

INSPECTION REPORT

SALESBURY C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

Blackburn

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119807

Headteacher: Mr P Corbett

Reporting inspector: Mr G Brown
21060

Dates of inspection: 6th – 8th March 2000

Inspection number: 190089

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Lovely Hall Lane Salesbury Blackburn Lancashire BB1 9EQ
Telephone number:	01254 247300
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Reverend J Hartley
Date of previous inspection:	21st October 1996

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school serves pupils from the village of Salesbury as well as those living in several outlying areas. It became grant maintained in 1994 but has recently reverted to Church Aided status. The popular Nursery opened quite recently. On entry to compulsory schooling, children display a wide range of abilities, but attainment is mainly above average. The school has 278 pupils on the main roll and there were 86 children under five at the time of the inspection. Very few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. Approximately two per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals. There are 29 pupils on the register of special educational needs of which three have a statement of special educational needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Salesbury is a very effective school where pupils achieve consistently high standards. Much of this is due to the good quality of teaching, and to the very clear, influential leadership and management provided by senior staff and the governing body. The school gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards of attainment are high, particularly in English, mathematics, science and art.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good and has a marked influence on pupils' learning.
- There is a very effective learning ethos in which pupils work hard, behave well and find pleasure in their own achievements and those of the wider school.
- Leadership and management are very effective in helping the school meet its aims and priorities.
- The Nursery is a good provision enabling children to make a good start to their schooling.

What could be improved

- The means by which the school communicates its policies and decisions over matters in which some parents and carers express particular concern.

This area for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Salesbury was last inspected in October 1996 when it was still a grant maintained school. At that time, it was reported to be achieving high standards with only a few areas for improvement and development. The school continues to make good progress and has the systems in place to ensure even further improvement. The planning of the curriculum has been made more manageable whilst retaining the strong features identified at the time of the last inspection. Effective work has also been carried out to ensure that the curriculum concentrates on the systematic development of subject-specific skills as well as on pupils' knowledge and understanding. The school tracks the attainment and progress of all pupils well and has paid sound attention to those in mixed-age classes, where problems of progressive learning can occur. There have been particularly new and important developments in the way that the school monitors its overall performance and ensures that results are well evaluated and form the basis of even higher standards and achievements in the future.

STANDARDS

The table below shows the standards achieved by 11-year-olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	B	A	B
Mathematics	A	A	A	B
Science	B	A	A	A

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests confirm the high performance of girls and boys in recent years. Pupils of differing abilities also achieve well across the curriculum. The results in science are particularly good and indicate attainment within the top five per cent nationally. This is due to the subject being well led and taught. The recently introduced literacy hour and National Numeracy Strategy, make good impact on pupils' learning and have helped to consolidate and extend the already good standards in English and mathematics. In Key Stage 1, attainment is above, and sometimes well above, the national average with particularly high standards in reading. In both key stages, it is the substantial number of pupils who attain the higher levels for their age that contributes significantly to the overall performance of the school. Standards in many other subjects are also high, with art being a particular strength of the school's curriculum. The school continues to set high, yet realistic, targets for the future attainment and progress of its pupils. The high expectations on pupils' attainment are met, although the school is rightly considering ways in which it could raise standards still further.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good overall. Pupils enjoy coming to school and show great enthusiasm for their learning. Their levels of interest and motivation are also high.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Consistently very good, particularly during lessons. School is a very harmonious place for learning to occur. Exclusions are very rare.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils show very good respect for the feelings and views of others, building up positive relationships with adults and each other. Good emphasis is placed on the personal development of pupils.
Attendance	Very good, and above the national average. The school day starts promptly and efficiently.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
27 lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The quality of teaching is uniformly good at the foundation stage (children under five) and in both key stages. Teaching is very good in about one lesson in every four. A very small amount of unsatisfactory teaching occurred in Key Stage 2, mainly due to a lack of pace in pupils' learning combined with ineffective management strategies. Where teaching was good or very good, it was most frequently because of the high expectations made on pupils' response and progress, combined with effective questioning of the pupils. There is also, in many lessons, the presentation of a good range of interesting activities for the pupils to complete and these help consolidate and extend their learning. The skills of literacy and numeracy are well planned for and delivered, including their use and application across the wider curriculum. The learning needs of all pupils are well met, including those with special educational needs, where the quality of teaching and support allows pupils to make good progress set against their previous learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. The curriculum is well prepared for children under five, particularly in the Nursery, and at both key stages, where learning opportunities are usually exciting and sufficiently challenging. Statutory requirements are met.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	A strength of the school. Pupils' learning difficulties are well identified and the current provision is very effectively meeting their needs. The leadership and teaching given by the co-ordinator is particularly effective.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school has effective measures in place to support the very small number of pupils who occasionally require help.
Provision for pupils' personal development including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision made for spiritual, moral and social development is very good. This is achieved through reflective worship and through the values of the Church that are carefully woven into the learning environment. Pupils also respond well to each other. The cultural development of pupils is a successful blend of their own heritage combined with a growing knowledge of other faiths and cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is a caring community that supports pupils as individuals and pays good attention to their welfare and personal development.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	This is very good and a strength of the school. Senior staff form an influential team that ensures the school has clear educational direction and the means by which it monitors standards of both past and future performance. The headteacher's enthusiasm and style of leadership are pivotal to much that is achieved.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are very effective in fulfilling their statutory duties and overall responsibilities. They are an integral part of school life and have a good grasp of strategic planning and development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school knows the importance of evaluating past achievements and how it will be judged in the future. Very good systems are in place to ensure the school can self-evaluate its future performance.
The strategic use of resources	Educational priorities are supported through careful budgeting and efficient financial management. The educational resources are of good quality and are used effectively. Very good use is made of support staff.

There are particular strengths within management as a whole and in the way that the school targets priority areas for development, including its shared commitment to further improvement. The action taken by management to help the school meet its targets is normally very effective. Where some parents express particular concerns or are unsure about policies, it is important that management clearly explains the actions it has taken and why. The school understands the principles of obtaining best value for money and these are applied well as part of day-to-day administration.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards are high and pupils do their best. The values taught are very good and most pupils respond and behave well. Teaching is good. Staff are committed and hard working. The school is well led and effectively managed. Pupils enjoy school and generally make good progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ways the school informs parents about important matters relating to their child's level of work, progress and status in school. Ensuring that pupils in mixed-age classes are seen to receive total parity of opportunity with those who are not. Written reports do not always reflect the work of the individual child and do not contain meaningful targets for the next phase of their learning. Whilst homework is appreciated, its nature, purpose and duration are not always clear enough for parents to understand how and when they can best help their children.

The inspection team confirms all the favourable points made here by parents. The school is aware of the views of some parents relating to mixed-age classes, staff changes, homework

and the impact of written reports, and should improve the means of communicating its policies in this respect. The inspection found no evidence that pupils in mixed-age classes did any better or worse than their peers in single-aged classes. Annual reports are computer generated and have shortcomings that can be remedied. Homework is used as a sound learning tool, but the school needs to re-examine its policy, to ensure that as pupils mature, more is asked of them in relation to homework tasks.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Standards of attainment are high, particularly in English, mathematics, science and art

1. In English, pupils in both key stages speak, read and write to a high standard. In Key Stage 1, pupils talk with confidence about much of their work and clearly explain, for example, what experiments they have done in science or why a particular book has great appeal. In their reading, they show well above average knowledge of different types of text and most read fluently and accurately for their age. In a Year 2 lesson, almost all pupils were able to recognise a variety of compound words and understood how powerful adjectives can liven up an otherwise dull text. Much of their written work is imaginative, accurate and well presented. In Key Stage 2, pupils debate to a good level. In a particularly good lesson, Year 5 pupils played the role of reporters covering a humorous story about a boy who claimed to have eaten part of the sun, but it turned out to be no more than a bowl of cornflakes. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils read widely and know how to fully utilise encyclopaedias and a range of non-fiction texts. While the school recognises the need to extend pupils' narrative writing and give increased emphasis to good planning, pupils write successfully for a wide range of purpose and audience. Some of their accounts in history, religious education and science indicate the successful use of literacy across the curriculum.
2. In mathematics, pupils in both key stages show good levels of mental recall and are confident and competent in handling large numbers. Most are very familiar with place value and their use of fractions, decimals and percentages is frequently well above average. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils show very good standards in their work on shape, angles, measurement and data handling. They are less adept at problem solving, but the school is rightly giving extra attention to this aspect of the subject. In science, pupils in Key Stage 2 in particular, possess a very good knowledge of their annual topics and some of their investigational work is outstanding. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils worked well in groups testing growing mediums and conductors of heat. Throughout the school, pupils learn how to conduct thorough and carefully organised experiments and to record their results in graphic and other forms. Standards in art were seen to be very high with pupils' skills and techniques well used to work, for example, in the styles of famous artists.

Teaching is consistently good and has a marked influence on pupils' learning

3. In approximately three-quarters of lessons, the quality of teaching was good or better and was very good in about one lesson in every four. There are strengths in teaching at the foundation stage and in both key stages. Teachers plan their work well, clearly showing they intend building on pupils' previous learning. The planned outcomes for each lesson are very focused and these are often effectively shared with the pupils so they can gauge their own learning. The most effective lessons illustrate the high expectations teachers place on pupils' response and progress and the challenge to their learning that results. In a Key Stage 1 science lesson, the teacher carefully led the pupils through an awareness exercise on their senses and then challenged and extended their learning through a series of group experiments designed to develop their sense of touch.

4. Teachers are particularly adept at oral questioning and lay considerable emphasis on pupils' confidence to express their views and say what they have been doing. Teachers encourage good quality group-work whereby pupils can share their ideas and difficulties with others. In a Reception/Year 1 music lesson, pupils made group 'shakers' and analyse together which filler made the most pleasing sound. In all the lessons seen, the teachers had a sound to very good knowledge and understanding of their topics and were able to translate this into a series of stimulating activities for the pupils to complete: that then helped to deepen and refine their learning. In almost all lessons, teachers exercise close but unobtrusive control of their pupils and the learning ethos is harmonious and productive.
5. The school has good quality resources and experienced support staff. These are used effectively in lessons throughout the school and help bring additional ideas and understanding to pupils' learning. In literacy and numeracy sessions in particular, support staff are used imaginatively to help meet the individual needs of the pupils. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is frequently very good, and those pupils who display particular subject talents are also well provided for. Where teaching is less successful, it is due mainly to a lack of rigour and pace in pupils' learning and sometimes to a lack of management strategies that allow pupils to stray off task. Overall, however, the quality of teaching is a measured strength of the school that encourages pupils to apply intellectual, physical and creative effort to their learning.

There is a very effective learning ethos in which pupils work hard, behave well and find pleasures in their own achievements and those of the wider school

6. This is an important feature and strength of school life and has considerable influence on pupils' learning. The expectations that pupils and staff will work hard together is clearly illustrated by the very good relationships that exist in all classes and by the overall response of the pupils who want to do well and to please their teachers. Pupils show enthusiasm for their work and respond well to both challenge and praise. In literacy lessons in particular, they enjoy the oral work and are keen to answer many questions, but still move swiftly and without fuss to their reading and written exercises. This very positive attitude to lessons, combined with effective teaching, ensures that pupils make relatively rapid progress in much of their work. Although some of the work presented could be neater, particularly in parts of Key Stage 2, pupils generally have pride in their finished efforts.
7. The very good behaviour of most pupils also contributes well to the learning environment. Pupils are trusted to behave sensibly and to respect the space and rights of others. This they respond to in a mature way. Outside of the classroom, pupils play well together and the oldest pupils are good role models in this respect.
8. The school has successfully engendered a very good community feel to its everyday work and this is reflected in the pride shown by leadership, the staff and pupils in the school. Pupils, for example, are very sensitive to events worthy of celebration as well as to moments of sadness. When asked what they most liked about the school, some pupils said it was the sense of belonging and that everyone will help you.

Leadership and management are very effective in helping the school meet its aims and priorities

9. This is a major strength of the school and contributes widely to its success and popularity. The experienced headteacher brings enthusiasm and commitment to his work and, together with others, he has created a secure and clear vision as to the needs of the school, and the direction it should take. In this he is well supported by senior staff, teachers and governors who then collectively embrace the challenge of how best to run a successful yet demanding school. Of prime importance is seen to be the maintenance of good standards and the commitment for pupils and staff to achieve even more in their daily work. Many of the school's aims and priorities are fashioned through the influence of a good curriculum and the support offered by the local church. Although all those who hold management roles have their individual talents and strengths, it is the growing sense of teamwork that is rapidly becoming of greatest significance to the school as it continues its quest for self-improvement.
10. The careful monitoring of teaching and learning and the close relationship of these to pupils' attainment and progress is a particularly successful strand of leadership and management. The results of monitoring and evaluation then help inform the school's development plan, which in turn is central to the school's growth. The governing body is well involved in this and many other important aspects of school life, and meets its statutory duties. The chairman, vice-chair and other governors are regular visitors to the school and act from an informed base and in the close interests of the pupils. Alongside effective teamwork, there is also clear delegation of roles and responsibilities, which ensures that the longer-term objectives of the school are met and that day-to-day administration is effective. All those with management roles ensure that the principles of best value are applied and that, as a result, the finance given to the school is spent efficiently.
11. The educational priorities identified in the school development plan are well supported by careful financial planning and control. During its earlier period of grant maintained status, the school has built up considerable expertise in effective management procedures and this is put to good effect, not least in its use of resources and the ability to assess past and future performance. The school is rightly attempting to find better ways of communicating its decisions and policies to parents and carers.

The Nursery is a good provision enabling children to make a good start to their schooling

12. Despite being in only its second year, the Nursery is already proving a valuable addition to school life and is very popular with parents. The majority of children now spend up to one year in Nursery before commencing their Reception year. This is particularly helpful in developing the pre-school skills of children, including some additional opportunities to extend their personal and social development. The Nursery is correctly viewed and operates on the basis of the vital importance of a good start being made to the foundation stage and in this, it is very successful. By the time children leave and are transferred to their Reception class, the great majority has made very good progress towards the learning goals expected for children of this age. A very good platform has been made for the next stage of their development.
13. The planning of children's work and experiences is detailed and clearly reflects the needs of individuals. The teacher and the two part-time nursery nurses work well as a team and their individual strengths and enthusiasms are well utilised. All adults ensure that the Nursery accommodation is bright and stimulating and will lead to children asking many questions, as well as exploring things for themselves. For example, in one afternoon session, a group of children worked with the teacher on a

dot-to-dot exercise to illustrate their own names, while the remainder of the children worked almost unaided, experimenting with constructional toys, malleable materials and role-play. Levels of speaking and listening are thoughtfully encouraged, with well above average results. Assessments are well planned and seen through by careful observations and the systematic recording of what children understand and can do. Good attention is paid to all aspects of children's early growth, including their language, numeracy, creative and physical development. The children's response to learning is also very good and is an effective aid to their own progress.

14. In order to ensure that children continue for as long as necessary the very best of established Nursery practice into the Reception year, additional work is required on establishing more effective links with the main school.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The means by which the school communicates its policies and decisions over matters in which some parents and carers express particular concern

15. Both at their initial meeting and in the questionnaires, several parents and carers expressed concern about a lack of information relating to particular school policies and procedures. These policies are not unsatisfactory in themselves. It is more a matter as to how the school explains why things are organised as they are. For example, a major concern of some parents is the possible impact of educating young pupils in a relatively large mixed-age class compared to those of their peers who are taught in single-age classes. Parents are worried about repetition of work in subsequent years and a lack of challenge for older pupils where, for example, there is a majority of younger children present from the year below. While the inspection found nothing amiss in terms of pupils' progress in such a context, it is nevertheless important that equality of opportunity is seen to be well established and that parents fears are allayed.
16. A further concern centred on the need to give clearer guidelines to parents about the amount and range of homework given to pupils of different ages and to match this with a clear policy into practice. Finally, the written reports given annually to parents about their children's progress, are computer generated and many lack specific and personal detail of what individual children have achieved. The reports also tend to lack significant targets for future improvements that parents and carers feel they can be part of. In these matters, the school has not fully developed the means by which parents can express their views and how management intends to respond to such concerns.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

17. In order to further extend the quality of education provided, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- examine ways in which the school can extend and improve its lines of communication with parents and carers over matters in which the latter group have expressed particular concern.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	27
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	26	48	22	4	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	273
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	29

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	19

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	3.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	19	19	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	17	17
	Girls	19	19	19
	Total	36	36	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (99)	95 (96)	95 (99)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	17	18
	Girls	19	19	19
	Total	36	36	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (93)	95 (100)	97 (98)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	15	18	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	14	15
	Girls	17	14	18
	Total	31	28	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	94 (78)	85 (82)	100 (84)
	National	70 (65)	69 (58)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	14	15
	Girls	17	14	16
	Total	30	28	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91 (84)	85 (85)	94 (84)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	298
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	2	
Other minority ethnic groups		

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.8
Average class size	30.4

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
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Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

Total number of education support staff	1 FTE
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Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	619808
Total expenditure	604629
Expenditure per pupil	2043
Balance carried forward to next year *	78021

* The relatively high underspend is mainly a legacy of former grant-maintained status.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	329
Number of questionnaires returned	218

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	36	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	43	4	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	47	1	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	46	13	1	11
The teaching is good.	57	39	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	44	5	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	33	2	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	34	1	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	43	42	8	2	5
The school is well led and managed.	50	43	1	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	44	3	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	40	39	7	0	15

Columns may not add up to 100 per cent because of rounding.