

# Nelson St Philip's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119437
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	379799
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 October 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Roger Gill

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>	138
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Janet Laycock
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kathryn Ellidge
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 June 2009
<b>School address</b>	Leeds Road Nelson Lancashire BB9 9TQ
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	4–5 October 2011
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The team observed teaching and learning in seven lessons, taught by six teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, parents and carers, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of evidence, including the school's documents for self-evaluation and safeguarding. They also studied the tracking system used to monitor pupils' progress and the work pupils were doing in their books. Inspectors considered the 91 questionnaires completed by parents and carers as well as those from pupils and staff.

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

- The effect of any downturns in learning that occurred since 2009 on pupils' progress and levels of attainment.
- The evidence to support the school's assertions about its Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Whether teaching and the use of assessment are having at least a satisfactory impact on pupils' learning and progress.
- The influence of leadership and management on the school's recovery from its recent challenges.

## Information about the school

St Philip's is a smaller than the average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is about average. There are well above average numbers of pupils from minority ethnic heritages, including those learning English as an additional language. An average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities, but the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is well below average. Currently, there are significantly more boys in the school than girls. Since the school's previous inspection, it has experienced significant changes in staffing including periods of long-term absence owing to illness. The school has received a number of national awards since 2009 such as, the Quality in Study Support Award, Healthy School status and the Activemark. The school runs a breakfast club for a small group of pupils on several days in the week.

**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

St Philip's is a satisfactory school. Pupils' progress is advancing quickly now that staffing is more settled. Parents, carers, pupils and staff are justified in their perception that the school's fresh start has produced improvements in teaching and learning. Senior leaders are focused on targeting resources and professional development effectively in the pursuit of increasing the proportion of good teaching. However, senior leaders recognise that while teaching is satisfactory overall, further improvement is needed in order to sustain the increasing rate of pupils' progress and learning. Because senior leaders have taken action based on accurate self-evaluation, the school is recovering quickly from a dip in its performance. Children join the school with skills for their age that are below national expectations. Overall, attainment at the end of Year 6 is improving and current indications are that it is now broadly average. Improvement in raising attainment in writing has not been as rapid as in reading and mathematics.

Determined leadership ensures that pupils' personal qualities, such as behaviour, remain positive features of the school. The way in which pupils contribute to school life and assume responsibilities within the Pendle Pupils' Parliament, for example, is excellent. Their keenness and commitment to learning, their willingness to join in and to confidently express their opinions, result from the good care and support that they receive and from the school's many successful partnerships. In conversation, older pupils in particular, talk about how they receive a 'good education' owing to the school's wide and varied curriculum. Certainly, the joint residential visit with other schools, visits to The Houses of Parliament and role playing in the local magistrates' court all contribute well to pupils' development.

Leadership, including that provided by the newly formed senior team, which includes two assistant headteachers, is working on the right lines to improve the school. Advances in the Early Years Foundation Stage that began last year are now being refined. As a result, children's learning is satisfactory with some good aspects in the basics of reading and mathematics. However, adults often do a little too much for the children, who lack enough opportunities to develop their own play activities and the confidence to communicate their own ideas.

Overall the school's capacity to improve is satisfactory rather than good because despite indications of good improvement, too little time has elapsed to demonstrate that these improvements are embedded fully and are being sustained.

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

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

- Raise attainment by the end of Year 6, particularly in writing, by:
  - making pupils' targets more demanding
  - checking more rigorously pupils' progress towards targets
  - ensuring that all pupils fully understand how to take their next steps in learning
  - placing extra emphasis on the writing of grammatically correct and well-punctuated sentences.
  
- Improve children's learning in The Early Years Foundation Stage to at least good by:
  - ensuring that they have ample opportunities to initiate their own play
  - developing adults' capacity to improve children's thinking and communication through skilful questioning and discussion.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

<b>3</b>
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Pupils enjoy learning and achieve satisfactorily. Behaviour is good in lessons: pupils are alert, polite and listen well to adults and each other. They enjoy the basics of English and mathematics, such as solving problems with numbers or reading in groups with and adult. Pupils also enjoy lessons that extend their horizons. For example, pupils in Year 5 invited their counterparts from a local school to join them to hear how biscuits are made locally. The factory owner showed a video and talked about the business side of food production. This kind of activity, which is common feature at St Philip's, has a positive effect on pupils' academic and personal development.

Different groups of pupils learn with a similar degree of success. For example, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those learning English as an additional language and the few whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. Pupils who attend the breakfast club find that it helps them start the day's learning well. Successful lessons use visual stimuli well to engage pupils. For example, in a Year 4 literacy lesson an animated video of a poem called 'The Bone-yard Rap' created a great interest in choice vocabulary and rhyming words. When learning is not so successful pupils are unclear about the schools' code for marking, so they are uncertain about what they need to do to improve their work. Moreover, in some cases, pupils complete activities without a clear idea of where their learning is heading.

Pupils acquire a range of positive personal qualities. They feel safe in school because bullying is rare, behaviour is good and school security is organized well. Pupils realise that regular attendance has educational benefits and compete for the class prize with

zeal. They lead healthy lives as is evidenced by their keenness to be involved in extra-curricular sport and by eating well-balanced meals. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They respond well to the school's ethos and their regular face-to-face contact with pupils locally from different heritages and backgrounds. They are thoughtful about each other, local issues, people in their community and further afield, as shown in their work on Africa.

*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>1</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>

## How effective is the provision?

Despite the recent rapid improvements in the quality of pupils' learning, as a result of the increasing incidence of good teaching, the overall quality of teaching and learning is currently satisfactory. Teachers largely assess pupils' work accurately and plan appropriately. Good lessons contain lively and ambitious presentations by teachers, thoughtful responses from pupils and timely interventions from teaching assistants. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is planned carefully and often delivered by well-trained teaching assistants who help these pupils to make similar progress to their peers.

Where learning is merely satisfactory, teachers talk for too long and not enough emphasis is placed on writing fully grammatical and well-punctuated sentences. However, the school is beginning to tackle these issues by implementing a system of teaching by ability groups in Key Stage 2, ensuring more challenge in lessons. Systems of marking, providing verbal feedback to pupils and setting targets are in place but are not yet fully effective. So, pupils' understanding of what to do to reach the next level, particularly in writing, lacks consistency and clarity.

The good curriculum emphasises the basic skills in English and mathematics well, except in the case of finer points related to sentence construction. Opportunities for sport, the study of Eco issues, such as sustainability, links with pupils from other schools and residential trips add enrichment and enjoyment on many levels. Pupils' knowledge about different cultures and faiths in Britain is good owing to the strength

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<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

of the curriculum in this respect. The curriculum also contains some outstanding elements, particularly in the way that pupils' self-esteem and their contribution to the school are fostered. For example, for debating in the school council, the school was recently placed in the top six schools in Lancashire. The good care, guidance and support provided reassures pupils and their families, especially those whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable than most. A few parents and carers would like more information about how well their children are doing and how they can help at home, which are areas that the school is addressing through its online homework system and its newly established parents' forums.

*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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's evident ambition and drive, ably supported by the two new assistant headteachers, has created a united team of staff that is fully behind the fresh start being made. Leaders have provided a firm lead in the difficult times for the school. New staff receive good induction, which enables them to be effective straight away. The school has benefitted from expertise provided by the local authority and other schools. Unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated, the amount of good teaching is on the increase and pupils are catching up quickly in their learning. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body provides a strong degree of support for the school, but is not yet deeply enough involved in monitoring and evaluating the school's work in order to play the fullest role in strategic planning.

Discrimination is not tolerated. Provision for equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Leadership keeps intricate records of achievement and knows a great deal about each pupil's progress. Now that teaching has improved, the school is correct in its judgement that targets, and the checking to see if they have been attained, should be more ambitious now for all pupils, particularly those in Year 6. The school's procedures for safeguarding pupils are good, also confirmed by parents, carers and pupils. All requirements are fully met and the detailed care taken over individual cases that cause concern is sometimes exceptional. Provision for community cohesion is good. The school possesses an atmosphere of collaboration that is enjoyed by the vast majority of pupils. Their African studies work was displayed in the Houses of Parliament with pupils receiving a congratulatory letter back from the Prime Minister.

*These are the grades for the 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>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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Satisfactory provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage results in steady learning by children who enjoy what they do. By the time they leave reception they are still below expected levels overall, but not far below in personal development and mathematical learning. The children in reception share the classroom and outside space with some pupils in Year 1. This is a successful arrangement in that younger children have good role models in Year 1 to emulate. However, the classroom lacks a really wide variety of play activities in which the youngest children can develop their own ideas as well as practise their basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Adults do not always use skilful questioning and discussion to develop children's skills of thinking and communication.

Leaders have made sure that children's learning has not been disrupted unduly by staff changes and capitalised on the continuity that experienced teaching assistants have provided. Children collaborate well, which is why their personal development is successful. For example, they enjoyed taking turns when talking about fruit for the harvest festival and making fruit kebabs afterwards. The courtyard outside has limited space for play but children ride bikes and blow soap bubbles in the water tray, for example, with enthusiasm. There is no cover, however, in wet and cold conditions so opportunities for extended play or literacy activities are limited. Nevertheless, learning is satisfactory because staff plan adequately, assess accurately and maintain children's interest, despite the limited space and the mixed-age class.

Staff liaise well with parents and carers and make sure that external agencies are used productively for individual children who need extra support. The areas for development in the respect of children's independent play, thinking skills and powers of oral communication are well known within school. However, a project to strengthen these aspects has only just started, so improvements are not securely evident.

### *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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3



## Views of parents and carers

Around 66% of parents and carers returned the inspection questionnaire. The responses show that a very large majority hold positive views about their children's education. A very small minority has reservations about how well the school is doing. The points made are mostly related to the instability last year, for example, too many changes of teacher, children's progress slipping and not finding out quickly enough about gaps in their child's learning. Inspectors investigated these views by talking to pupils, parents and carers, staff and members of the governing body. They found that there were problems in the years since 2009 but the school has done a lot to tackle the staffing issues, which were beyond its control, to put the school on a stable footing once more.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Nelson St. Philip's 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 inspection team received 91 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 138 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	46	51	39	43	4	4	2	2
The school keeps my child safe	48	53	37	41	3	3	3	3
The school informs me about my child's progress	34	37	42	46	9	10	5	5
My child is making enough progress at this school	33	36	39	43	8	9	7	8
The teaching is good at this school	36	40	41	45	8	9	5	5
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	34	34	37	17	19	7	8
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	33	53	58	4	4	2	2
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)	29	32	45	49	6	7	7	8
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	32	48	53	10	11	3	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	32	35	46	51	10	11	3	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	33	39	43	11	12	9	10
The school is led and managed effectively	34	37	39	43	7	8	7	8
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	43	47	34	37	7	8	4	4

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 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 October 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Nelson St Philip's Church of England Primary School, Nelson BB9 9TQ**

My colleague and I thoroughly enjoyed our two days inspecting your school. We were impressed by the way that you value the education provided, including the emphasis on sport, information and communication technology and art. We enjoyed hearing about how safe you feel and all the trips and residentials that you undertake with pupils from other schools. You make valuable friendships with pupils from different heritages and backgrounds.

You go to a satisfactory school, which has recovered well after an unsettled period in the last two years. The outstanding thing about your school is the way that you can contribute to the school and the wider community through your influential school council, Eco committee and joint parliaments with local schools.

I have asked your school to do two important things to help improve your learning and progress. Your attainment at the end of Year 6 should be higher, particularly in writing. I have asked that you are set harder targets to reach and that the teachers should check more closely on how well you are doing towards them. You must all be absolutely clear about your next steps in learning.

Finally, children's independence in the Early Years Foundation Stage should be strengthened and adults should develop children's thinking and the way they talk about their experiences.

You can all help by trying hard at all times and being determined to reach your targets.

Yours sincerely

Roger Gill  
Lead inspector

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