

# Cuerden Church School, Bamber Bridge

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	133645
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	360555
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 July 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Stephen Rowland

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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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>	164
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr David Evans
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Carolyn Ranson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 October 2007
<b>School address</b>	Station Road Bamber Bridge, Preston Lancashire PR5 6ED
<b>Telephone number</b>	01772 335033
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<b>Email address</b>	head@cuerden.lancs.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out three additional inspectors. They visited 13 lessons and observed the work of seven teachers. They observed the school's work, and looked at relevant policies, the school development plan, minutes of meetings of the governing body, the school's monitoring records and analyses of pupils' attainment and progress. Meetings were held with staff, pupils and members of the governing body. The 21 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were analysed.

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

- How well the school ensures that all pupils achieve their full potential.
- The extent to which challenging and engaging teaching helps children to learn.
- How consistently teachers use assessment information to plan their lessons.
- Whether leaders and managers at all levels, including members of the governing body, contribute actively to evaluating the school's effectiveness and securing improvements.

## Information about the school

This is smaller than most primary schools nationally. The proportion of pupils currently known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. A very small number are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is close to that normally seen.

The school has the Leading Parent Partnership Award, the Bronze Eco Award, Activemark and the Silver Active Quality Mark. It has Healthy School status.

Since the last inspection a new headteacher has been appointed. The previous deputy headteacher moved to another post in December 2010. A new deputy headteacher has now been appointed and will start work at the school in September 2011. There has been significant turbulence in staffing over the last school year.

A private nursery operates on the school site. This will be subject to separate inspection and reporting arrangements.

**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**

**3**

## Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. It has a number of good features, such as the quality of care, guidance and support for all pupils and the provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The new headteacher has high expectations for herself and the school and there is a clear sense of growing confidence and a determination to succeed. The last year has seen significant staff turbulence and this has slowed down the school's development. Achievement overall is satisfactory. Nevertheless, staff are increasingly successful in improving pupils' outcomes. Attendance is now above the national average and achievement in mathematics, particularly for boys, has improved. The issues raised at the time of the last inspection have been addressed successfully in the main. Self-evaluation is honest and accurate and planning to secure improvement is clear and helpful. All this indicates that the school has a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and attainment in English and mathematics is broadly average. Teaching overall is satisfactory but there are examples of good practice. In an effective Year 6 mathematics class, for example, pupils were constantly challenged to think harder and to explain what they had learnt about number patterns to the teacher and to their peers. Where teaching and progress were not as good, opportunities to extend learning by skilful questioning were missed. Assessment information is not used carefully enough to ensure that all pupils are sufficiently challenged so that they make more rapid progress. Marking is inconsistent so that it does not always enable pupils to see how they are doing and how to improve. Improving the consistency of teaching, including use of assessment, is the only area which requires concerted attention in order to secure improvement.

The school has a calm atmosphere and the behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are very loyal to the school and appreciate the way in which the staff care for them and insist on respect for all. They made many positive comments during the inspection, such as, 'Teachers always help you. If ever there is a problem it gets sorted out quickly.' This reflects the good care provided by the school.

Many parents and carers expressed very positive views about the school. One wrote, 'Staff are always willing to discuss and address issues.' Others expressed confidence about the future of the school. 'The new headteacher is making a positive impact. The school is moving forward again.'

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

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

- Raise attainment and increase the rate of pupils' progress by:
  - using assessment more effectively to plan lessons that challenge pupils of all abilities to learn well
  - improving the use of questioning so that it involves all pupils in preparing answers and thinking about their work
  - ensuring that written and verbal feedback informs pupils about how well they are doing and how they can improve.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Pupils enjoy school. Their behaviour is good and they respond well to teaching which is interesting and challenging. In an effective Year 2 science lesson, for example, pupils wearing masks were working with partners to identify the features of different types of animals. In this lesson, pupils were engrossed in their learning and made good progress. When teaching is not so engaging and challenging, pupils' learning and progress are satisfactory rather than good.

Generally children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which are below those expected for their age. They make good progress in the Reception Year and enter the main school with the skills needed for learning in Year 1. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and attainment at the end of Year 6 has been close to the national average over recent years. The school's most recent tracking data suggest there is a positive upward trend in attainment and progress although this is not yet consistent throughout the school. Where activities in lessons are carefully matched to individual needs and challenge pupils' progress is good. There are no gaps in performance between different groups of pupils. The school has successfully improved the performance of boys in mathematics so that they now achieve as well as girls in this subject. Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective, so that they make progress which is in line with their peers.

Pupils are polite and considerate. They have a strong sense of right and wrong and respond well to the high expectations the school has of their behaviour. As a result the school is a calm and orderly environment. There is an active school council which has influenced decisions about school meals and about the form of daily worship. The school is developing a more active role within the local community. For example, the school choir sang at a local store at Christmas. Pupils feel safe in school and say they feel confident that adults will listen to their concerns and will deal with any problems. Parents and carers endorse this view. Attendance has improved steadily over recent years and is now above average. This is as a result of the increasingly effective links that the school is building with parents and carers. Pupils have a good awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. The participation rate in the wide range of sporting and exercise activities is high. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school's daily opportunities for worship and prayer ensure that pupils develop a strong spiritual awareness. Pupils' consideration and respect for others demonstrate good social and moral understanding.

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

*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>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<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>3</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>	2
<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?

Teaching is satisfactory. There are, however, examples of good practice. In the best lessons, the pace of learning is brisk. In these instances, teachers use their knowledge of the abilities and progress of individual pupils to plan activities which help them to master the next steps. All pupils are challenged through skilful questioning to extend their thinking and to explain their answers. However, in some lessons, learning is not as strong. This is because activities are not matched closely enough to the different needs of pupils. There is insufficient challenge so that pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. Questioning is not probing and pupils are not expected to think hard.

The school is implementing a thorough and helpful system for keeping track of pupils' progress over time. This is beginning to have an impact on planning and progress but is not yet used consistently to plan activities in lessons that challenge pupils to achieve as much as they can. Marking and verbal feedback often provides encouraging comments for pupils. However, feedback does not always provide sufficient detail to help pupils to see how to improve their work.

The school's curriculum has some good features. Pupils benefit from a broad range of musical, artistic and sporting extra-curricular activities. The themed weeks, such as the Design and Technology Week and the Bible Week contribute to pupils' enjoyment of school. There is an appropriate focus on the development of basic literacy and numeracy skills and pupils are enabled to become comfortable users of information and

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communication technology (ICT). The school is currently developing a more creative curriculum, which is helping pupils to see the links between different subjects and the relevance of what they learn. The religious studies programme has a strong impact on pupils' spiritual and moral understanding.

The school has an established ethos of care and support for pupils. The needs of individual pupils, particularly those who are potentially vulnerable or who are at risk of failure in school are assessed carefully and actions put in place to support them. There are some telling examples of the effective programmes of support provided for individuals. Pupils say that they can always talk to adults in school and that they are listened to and helped. The school's actions to promote good attendance have been effective and the school currently has no long term or persistent absentees.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The new headteacher is providing clear and determined leadership. In her first year in post she has won the respect of staff, pupils and parents and carers. She is actively supported by two experienced senior leaders who share her ambition to raise standards and to improve outcomes for pupils. There is a growing sense of confidence and shared responsibility throughout the staff. However, much remains to be done and this process has been somewhat hindered by the high degree of staff change over the last year. Teaching is monitored systematically and the lessons learnt from this are beginning to have a positive impact on teaching practice. Although there is a growing understanding of how to secure good learning, the full impact of this on attainment, achievement and provision is not fully realised and there are still inconsistencies in the effectiveness of teaching and assessment on pupils' progress.

Members of the governing body know the school well and have a clear understanding of what needs to be done to secure improvement. They provide realistic and honest support for the headteacher and are increasingly confident in asking challenging questions when necessary.

The school benefits from a broad range of partnerships with other organisations. Links with a group of local high schools are active. This helps with pupils' transition to the secondary phase and supports work to enhance the school's sports and arts curriculum. The school works along with its two associated churches and is engaged in the Grassroots project, which supports local potentially vulnerable families. The school has good partnerships with parents and carers. They are actively involved in the school's themed curriculum weeks and a large number of them attend the weekly achievement assembly,

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in which they can share their children's success. There are suitable arrangements to promote equal opportunities and, as a result, the school has successfully reduced the gap in performance between boys and girls in Key Stage 2. The school's robust safeguarding systems ensure the safety and security of pupils and are monitored and evaluated regularly. There is an appropriate focus on the suitability of staff and on the appointment of new staff. The school functions well as a community and has a number of links within the local area, which help to encourage community cohesion. However, links with other ethnic and religious groups within the United Kingdom are limited.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<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>3</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</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 enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which are generally below those expected for their age but make good progress in acquiring the language and social skills they will need for the future. They develop positive attitudes to learning and learn how to share and play with others. They work with tenacity and concentration and understand how to remain safe by, for example, not rushing around thoughtlessly. There is an appropriate level of choice and children talk confidently about what they are doing.

There is a safe and stimulating environment both indoors and out, although the outdoor provision is not as fully utilised. Adults are deployed well so that children's needs are met and their learning developed. Skilful questioning ensures that children are challenged to develop their skills. Staff engage in supportive conversations to enhance children's learning. Observations are used to plan for the next steps in learning and there is an appropriate balance between activities chosen by children and those led by adults. Links with parents and carers are carefully nurtured so that they can share in their child's learning in school.



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The recently appointed Reception class teacher has built on the effective foundation of leadership and management established in the Early Years Foundation Stage. There is a clear focus on ensuring good progress and an honest understanding of what needs to be developed further. The adults who work in the Reception class work closely together to ensure that priorities for development are achieved. Safeguarding procedures are continually under review so that they remain effective.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

About 12% of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. This is well below average for primary schools. A very large majority of the responses were positive with many supportive comments. A very small number of parents and carers felt that the school did not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors considered the way in which the school deals with unacceptable behaviour through discussions, including with pupils, observations in and around the school and by examining records of incidents. During the inspection, no evidence was found to suggest that the school did not deal effectively with such behaviour.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cuerden Church School, Bamber Bridge 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 inspection team received 21 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 164 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	13	62	7	33	1	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	13	62	8	38	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	6	29	13	62	2	10	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	11	52	9	43	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	12	57	8	38	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	9	43	10	48	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	10	48	10	48	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	10	48	8	38	1	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	10	48	10	48	1	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	48	8	38	1	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	6	29	13	62	1	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	12	57	7	33	1	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	9	43	11	52	1	5	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](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.**



6 July 2011

Dear Pupils,

**Inspection of Cuerden Church School, Bamber Bridge, Preston, PR5 6ED**

Thank you for making us so welcome during our recent inspection of Cuerden Church School. We were particularly grateful to those of you who agreed to meet us during your lunch break. Thank you also to those of you who completed the questionnaire. All your responses were very useful.

Cuerden is a satisfactory school. It has some good features. The school provides you with good care and support. Your behaviour is good and we were impressed by how considerate you are to each other and to visitors. We were impressed by your understanding of how to remain healthy. You participate in some super activities, including ballroom dancing. Also you enjoy participating in the daily act of worship and know how to respect and value others. We thought that the work of the Reception class was good and gave the younger children a really good start to their time in school.

Your teachers work hard to make sure you can learn and make progress but there are some important things they need to do to make sure that you can learn faster. We have asked teachers to make sure that work in lessons is always hard enough for each of you. We want them to ask you more questions that really make you think hard. We have also asked teachers to mark your work so you always understand how well you are doing and exactly how you can improve.

We enjoyed our visit and know that you are proud of your school. Please try to help your teachers by continuing to behave well, always trying your best and by helping each other.

Once again, thank you for your kindness and help.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Rowland

Lead Inspector

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