

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **ADLINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Adlington, Lancashire

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119330

Headteacher: Mrs R Laurie

Reporting inspector: Mr T Neat  
20007

Dates of inspection: 6 - 8 March 2000

Inspection number: 190760

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Park Road Adlington Chorley Lancashire
Postcode:	PR7 4JA
Telephone number:	01257 480557
Fax number:	as above
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs L Bellis
Date of previous inspection:	4 November 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Allan Smith	Lay inspector
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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Adlington Primary School is smaller than most other schools of its kind. It has 114 pupils compared with the average size nationally of 226 pupils. Most of the pupils come from the area close to the school. Housing is a mixture of council, housing-association and privately-owned properties. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals - 23.2 - is broadly in line with the national average. There are no pupils speaking English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs - 11.6 - is below the national average. The percentage of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need - 0.9 - is broadly in line with the national average. The attainment of children when they join the school varies from year to year. At the time of the inspection it was below the level found nationally, especially in the area of language and literacy. There were eight children below the age of five when the inspection began.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is an effective school, which has many strengths. Its pupils achieve well and they attain sound standards. This is due to the good quality of teaching and a shared commitment to succeed. The school is led and managed well. It provides good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Pupils achieve good standards overall at Key Stage 1, and in mathematics at both key stages.
- It is well led and managed.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- Pupils benefit from a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.
- A shared commitment to improvement helps significantly in raising standards.

#### **What could be improved**

- Some aspects of the provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- The lesson hours at Key Stage 2 fall short of the recommended minimum.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in November 1996. It has improved well since then. Overall, standards have risen. Everyone has worked hard to implement the national strategy for numeracy and to improve mathematics results. The pupils' use of computers is now much better than it was. Most of the action points raised in the last inspection report have been addressed successfully. The quality of teaching has improved greatly. Schemes of work for subjects have been agreed and implemented. The quality of leadership and management is better, and planning to develop the school over the long term has been put into place. The building and the school site are now a better place for pupils to learn in. The way in which the school checks on how well it is doing is much improved.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				<b>Key</b>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	C	C	E	E	well above average    A above average        B Average                C below average        D well below average    E
Mathematics	D	E	B	A	
Science	D	C	C	B	

The school achieves strongly in mathematics. The mathematics results attained by pupils at Key Stage 1 are in the highest five per cent achieved nationally by schools with a similar intake. Inspection evidence largely reflects the outcomes of the 1999 national tests. The English results were well below average that year, due largely to the high number of pupils with special educational needs. However, inspectors judge that the majority of pupils currently in Year 6 achieve standards in English that are in line with national expectations. Statutory teacher assessments for 1999 indicated that, at Key Stage 1, science results were in the highest five per cent achieved nationally. At Key Stage 2, performance in science was close to the national average for all schools, and above average when compared with schools with a similar intake. The small number of pupils in each cohort makes the identification of trends in attainment unreliable. The school has set appropriately challenging targets for improvement, which it is on course to attain. Pupils achieve well as they pass through the school.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to school. They involve themselves well in lessons and are eager to learn. They work hard at their tasks and concentrate for good periods of time.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave well in classrooms, in the playground and around the school. They follow the school and class rules, and understand the importance of good behaviour. Their good conduct contributes well to the standards they achieve.
Personal development and relationships	The personal development of pupils is good throughout the school. They relate very well to each other and to adults. They also show a good deal of respect for other people's property.
Attendance	Levels of attendance are good. Pupils are punctual and lessons start on time. This enhances the progress that the children make.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very 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 good. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. Twenty per cent of the teaching observed was satisfactory, 60 per cent was good and 20 per cent was excellent. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is at least sound and sometimes it is very good. The needs of most pupils are met successfully. Attention is needed to the targets set for some pupils with special educational needs. The teachers' knowledge of the subjects they teach is good. A particular strength of the teaching of children under five is the extent to which the teacher understands how her pupils learn. Challenging work, good methods and the skilful way in which teachers manage and control pupils contribute strongly to the standards that are achieved. In a very small proportion of the teaching seen by inspectors the pace of work was not brisk enough and the tasks set were not sufficiently difficult.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum by means of a wide range of relevant experiences. The provision for those under five is based properly on the recommended areas for learning for children of this age, and is of good quality.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The support given to pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need is good, and results in them making sound and sometimes very good progress. However, the monitoring and recording of the progress of pupils on Stages 1 and 2 of the national Code of Practice are unsatisfactory, and the targets set for individuals are sometimes not sufficiently focused.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' moral and social development is good. The promotion of pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for its pupils. It provides a caring, supportive and secure environment for learning.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher gives the school clear educational direction. Her strong leadership has resulted in many improvements. She has promoted a shared commitment to succeed. The subject co-ordinators work hard and effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is very supportive of the headteacher and staff. There are very good relationships between the governors and the staff. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The arrangements for checking the quality of teaching are good. The school analyses the results of tests well, in order to raise standards.
The strategic use of resources	The school plans effectively to make the best use of resources. It strives to ensure that its spending is directed towards improving pupils' achievements.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Their children like going to school.</li><li>• The school is well led and managed.</li><li>• Their children are being helped to become mature and responsible.</li><li>• Behaviour in the school is good.</li><li>• They would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems.</li><li>• The teaching is good.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Four per cent of those parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire thought that they could be better informed about their children's progress.</li><li>• Three per cent believed that the school could work more closely with parents.</li><li>• The same proportion disagreed with the statement: 'The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons'.</li></ul>

The evidence gained during the inspection supports the favourable views of the school held by the vast majority of parents. Inspectors judge that parents are well informed about their children's progress, and that the school actively seeks to work closely with them. Inspectors disagree with the view that the range of activities outside lessons is not sufficiently interesting.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

**The pupils achieve good standards overall at Key Stage 1, and in mathematics at both key stages.**

1. Pupils at Key Stage 1 attain good standards in the National Curriculum tests.
2. The school's seven year olds achieve results in reading that are above the average for all schools, and well above average for schools with a similar intake. Levels of attainment among the children joining the school are generally below those found nationally, especially in language and literacy. The pupils in the reception class recognise a number of words and can use the pictures in the book to help in their understanding of the text. Those nearing the end of Key Stage 1 use their knowledge of letter sounds to help them read unfamiliar words such as 'cheetah'. They enjoy reading and are confident in discussing their preferences. For example, after sharing a story with their teacher, one child said, "I like the part where the wolf was chasing him". Writing standards are close to the national average, but above the average for similar schools. Younger pupils in the key stage write for a range of different purposes and are able to form sentences independently. Pupils in Year 2 respond well to opportunities given in the literacy hour to write, for example, descriptions about their pets. They sometimes link their work in other subjects to their writing. For example, as a result of an activity in mathematics, the pupils wrote poems about numbers. One girl began hers with the line: Ten tired turtles swimming in the sea. Good quality teaching and the successful implementation of the National Strategy for Literacy are helping to maintain the high standards and to further improve pupils' achievements. Pupils attain very good standards in science. Last year, statutory teacher assessments showed that their results were in the highest five per cent in the country. They respond well to suggestions about how to investigate things, such as the rate at which ice melts. Pupils know a good deal about different materials. They compare and sort them according to whether they bend or stretch, and whether they are opaque or transparent.
3. At the end of both key stages, pupils achieve good results in mathematics in the National Curriculum tests.
4. Seven year olds perform at a level that is well above the average for all schools. They achieve results that are in the top five per cent of schools that are similar in intake. Pupils nearing the end of the key stage understand the value of each digit in numbers such as 61. They can say how many tens and units make up such numbers. They also apply their knowledge to patterns; for example, by working out the answer to the next question in a sequence by referring to those already given. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils achieve standards in the national tests that are above average compared with those in all schools, and well above the average for schools with a similar intake. Pupils in Year 6 have good numeracy skills. For example, they use tests of divisibility to check their answers and recognise that two tenths and 20 per cent are of equal value. Their achievements extend to different aspects of mathematics. They understand data handling ideas such as the 'mode' and the 'mean,' and deal confidently with the rotational symmetry of different shapes. At both key stages, mathematics is taught well and pupils are eager to learn. Teachers, pupils and parents have joined forces to ensure that standards

rise. These factors have combined to improve the level of attainment throughout the school.

**The school is well led and managed.**

5. The headteacher knows what priorities to set for development because she has her 'finger on the pulse' of the school. She has a good range of methods for gathering information about what is happening. She works closely with all members of staff. There is a continuous dialogue about how things can be improved. The headteacher spends a high proportion of her time teaching. This enables her to monitor and influence standards. For example, very challenging targets have been set for the current Year 6 cohort to achieve in the National Curriculum tests. The detailed knowledge of those individuals that the headteacher gained through teaching them over a prolonged period allowed her to act in this way to raise the expectations that the school has of this group. The regular checking that she makes of classroom practice has a direct impact on the quality of teaching, which, in turn, positively affects the standards that pupils achieve. The careful analysis of test results to identify strengths and weaknesses in the pupils' attainment adds considerably to the school's picture of how well it is performing. The headteacher is supported very well by the governing body, which acts effectively as a 'critical friend' of the school and has very good working relationships with members of staff. Each of the governors has 'adopted' a particular class and spends time in the classroom talking to the teacher and the pupils.
6. A further strength of the leadership and management of the school is the positive response of staff members, to change. The headteacher has worked very effectively with the subject co-ordinators to increase their awareness of the importance of their role in raising standards. They have responded very well and now play an effective part in checking the quality of education provided by the school. This has been particularly evident in the way in which the co-ordinator for English has monitored well, the teachers' planning and their classroom practice. Working closely with the headteacher and staff, she has ensured the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. The very effective introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy was handled in the same way. All the classes were observed and afterwards discussions were held with the headteacher and other staff.

**The quality of teaching is good.**

7. The teachers' good levels of subject knowledge, their clear understanding of how children learn, and their high expectations of what they can achieve, contribute strongly to the progress that pupils make in lessons. Teachers' skilful management of their classes and their choice of effective strategies ensure that the pupils' very good attitudes to learning are fully exploited.
8. Teachers are good at ensuring that the pupils learn the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. They use engaging and very effective ways of doing this. For example, in a lesson for reception and Year 1 pupils, the teacher's very effective use of a bumble-bee puppet, which flew along a painted cane, significantly increased the rate at which the skills of counting were gained by the class. It also enhanced pupils' enjoyment of number work and lengthened the period over which they were able to concentrate. A further example of the teachers' use of good strategies was seen when a clapping game was played in another mathematics lesson for pupils in

Years 2 and 3. The game, used in conjunction with large 'domino' cards, focused the pupils' attention very well, and helped them to write number stories incorporating the correct mathematical language of 'more than' and 'less than'.

9. Teachers manage pupils well and insist on high standards of behaviour. The good discipline in lessons contributes greatly to the standards that pupils achieve, and supports their social development well. This was evident in a literacy period for seven and eight year olds, in which the teacher's good use of praise for those pupils who were behaving well had a positive effect on the quality of learning.
10. Challenging activities are devised which promote good quality learning. In one lesson an inspector asked some pupils how difficult their task was. One of them replied, "It's hard, but if we concentrate we can do it". The good level of awareness of the need to constantly challenge pupils and the effective use of day-to-day assessment of what they have already achieved were clear in a mathematics lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6. The teacher's opening remark was, "You were able to do most of these sorts of questions yesterday, so I have made today's more difficult".
11. The factors identified above, together with the teachers' good knowledge of individuals, and their hard work, commitment and willingness to work as a team, have a strong impact on the standards that pupils achieve.

**Pupils benefit from a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.**

12. Literacy and numeracy are at the heart of the school's curricular provision. All members of the classroom staff place proper emphasis on these areas, and fully understand their importance as the means through which other subjects can be explored. The teachers have worked hard to implement the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and to address the key point for action from the last report, which indicated that schemes of work for all National Curriculum subjects should be agreed and put into place as soon as possible. Thanks to their efforts and the clear direction from the headteacher, pupils now enjoy a wide range of structured, relevant experiences, which contribute positively to their achievements. In addition, the quality and extent of the pupils' experience of information and communications technology have improved considerably.
13. The work of lessons is supplemented well by the provision of activities which reflect the school's intention to give pupils an all-round education. At the time of the inspection, both parents and pupils were engaged in a special project, 'Bricks in the Wall', which involves them in making promises and focusing on good deeds such as helping others. Older pupils have the opportunity to engage in an adventure weekend, which also includes working with computers. These experiences have a positive impact on the pupils' personal and social development. Pupils also have the chance to join in activities set up in conjunction with a local secondary school and to enter competitions. The school recently took part in a 'buggy' building challenge and won a competition involving the use of construction kits. The links that have been forged with a school in a neighbouring local education authority, which has a different ethnic composition, contribute significantly to the pupils' cultural development. These opportunities enrich the work done in lessons and add considerable interest to the pupils' life at school.

**A shared commitment to improve helps significantly in raising standards.**

14. Everyone associated with the school wants it to succeed and makes a contribution to raising standards. The headteacher, governors and staff combine to plan the development of the school, with the objective of improving pupils' achievements. The governing body takes decisions about the use of resources, using the raising of standards as their criterion. Staff and governors are involved in looking closely at the results of both statutory and non-statutory attainment tests taken by the pupils. They try to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' performance, in order to help them to improve. Recently the school made good use of the skills of a parent who has professional experience of analysing data to examine its performance in English and mathematics. The teachers' willingness to work as a team also helps. Every teacher is involved in working with the pupils in Year 6 to further raise standards.
15. Parents are involved and consulted. The school operates an 'open door' policy, and both the headteacher and the governors actively seek parental opinion about proposals to improve the quality of the school's work. Through their support for homework, and their work for the parent-teacher association on fund-raising, parents also make a very effective contribution. Some of the money they raise helps greatly towards the cost of educational visits. The pupils' very good attitudes to learning are perhaps the most valuable tool in raising standards. The headteacher's belief that they should be closely involved in improvements harnesses their eagerness to succeed. When the scrutiny of test results showed a weakness in their understanding of percentages, they were told, and joined wholeheartedly in the focus on that area, with the full support of their parents. One of the strengths of the headteacher's leadership and management of the school is her ability to involve everyone in raising standards.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

### **The provision for some of the pupils with special educational needs.**

16. The care and support given to pupils with special educational needs by classroom staff are good. However, the administration of records, and the monitoring of the progress made by pupils with special educational needs who are at Stages 1 or 2 of the national Code of Practice, require attention. The targets identified as part of the individual education plans of these pupils are not always as well focused as they should be. Members of staff do not always make sufficiently effective use of the assessments made of each pupil to create the small steps in learning that each child should take next. Some of the individual education plans are not dated, and the date of the next review of their progress is not recorded; nor is the stage at which they have been assessed. The register of pupils with special educational needs was not up to date at the time of the inspection, and the registers from previous years were not available. This makes the monitoring of the progress that pupils make difficult.

### **The lesson hours at Key Stage 2 fall short of the recommended minimum.**

17. The Department for Education and Employment set out recommendations about the minimum lesson hours for pupils at each key stage. The intended teaching time currently allocated by the school for those at Key Stage 2, does not meet that recommended as a minimum.



## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

18. The headteacher, governors and staff should now:

- i) improve the provision for pupils with educational needs at Stages 1 and 2 of the national Code of Practice, by:
  - (a) ensuring that the targets in pupils' individual education plans are made up of small, achievable steps in learning, based securely on assessments of their needs;
  - (b) devising and implementing systematic procedures for checking the progress of pupils towards the targets identified for them;
  - (c) ensuring that the register for special educational needs is kept up to date;
  - (d) making sure that individual education plans are properly annotated;
- ii) review the allocation of intended teaching time for pupils at Key Stage 2.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	11
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
20	0	60	20	0	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)	n/a	114
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	n/a	24

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	12

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	7	12	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	6	7
	Girls	11	11	12
	Total	17	17	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (84)	89 (92)	100 (92)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teacher's Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	7	7
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	18	19	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (92)	100 (94)	100 (92)
	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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999	7	7	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	3	6	6
	Girls	3	6	5
	Total	6	12	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	43 (71)	86 (48)	79 (67)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teacher's Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	5	6
	Girls	4	5	5
	Total	9	10	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64 (81)	71 (81)	79 (90)
	National	69 (64)	68 (64)	77 (72)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	107
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

*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)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.4
Average class size	28

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	78

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	n/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	n/a

Total number of education support staff	n/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	n/a

Number of pupils per FTE adult	n/a
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	98/99
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	£
Total income	197,431
Total expenditure	198,150
Expenditure per pupil	1,769
Balance brought forward from previous year	11,133
Balance carried forward to next year	10,414

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	112
Number of questionnaires returned	79

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	89	11	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	85	12	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	73	26	0	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	75	23	1	0	1
The teaching is good.	87	11	1	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	75	22	4	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	89	9	0	0	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	84	13	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	71	25	3	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	82	17	1	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	79	20	1	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	63	29	3	0	5