



# Abram CofE Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 106469  
**LEA** Wigan  
**Inspection number** 277567  
**Inspection dates** 14 September 2005 to 15 September 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Christopher Keeler HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Simpkin Street
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Abram
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Wigan, Lancashire WN2 5QE
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01942 863264
<b>Number on roll</b>	220	<b>Fax number</b>	01942 863264
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr M Baker
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	29 November 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr T Fletcher

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 14 September 2005 - 15 September 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 277567
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors, and one contracted inspector.

## **Description of the school**

Abram Church of England Primary School is average in size. It is situated at the heart of a private housing estate but the area from which the pupils are drawn is socially and economically deprived. Almost all pupils speak English as their first language. Attainment on entry is below the national average and many pupils start school with poor speaking and listening skills. The number of pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, is higher than in most schools.

A distinctive feature of the school is the strong Christian ethos which helps pupils to feel happy and safe.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

Abram Church of England Primary School is a good school. The head teacher has established a good climate for learning where pupils feel secure, enjoy coming to school and make good progress. Pupils enjoy and benefit from a range of activities that help them to learn, such as, trips to places of interest and visits from music and sports specialists. Relationships with parents and the community are strong and the parents hold the school in high regard. Inspectors agree with the school's own evaluation of its performance. The pupils are taught effectively and they achieve well in all key stages.

The school's capacity to improve is good, as is the value for money it provides.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- link the school's self evaluation with its school improvement plan;
- monitor the implementation of initiatives contained within the school improvement plan on teaching and pupils' achievement;
- set individual pupil targets in English in order to help children understand what they need to do to improve further.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' achievement is good in all areas of the curriculum. When they start school their speaking and listening skills are below average. However, the majority of pupils make good progress in the reception class and Key Stage 1, particularly in mathematics. The standards they reach by the ages of seven and eleven are broadly in line with those expected nationally in English, mathematics and science. Some instability in staffing has meant that the results of tests taken by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 this year were not as good as those previously, especially in reading and writing. Lesson observations and an evaluation of pupils' work demonstrate that pupils are on track to achieve standards similar to those reached in 2004, when they reflected the national average. By Year 6, standards in mathematics are especially good. Even though pupils make good progress and standards seen during the inspection reflect national expectations, there is still room for further improvement with regard to writing in Key Stage 1 and pupils' overall performance at Key Stage 2. This is borne out by some variation in the quality of teaching as pupils move through the school.

Pupils with special educational needs are identified at an early stage and appropriate steps are taken in order to ensure that they make good progress. Teaching assistants provide good individual and group support and as a result make a significant contribution to helping these pupils acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enjoy school. They work hard, are attentive and try their best in lessons. Their enjoyment of school and all it offers is reflected in their good attendance. Behaviour is good. The behaviour of the youngest pupils is exemplary, given the short time they have been in school. Pupils work and play together well and they like their teachers and other adults who work in the school. Pupils are keen to undertake useful tasks, for the benefit of the school community. They willingly take on duties such as answering the telephone in the school office and carry them out responsibly. The oldest children diligently support the younger ones, for example at lunchtimes.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Their positive attitudes to others strongly reflect the Christian values which underpin all aspects of the school's work. However, more could be done to prepare children for life in a diverse multi-cultural society. Pupils know how to keep healthy and stay safe. For instance, they have a very good understanding of the benefits of healthy eating. The School Council gives the children a say in improving the school environment, for example they helped to select new play equipment which has made playtimes more pleasurable.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and this has enabled the majority of pupils to make good progress since starting school.

While there are many examples of good and very good teaching throughout the school, from time to time the focus on improvement is not sufficiently rigorous. As a result, pupils do not always build on what they have learnt before as well as they might, and have to work harder in their final years in order to reach the expected standard in English, mathematics and science. The senior management team know this and have a good understanding of where the strengths and weaknesses in teaching are. They are equally aware that consistently good teaching will lead to improved pupil performance in all areas of the curriculum and are committed to achieving this.

Good teaching is evident where the lessons are well planned, expectations are high, pupils of varying abilities are set appropriately challenging work, and their progress is carefully monitored. In addition, the atmosphere encourages pupils to learn: teachers display enthusiasm, and pupils are motivated and focussed on the tasks they undertake. They develop good working habits, work well together and by themselves, and are keen to learn. When this level of teaching is not maintained, expectations of how much pupils can learn are not as high as they should be, and as a result their rate of progress slows down.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is of good quality. It is rich and interesting and meets pupils' needs and interests well. Provision for the youngest children is particularly stimulating, with plenty of opportunities for exploration, both indoors and outside. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are well provided for. They have good support and as a result make good progress. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are developed well throughout the school.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy taking part in and benefit from the wealth of activities provided through 'enrichment afternoons', visits to places of interest and visitors who come into school, including musicians and sports specialists. They also value the opportunity to take part in a wide range of activities outside lessons. Provision for personal development is very good, with some outstanding features related to the 'Healthy Schools Award'. As a result, pupils learn to be good citizens, look after themselves and care for others.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school takes good care of its pupils. Staff know pupils well and pay close attention to their health, safety and welfare. They ensure that pupils feel safe and secure. Pupils report that there is always someone they can turn to if they have a problem, that they feel 'loved and valued' and that the praise and rewards they receive for doing well motivate and encourage them. They also follow the good example set by staff in valuing and supporting others. Relationships throughout the school are very positive and this has a significant impact on learning.

A keen eye is kept on pupils' overall progress. However, the school does not always make best use of this information to help pupils build as rapidly as they could on their previous learning, particularly in English. More could be done to help pupils understand what they need to do next by setting them clear targets. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are particularly well supported. They have clearly defined, achievable targets that enable them to build effectively on what has gone before, with good quality support from staff.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The leadership of the head teacher is good. He is committed to providing the best quality of education for all pupils. A particularly strong feature is the successful development of a secure, caring environment in which pupils enjoy coming to school and make good progress. This is a significant factor in promoting pupils' personal development and achievement. Good relationships exist with parents and the community who find the head teacher very approachable and responsive to their concerns.

The senior management team have been instrumental in establishing effective systems to assess and track pupils' progress in English and mathematics. They have also ensured that the curriculum is brought to life through a range of practical experiences.

Although some effective systems have been set up to monitor the performance of the school, further work needs to be done. The process of school self evaluation should be more closely related to the school improvement plan. Furthermore, action should be taken by the senior management team to ensure that improvements are being consciously implemented by teachers and that they make a difference to pupil performance.

The governors are extremely supportive of the school and the work of the head teacher in particular. Good progress has been made in setting up sub-committees to carry out their functions more effectively. They are developing the capacity to monitor the work of the school, although there is still some way to go.

The school's capacity to improve is good. The head teacher and the senior management team have responded positively and effectively to the issues raised in the last inspection.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for welcoming us when we came to visit your school. We enjoyed watching you learn and play. We especially enjoyed talking to you about your work and speaking to your teachers who told us a lot of nice things about you.

As soon as we entered the school we were welcomed in a very friendly way. All of you, and all of your teachers and teaching assistants were very polite. We were struck by the way that you get on so well together during lessons and when playing together.

Your head teacher runs the school well. He cares very much about you and wants to do everything he can to help you do well. He is helped by your teachers who do a good job in making sure that you try your best to get better at your work while having fun at the same time. Your parents are right in thinking that you go to a good school.

We have asked your teachers to be sure to tell you what you need to do next to improve your reading and writing further. Your head teacher wants to make your school even better and is going to look at your work and watch you during lessons to see if you are improving.

We had a good time in your school. Thank you.