

# Great Harwood St John's Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119421
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	366215
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 June 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Coleman HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	131
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Dion Etheridge
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Darren Mussell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 November 2009
<b>School address</b>	St John's Street Great Harwood, Blackburn Lancashire BB6 7ES
<b>Telephone number</b>	01254 885926
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<b>Email address</b>	head@st-johns-greatharwood.lancs.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The inspector observed teaching and learning in nine lessons taught by five different teachers. Meetings were held with representatives from the local authority, senior staff, a group of parents and carers, and pupils. Additionally, a telephone discussion was held with the chair of the governing body. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at a range of school documentation including data showing pupils' attainment and progress, policies, the minutes of the governing body, reports from the local authority and school leaders, safeguarding records and pupils' work.

The inspection reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Have leaders at all levels, including the governing body, successfully tackled the points for improvement identified at the last inspection?
- Does the school have sufficient capacity to improve?
- Is pupils' attainment rising quickly enough?

## Information about the school

This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. It is situated in an urban residential area. There are two sites approximately 500 metres apart. The lower site houses pupils aged 4-7 years and the upper site pupils aged 7-11 years. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The percentages of pupils who speak English as an additional language and/or from minority ethnic groups are above the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who have a statement of special educational needs is below average.

The school's previous inspection in November 2009 judged that the school required special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school were not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvements.

**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: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Since the last inspection, the headteacher, senior leaders and the governing body, have acted decisively to bring about significant improvement to the school's provision. As a result of rigorous monitoring and well-targeted staff development, the quality of teaching is good. The good teaching is combined with a curriculum which has been developed successfully to provide a well-balanced and interesting range of learning experiences for pupils. Together, those features ensure that all groups of pupils make good progress. Pupils' attainment is low due to a legacy of underachievement, but it is rising quickly and pupils are closing the gap towards reaching national expectations.

Senior leaders and the governing body are well informed due to effective and accurate evaluations of the school's performance by leaders at all levels. Regular and systematic scrutiny of lessons, pupils' work and data tracking pupils' attainment and progress, are analysed carefully by subject leaders and reported to the senior team and the governing body. There is a good level of challenge and support from the governing body to the school's senior leaders. It ensures that prompt plans and actions are implemented to tackle areas in need of improvement. The clear success of the actions, as noted above, demonstrates the school's good capacity to improve.

Pupils' attendance, which was judged as causing concern at the last inspection, is now broadly average and improving. The school promotes the importance of good attendance through newsletters, assemblies and weekly celebrations for pupils and classes who make a full attendance. Prizes and certificates are awarded to reward pupils. Pupils who spoke to the inspector said that those actions encourage them to attend. Sanctions are also in place to deter persistent absence and the number of pupils to whom this applies is falling significantly.

Pupils enjoy coming to this school. They say that staff are caring and listen to pupils' views and concerns. Most importantly, leaders take notice of pupils' views and act on them to improve the school. For example, the pupil parliament suggested that 'proper' plates and cutlery would be better than plastic trays and knives and forks. As result, they were changed and pupils are very pleased. Parents and carers who spoke to the inspector, also, said that the headteacher and staff are very approachable, which is much appreciated. Communication with parents and carers is good and effective. The school provides many opportunities for pupils' spiritual, social and moral development. Pupils develop good self esteem and confidence because staff praise their efforts regularly. Staff have consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour and the pupils respond by showing good manners, courtesy to each other and adults and by cooperating willingly in classrooms and around the school. Opportunities for pupils to develop cultural awareness

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are more limited. Links and partnerships exist with local schools and Christian communities, but there is a lack of provision to extend them to other cultures and faiths either nationally or internationally.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment by:
  - - sustaining the momentum of school improvement
  - - providing more consistent homework to build effectively on the learning in school
  - - improving the Early Years Foundation Stage classroom environment so that it is more conducive to children's learning needs
  - - sharing the best practice in using assessment in lessons
  - - providing good and effective induction arrangements for new staff so that they are able to provide good-quality provision immediately upon taking up post.
- Improve pupils' cultural development by:
  - - providing more opportunities for pupils to visit non-Christian places of worship and/or visiting leaders of other faiths to speak to pupils in school
  - - establishing links and partnerships with institutions in other parts of England and overseas so that pupils can learn about other contrasting cultures.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

<b>3</b>
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Pupils' starting points are mostly below those expected nationally. Due to good teaching, pupils make good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2. Consequently, pupils' attainment is rising quickly and, overall, shows a trend of improvement over the most recent three years. However, the legacy of underachievement means that levels of attainment are below average by Year 6. Pupils reach higher standards in mathematics than in English. The rate of progress made by pupils is similar in both subjects, but the starting points for pupils in reading and writing are lower. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who speak English as an additional language and minority ethnic groups make progress equally as good as other pupils.

Evidence from previous monitoring inspections and from this inspection, shows that the rapid improvement in the quality of teaching is matched by similar sharp rises in the amount of progress being made by pupils in lessons. For example, in science lessons, the emphasis placed on learning through practical tasks and opportunities for investigation leads to pupils making good and sometimes outstanding progress, because their interest in problem solving is very high. Lesson observations by the inspector show that in English, mathematics and science the vast majority of pupils make at least good progress. Analysis of school tracking data and scrutiny of pupils' work confirm this.

Pupils say they feel safe in school because the staff are good at looking after them. In lessons seen, teachers make suitable risk assessments and ensure that pupils are aware of any health and safety considerations. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the amount of

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sporting opportunities available to them, which help them stay physically fit. Combined with the strong emphasis given to teaching pupils about healthy foods, they lead to good attitudes towards leading a healthy lifestyle. Pupils behave well and say there is no bullying. Parents and carers who spoke to the inspector said there are isolated examples of bullying, but these are dealt with very well by the school staff. Pupils take on extra responsibilities, such as by being a behaviour monitor or being on the pupil parliament, and through such activities make a good contribution to the school community. In the local community, pupils raise funds for good causes.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

The vast majority of teaching in the school is good. Some lessons are outstanding and a similar proportion is satisfactory. Classrooms are organised well by teachers and provide attractive displays of pupils' work across a range of curriculum subjects. Of particular note is the effective use of captions, key words and prompts which help pupils to refer back to previous learning and this reinforces their understanding. Teachers are enthusiastic about their lessons and provide mostly stimulating and exciting activities which grip pupils' interest quickly. For example, in a science lesson, the pupils used a pipette to drop water droplets onto a coin. They watched in amazement as the surface tension of the water built a bubble or dome shape which was clearly much higher than they had predicted. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to discuss their ideas and learn from each other. The

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outstanding lessons are characterised by very effective continuous checking of pupils' understanding through sharply targeted questions and quick summary sessions. Those features ensure every pupil achieves and is ready to make the next step. Satisfactory lessons occur when there is a lack of clarity about the task and pupils lose interest and their concentration wanes. There is some inconsistency in the use of homework, a point which parents and carers, rightly, identified to the inspector.

The curriculum provides a good balance of basic skills and themes which link subjects together and enable pupils to make sense of their learning. A high emphasis is placed on learning through investigations and problem-solving activities. That approach makes learning interesting for pupils and they enjoy lessons which allow them to become involved in practical work. 'Theme weeks' take place which stimulate pupils' curiosity and extend learning. A number of visits are organised to places of educational interest such as a residential visit to an outward-bound centre and to a local wildlife area. The visits bring meaning to learning for pupils and give relevance to curriculum themes. A range of visitors also enriches the curriculum. For example, the school received an incubator with ready-to-hatch eggs. That provided a sense of awe and wonder for pupils as they observed the beginnings of new life. Pupils are appreciative of the many extra curricular activities offered by the school.

Staff are vigilant in their supervision of pupils and this leads to pupils feeling safe and looked after. Effective tracking is used well to identify any pupils who may be vulnerable and good use is made of external agencies to support these. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good support and guidance. Recruitment procedures are rigorous in checking the suitability of staff. Risk assessments are made for trips out of school, for premises requirements and in lessons as needed. Pupils are taught about the dangers of drugs and alcohol and the curriculum includes personal, social and health education.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher has built an effective leadership team who share his clear vision for school improvement. He has successfully implemented a rigorous system to monitor the school's performance. It provides senior leaders with frequent evaluations about the quality of teaching and pupils' attainment and progress. As a result, staff development is targeted to improve teaching and increase the pace of learning. However, insufficient opportunities are provided to share the best practice in teaching and assessment across

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the school. Intervention programmes and one-to-one tuition is provided to boost pupils learning. The impact of this is rapidly rising attainment and increased rates of progress.

The governing body provides good challenge and support to the school's leaders. In particular, the school effectiveness committee monitors school improvement and is informed well through school leaders and local authority monitoring reports. Members of the governing body monitor the school's provision at first hand and report back in meetings. Training has been completed by the governing body to increase its skills in analysing and understanding data. That has led to rigorous consideration of the pupils' attainment and progress.

Arrangements for safeguarding are robust and ensure thorough vetting of all staff appointments. Risk assessments, fire evacuation procedures and child protection systems are rigorous. Evaluations of plans for community cohesion show good links locally, but the evaluation of the wider impact of the school's work both nationally and globally is less strong. Leaders ensure that pupils have equality of opportunity, as shown by the similar rates of progress for pupil groups and the good-quality planning between mixed-aged classes.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children enjoy coming to school. Effective transition arrangements, which include home visits, ensure that they settle quickly into the daily routines of the classroom. The learning environment includes a main classroom, an adjacent corridor and an enclosed separate small workroom. Outside, there is a hard surface which is partly covered and extensive grassed areas. The main classroom is cramped and cluttered and this hinders learning to some extent. Despite this, the children show admirable independence and cooperate willingly with each other as they move around. Relationships with staff are good and



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children are happy to ask for help if they need it. Behaviour is good. A 'key worker' system is in place which ensures children know which adult to turn to for help and that their needs are well cared for. Staff are suitably trained for first aid and child protection requirements.

Overall, the provision is satisfactory and this enables children to make satisfactory gains in learning the skills and knowledge needed to enter Year 1. The school's tracking data, which is moderated by the local authority, show that children make the strongest progress in their physical development and in learning numbers as labels and for counting. Progress in learning to read and write is satisfactory. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to other children.

Teacher's planning shows a sound identification of children's needs based on good assessment information. Portfolios of children's work are annotated and provide accurate assessments of the children's attainment. Staff provide effective support and guidance to help children to learn. The activities for children are mostly well organised and interesting. Occasionally, the task is not explained clearly and learning slows because of a lack of understanding. The outdoor environment provides for a useful extension of learning, with good use of natural resources. The continuous use of that provision is hindered sometimes because the access is restricted due to the cramped nature of the indoor arrangements.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

## Views of parents and carers

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

A group of six parents and carers met with the inspector. Also, one parent requested an individual meeting. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school's work and praised the approachability of the headteacher and staff. They raised two main concerns. Parents and carers do not think there is enough homework and they would welcome better transition arrangements when pupils move from one site to the other and into Key Stage 2. The inspector agrees that homework provision isn't as consistent as it should be. The school provides some opportunities for pupils to visit the upper site. The school has plans to increase the number of visits pupils make to the upper site so that they will be better prepared for Key Stage 2.

## **Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire**

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

## 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](http://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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



23 June 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Great Harwood St John's Church of England Primary School, Blackburn, BB6 7ES**

Thank you for welcoming me into your school when I visited you recently. I enjoyed my time with you thoroughly and would like to share with you what I found out about your school. I judged that Great Harwood St John's CofE Primary is a satisfactory school and no longer causes concern. These are the main reasons why I judged the school to be satisfactory.

- The headteacher, staff and the governing body are improving your school in many areas.
- The quality of teaching is good and you make good progress. The standards of attainment you reach are still below average, but you are catching up quickly to the level expected nationally for when you start secondary school.
- You enjoy school, feel safe and behave well.
- Staff take good care of you.
- Many of you take part in sporting activities and everyone is learning about the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

All schools need to develop and improve and I have asked your headteacher to make sure that your attainment continues to rise quickly. Also, I have asked that you have more opportunities to learn about other cultures, especially those away from the local area in which you live.

Thank you once again for all your help. I wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely,

John Coleman

Her Majesty's Inspector

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