

Scorton Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119613
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	358592
Inspection dates	25–26 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Margot D'Arcy

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	40
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr A Hesketh
Headteacher	Ms H Huset
Date of previous school inspection	5 March 2008
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector observed all of the teaching staff, visiting seven lessons and observing almost five hours of teaching. Discussions were held with school staff, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and parents and carers. The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation provided by the school, including that relating to safeguarding practices, the school's self-evaluation and development planning, records of pupils' attainment and progress and pupils' work. The responses to questionnaires completed by 26 parents and carers, 37 pupils and nine staff were also evaluated.

Information about the school

This rural village school is much smaller than the average sized primary school. All pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities is broadly average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low. A higher than average proportion of pupils joins and leaves the school other than at the usual points of admission and transfer.

Pupils are taught in two mixed-age classes. One contains children in the Reception Year and pupils in Years 1 and 2; the other pupils in 3, 4, 5 and 6. The headteacher, was appointed in September 2009. At this time the school entered into a collaboration with a neighbouring small village primary school. The headteacher leads and manages both schools dividing her time equally between each. Scorton Primary School retains its own governing body.

The school has gained the Healthy School status, the Activemark, Becta ICT Mark, Eco Schools silver award, Artsmark and Investors in People status. The school has met the government's floor targets for academic performance in each of the last three years. The privately run after-school club was inspected separately. The inspection report is available from the Ofsted website.

At the same time as this pilot inspection, the Church of England Diocese of Blackburn carried out an inspection of the religious character of the school. This report is available separately.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement	2
Teaching	2
Leadership and management	2
Behaviour and safety	1
Does the school adequately promote the pupils' well-being?	Yes
Does the school adequately promote community cohesion?	Yes
Does the school provide value for money?	Yes

Key findings

- Scorton Primary is a good school. Although the school has undergone some significant changes in organisation since its last inspection, it has been successful in ensuring pupils' continued good progress. Pupils achieve well and by the time they leave Year 6 their attainment in English, including reading, and mathematics is above average. Although attainment in reading is generally above average by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' phonic skills are not as well developed as other aspects of reading.
- The vast majority of pupils report that they enjoy school. They are eager to learn and both boys and girls mention reading, writing and mathematics as favourite subjects, just as much as lessons in art, music and physical education. Pupils show good moral and social awareness. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding.
- The quality of teaching is good. At Key Stage 2, pupils of all ages and abilities are exceptionally well challenged and supported. Teaching for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and for pupils in Key Stage 1 ranges from good to satisfactory. Here, although there are many opportunities for interesting practical work, teaching is not always adapted well enough to the pupils' stage of development. Phonic skills are not always taught well enough.
- The school's promotion of pupils' behaviour and safety is outstanding. There are rigorous systems to keep pupils safe and to promote their personal, social and emotional well-being. The needs of vulnerable pupils, such as those with special educational needs and those with disabilities, are very well met.

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- The committed headteacher, staff and governing body lead and manage the school well. Systems for self-evaluation provide a mostly accurate view of strengths and weaknesses. Some systems are still at a relatively early stage of development and some need sharpening to further enhance the quality of self-evaluation. The school's excellent partnership with parents and carers ensures its place at the heart of the community.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve pupils' attainment and progress in reading by:
 - implementing plans to introduce a programme of systematic phonics teaching for pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1
 - ensuring that all teaching staff are trained to deliver high quality phonics teaching.
- Build on current work to improve the consistency of teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, so that all is at least good or better. In particular, ensure that work is accurately matched to pupils' stages of development.
- Sharpen the systems for how the school monitors and evaluates its work by:
 - ensuring that the observations of teaching and learning are recorded less generically and, where necessary, provide clear and detailed pointers for improvement
 - further developing subject leaders' skills in monitoring and evaluating the quality of provision, including teaching, in relation to the impact on pupils' attainment and progress
 - developing further the way the school analyses the wide range of data it receives about pupils' academic performance to identify any underperformance or differences between the attainment of groups.

Main report

Pupils achieve well and by the time they leave Year 6 their attainment in English, including reading, and in mathematics is above average. Pupils enjoy school and are eager to learn. Where the work set is interesting and matched well to their needs they listen intently, answer readily and frequently offer views and pose their own questions to extend their understanding.

The most consistently effective learning occurs in Key Stage 2, where progress is often outstanding. Here, learning moves on at an incredibly fast pace, the teacher's high expectations and pupils' thirst to learn creating a highly charged and industrious learning environment. In an English lesson, the teacher's expert subject knowledge and lively input at the start motivated pupils and prepared them very well for the writing task ahead. All worked diligently, with pupils explaining that the background

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music, 'helps us to be creative'. Pupils produced writing of an exceptionally high standard for their ages. They used a wide range of descriptive vocabulary very effectively to create an atmosphere of suspense, spelt complex words correctly and used punctuation knowledgeably. Pupils describe mathematics as 'really exciting'. They show very good development of calculation skills and work well cooperatively to solve challenging mathematical problems. Pupils have well developed skills in information and communication technology and make very good use of their individual laptop computers to research and present work in a range of subjects.

Children's attainment on entry to Reception can vary significantly from year-to-year but is generally in line with or above age-related expectations. By the end of Reception, attainment in all areas of learning is usually above average. Although Reception children are in a mixed-age class, they benefit from specific opportunities to work as a single year group, both indoors and outside. They learn effectively through play and experience an appropriate balance of adult-directed activities and those they initiate themselves. During the inspection, after hearing the story of the Bear Hunt, the children worked well together using cardboard and other materials to build a cave and then wrote words to describe it on 'post-it notes', which they stuck to the inside of the cave. From their starting points, Reception children, and those pupils in Key Stage 1, make good progress. Work for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is frequently stimulating and challenging. There are many good opportunities for pupils to engage in first-hand practical work, such as testing the strength of houses they have built using different materials. Sometimes, however, learning is not as effective as it could be. For instance, abstract ideas such as the need for standard units of measure, are introduced before some pupils have had enough experience of exploring non-standard measures.

Currently, pupils' attainment in reading by the age of six is in line with expectations. While many aspects of pupils' reading at Key Stage 1 are developing well, assessments of pupils' phonic skills show that their competence in this aspect of reading is not as well developed as in other areas. The school does not have a systematic programme for the teaching of phonics across the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, although there is recognition that this is needed. Additionally, staff have not received sufficient training to support high quality phonics teaching.

Pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities receive individual support tailored well to their specific needs. This enables them to take a full part in lessons and supports their good and sometimes better progress. Because the school knows each pupil well as an individual, any gaps in their learning are quickly identified and addressed. One pupil explained how significantly the support provided by the school had helped to both improve skills and enjoyment of reading, as well as the pupil's overall confidence as a learner in other subjects.

Teaching is outstanding at Key Stage 2. In the most effective lessons, the content is stimulating, capturing and holding pupils' interest. High teacher expectations and brisk pace leave no time for pupils' attention to wander. Detailed lesson planning and

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organisation and excellent use of assessment information ensure that the needs of pupils of different ages and abilities are fully met. Collectively, with the teachers' very secure subject knowledge and good rapport with pupils, these elements promote outstanding learning. These features are consistently evident at Key Stage 2 and sometimes evident at Key Stage 1. Teaching at Key Stage 1 ranges from good to satisfactory. Where teaching is less effective, the potential of activities to promote the best possible learning is not fully exploited or work is not pitched at the most appropriate level for pupils' needs. Sometimes, when pupils spend too long listening to the teacher, they lose interest and learning dips. The teaching of phonics is not always effective. Letter sounds are not always demonstrated correctly to pupils and the phonics sessions are not always challenging enough.

Throughout the school, teachers' questioning of pupils is consistently good, as is the quality of marking, which regularly informs pupils of how well they are achieving and how to improve. Pupils have clear improvement targets and many Key Stage 2 pupils have a very good understanding of which National Curriculum levels they are working at in English and mathematics and what they need to do to achieve the next level. All pupils are regularly involved in thinking about and commenting on their own learning and how they might improve it.

The school's creative curriculum enables pupils throughout the school to learn and progress well in subjects such as art, music, history, geography, religious education and French. It also makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

In various contexts, pupils' behaviour is of a high standard and makes a strong contribution to their learning. Pupils play and work together well and are friendly and polite to each other and the adults around them. In discussions and in their responses to the questionnaire, pupils unanimously agree that behaviour is good. They say that because the school is small, 'everyone knows everyone' and that, 'We're all friends most of the time.' Pupils have a clear understanding of what constitutes bullying and of what to do if they experience it personally or see it happening to others; they are adamant that there is no bullying at the school. Pupils' attendance is high and they are very punctual. The parents and carers who completed the questionnaire all agree that behaviour is good and that the school deals well with any behaviour or bullying issues. Many commented positively on the way in which the school cares for their children, keeps them safe and helps them to succeed with their work.

The school meets all safeguarding requirements. Staff and the governing body have gained comprehensive awareness of safeguarding and child protection issues through regular training. Documentation, such as risk assessments, is comprehensive and detailed. Procedures to deal with bullying are thorough and followed correctly on the very rare occasions this arises. The school's caring, family ethos, its programme of personal, social and health education and the good example set by adults add much to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.

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Leadership and management are good and have been enhanced by the collaboration. One benefit has been to enable the role of the headteacher to become both non-teaching and more strategic. This works well and the school is also led and managed effectively when the headteacher is off site. While the two schools have separate governing bodies, the joint governors' collaboration committee has enabled the sharing of expertise and strengthened governance. Since the last inspection, there have been improvements in provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and in the tracking of pupils' attainment and progress and in the quality of marking throughout the school. The collaboration has also allowed the school to address, differently, the recommendation to develop the role of subject leaders. These roles are now across both schools, thereby reducing the number of subjects that staff are responsible for and providing more time to focus on improvement. The initiative is developing well, but is still at a relatively early stage in relation to how securely subject leaders monitor and evaluate the impact of provision on pupils' attainment and progress.

Self-evaluation is mostly accurate, albeit too positive in some areas. There is on-going monitoring of teaching by the headteacher, but while this provides a relatively accurate insight into the quality of teaching, it is mostly informal and not documented well enough to support improvements. The number of pupils in year groups is small and the school knows and tracks progress individually, ensuring that equality of opportunity is promoted well. However, better use could be made of the extensive data the school receives; for example, to identify and investigate any underperformance or difference in the achievement of various groups.

The school's excellent links with parents and carers enhance pupils' academic progress and well-being. There was a high response to the questionnaire sent to parents and carers. Almost all who responded agreed that the school helps their children to achieve well, addresses their concerns and keeps them informed. Inspection evidence, including discussions with parents and carers, supports these positive views. The governing body works effectively with the headteacher and staff, successfully balancing support and challenge. Collectively, there is a good and successful focus by leaders and managers on driving forward improvements and good capacity to improve further.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Scorton Church of England Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received 26 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 40 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Q1 My child is happy at school	19	73	7	27	0	0	0	0
Q2 My child feels safe at school	21	81	5	19	0	0	0	0
Q3 The school helps my child to achieve as well as they can	19	73	6	23	1	4	0	0
Q4 The school meets my child’s particular needs	16	62	10	38	0	0	0	0
Q5 The school ensures my child is well looked after	19	73	7	27	0	0	0	0
Q6 Teaching at this school is good	20	77	6	23	0	0	0	0
Q7 There is a good standard of behaviour at this school	19	73	7	27	0	0	0	0
Q8 Lessons are not disrupted by bad behaviour	18	69	8	31	0	0	0	0
Q9 The school deals with any cases of bullying well	15	58	11	42	0	0	0	0
Q10 The school helps me to support my child’s learning	19	73	7	27	0	0	0	0
Q11 The school responds to my concerns and keeps me well informed	18	69	7	27	1	4	0	0
Q12 The school is well led and managed	21	81	5	19	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The achievement of all pupils. ■ Behaviour and safety. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The effectiveness of leadership and management. <p>and taking into consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ how well the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



27 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Scorton Church of England Primary School, Scorton, PR3 1AY

Thank you for your warm welcome when I came to inspect your school recently. I enjoyed my visit immensely, particularly the discussions that I had with many of you. You are clearly very proud of your school and have every right to be so. I am pleased to inform you that I judged your school to be good.

I was extremely impressed with your excellent behaviour and maturity. You show respect to your teachers and other adults, and pay good attention when you are being taught. You are clearly very eager to learn and it was heartening to see you enjoying your work so much. I particularly enjoyed reading your 'suspense writing', watching you perform punctuation 'Kung Foo' and seeing how the younger children built their cave and created artwork from natural materials they found in the school grounds. You make good progress, especially as you get older and move into Key Stage 2. By the time you leave Year 6 you have achieved well and attained above average standards.

I judged that you are well taught and that your school is well led and managed by your headteacher, the governing body and staff.

In order to make your school even better I have asked your headteacher and governors to do the following:

- make sure that all of the teaching is good or better all of the time
- help children in Reception and Key Stage 1 to make better progress in learning about letters and their sounds
- develop some of the systems the school has to check on how well it is doing.

With very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Margot D'Arcy
Lead inspector

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