

Chorley St James' Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119467
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	379811
Inspection dates	10–11 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Stephen Wall

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	194
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Neville Norcross
Headteacher	Claire Greenway
Date of previous school inspection	30 March 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in eight lessons taught by eight teachers. They held meetings with staff, groups of pupils and the Chair of the Governing Body. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation including: information relating to attainment and pupils' progress; the school's self-evaluation; minutes of meetings of the governing body and evidence relating to how the school supports pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. Inspectors also examined evaluations undertaken by the school to ensure it meets statutory requirements with regard to safeguarding. In addition, 84 questionnaires completed by parents and carers were scrutinised along with questionnaires returned by staff and pupils.

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

- Whether pupils achieve as well as they could at all stages as they move up through the school, especially in Key Stage 2.
- How effectively leaders and managers, including the governing body, drive improvement, especially in pupils' achievement.
- How effectively the school uses assessment to track pupils' progress and raise attainment.
- How effectively leaders and managers monitor and develop the quality of teaching to maximise its impact on pupils' learning and progress.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average-sized primary school in which the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. Most pupils are White British. A few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is broadly in line with the national average. A new deputy headteacher joined the school in September 2009 followed a year later by the appointment of a new headteacher. The school has Healthy School status and has gained the Arts Council England Award.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. It has improved very rapidly since its last inspection in key aspects of its work because leaders and managers have set high expectations and have tackled weaknesses rigorously. As a result, teaching is now good and enables pupils to make good progress. Leaders and managers, including the governing body, evaluate the effectiveness of the school accurately. They use the outcomes to target highly effective actions on areas where pupils should and could do better. Consequently, pupils' achievement has improved significantly. It is now good. The school is demonstrating good capacity for sustained improvement.

Pupils say that they are enjoying school much more and this is borne out in their much improved attendance. Attendance is above average. Pupils say how safe they feel in school and this is due to the good quality care, guidance and support that they receive. Behaviour is outstanding at all times. This makes a major contribution to the pupils' rapidly improving learning and progress. Pupils are exceptionally courteous and respectful to each other and the adults working with them.

Teaching is consistently good. Some is truly outstanding. The school has made great strides in improving the use of assessment to track pupils' progress towards demanding targets. Teachers are making increasingly effective use of assessment data to match tasks closely to the needs and abilities of different groups of pupils, although occasionally tasks are a little too difficult or too easy for some pupils. Teachers do not consistently make the most effective and creative use of information and communication technology (ICT) to accelerate pupils' learning. They do not always provide enough opportunities for pupils to develop their skills as independent learners. The good curriculum provides strong support for pupils' learning and enjoyment.

The cornerstone of the school's rapid improvement is dedicated and purposeful leadership. Teamwork is strong across the school in the pursuit of further improvement. Staff are uniformly positive about the rigour that has been introduced to channel their work more effectively and this has provided a renewed sense of direction. The governing body is expertly led by the Chair of the Governing Body. It provides good and improving support and challenge to hold the school rigorously to account.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase further the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and progress by:
 - making sure that all teaching matches tasks closely to the needs and abilities of different groups of learners
 - making sure that information and communication technology is used more effectively to stimulate learning further and support the development of pupils' skills as independent learners
 - making sure that questioning is used consistently well to develop further pupils' reasoning and speaking skills.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

In lessons, pupils are eager to learn. They enjoy working hard and strive to give of their best. Pupils are keen to answer questions. They work well together in groups and pairs. Their excellent behaviour in lessons is a major contributing factor to their good learning because no time is wasted and pupils are very keen to listen and contribute. However, when tasks are occasionally too hard or too easy for some pupils, progress slows as a result. The school has invested heavily in ICT equipment but currently this is not used to full effect to support learning and to develop pupils' independent-learning skills. Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are generally below age-related expectations. By the time they leave at the end of Key Stage 2, their attainment is broadly average and rising because the improved quality of teaching is enabling pupils' progress to accelerate rapidly. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress because their needs are assessed well and they receive good and effective in-class support from the very able team of learning-support assistants.

Pupils say how much they enjoy school and how safe they feel. A typical comment is 'I love coming to school. Lessons are fun. We learn a lot.' Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors. It is very evident that pupils are proud of their school. Pupils know how important healthy lifestyles are. They talk enthusiastically about what they do to stay healthy, especially during health week in school. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities in school, such as by becoming 'buddies'. The school council is very active. It has brought about significant improvements to playground facilities. Pupils are consulted regularly on important matters, such as how to develop the curriculum and make it more effective. Improved attainment and good achievement in basic skills allied to the pupils' growing levels of self-confidence prepare them well for the next stages in their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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

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

The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good. Teachers plan their lessons in detail. They are making increasingly effective use of assessment to make sure that tasks are appropriately challenging for learners' abilities and needs. However, occasionally tasks are too easy or too hard. Teaching is enthusiastic and lively. Relationships between adults and pupils are uniformly respectful. As a result, pupils behave exceptionally well in lessons and show genuine desire to learn. Some teaching is outstanding. For example, in one Key Stage 2 lesson, enjoyment and challenge combined to enable pupils to make outstanding progress. The simple task of describing bubbles, which the teacher floated over the pupils' heads, not only gained pupils' rapt attention but elicited vocabulary such as 'translucent', 'spherical' and 'dropping gently like birds' feathers on the breeze'. Questions are often probing and challenge pupils to give extended answers that improve their reasoning skills. However, the use of questioning is inconsistent across classes with examples of questions failing to develop pupils' speaking skills and not leading them on to fully explain their thinking. Teachers mark pupils' written work regularly. Their comments are consistently helpful in showing pupils how to improve their work.

Responding to pupils' needs is the driving force behind recent changes to the curriculum. As a result, targeted actions, such as the introduction of daily mental mathematics and a more coherent approach to teaching basic literacy and numeracy skills, are helping to drive up attainment securely and rapidly. Cross-curricular provision for literacy and numeracy through the teaching of half-termly themes is good. The school provides pupils with a wide range of enrichment activities in sport and the arts. Participation rates are good. These activities provide good support for pupils' enjoyment and personal development.

Pupils, parents and carers say how caring and supportive the school is. Good and improving attendance is testament to the effective care and support the school provides. Pupils say that the adults working with them are approachable and helpful at all times. Transition arrangements for children entering the Early Years Foundation Stage are effective in making sure children settle quickly into school life.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Strong senior leadership and good management at all levels are invigorating the school so that it is increasingly effective. High expectations, increased rigour in monitoring and an insistence on what is 'non-negotiable' have brought about rapid improvement, especially in the quality of teaching, although some inconsistencies remain. The governing body provides good and improving support and challenge in the drive for improvement. Parents and carers are responding positively to the school's renewed sense of purpose. They are much more involved in the life of the school by becoming reading partners and founding the parent teacher association, for example.

The school promotes equality of opportunity well. The school is a very harmonious community. Pupils are known well as individuals. The progress of individuals and different groups of pupils is tracked effectively so that needs are clearly identified and provided for. As a consequence, all groups of pupils make overall good progress in their learning.

The school adopts recommended good practice for all aspects of safeguarding. Checks on adults working with pupils are carried out meticulously. Staff training is regular and appropriate. Risk assessments are comprehensive. The curriculum promotes pupils' good understanding of the importance of personal safety.

The school plans effectively to promote community cohesion. The school itself is a respectful and tolerant community. Links with the local community are strong. The curriculum provides pupils with opportunities to develop their understanding of other religions and cultures. The school evaluates accurately most of its actions to promote community cohesion.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children make good progress and achieve well because teaching meets their learning needs accurately. Children play happily

together in a harmonious atmosphere where every child, regardless of ability or background, is valued equally. Children make good progress and are given a firm foundation for future success. They work and play in a welcoming and stimulating environment both indoors and outside. Teaching is enthusiastic and supportive. Teachers check children's progress effectively and use the outcomes to plan activities according to individual children's needs. Children are very happy and obviously enjoy their learning in the safe and nurturing environment. Parents and carers are informed on a regular basis of their child's progress. There are detailed arrangements to ensure children settle quickly and smoothly into their new surroundings. Where necessary, effective use of outside agencies provides support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage provide a good vision for future success, a strong sense of purpose for its work and a good balance of teacher-led and child-initiated activities to stimulate and engage children in work and play.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	2
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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The responses from questionnaires returned by parents and carers show that a very large majority of them are pleased with the school. A few think that the school does not inform them of their child's progress. Inspectors looked into this and were satisfied that the school has procedures in place to inform parents and carers about progress. A few parents and carers also think that their child is not making enough progress. Inspectors judged that, overall, pupils are now making good progress because the quality of teaching has improved significantly. Inspectors were satisfied that the school is responsive to the concerns of individual parents and carers, and would encourage any individual parent or carer with a concern about the progress of their child to contact the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Chorley St James' 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 84 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 194 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	57	68	23	27	1	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	60	71	24	29	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	37	44	38	45	7	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	43	41	49	6	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	45	54	38	45	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	42	50	40	48	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	45	54	35	42	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)	41	49	38	45	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	39	47	56	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	42	50	34	40	4	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	40	48	40	48	2	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	56	67	26	31	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	53	63	30	36	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	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).

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 school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



12 October 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Chorley St James' Church of England Primary School,
Chorley, PR6 0TE**

Thank you for your warm welcome when your school was inspected recently.

You go to a good school that has improved a lot since it was last inspected because it is very well led and managed. The teaching you receive has improved and is helping you make good progress in your learning. Your excellent behaviour is also an important factor in your good and improving achievement – well done! I was very pleased to see that attendance has gone up and is now above average – again, well done!

To help your school become even better, I am asking the headteacher, staff and governors to make the following changes.

- Make teaching even more effective in helping you to learn by:
 - making sure that all teaching is pitched at just the right level of difficulty to match your different needs and abilities
 - making sure that ICT is used more effectively to help you learn independently and add extra interest to lessons
 - making sure that the questions teachers ask always make you think carefully and give full explanations to help develop further your reasoning and speaking skills.

I am confident that you will continue to work hard to make sure your school goes from strength to strength in the coming years.

I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Wall
Lead inspector

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