



Castle Hill St Philip's CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106472
LEA Wigan
Inspection number 277570
Inspection dates 14 June 2006 to 15 June 2006
Reporting inspector Mr John Coleman HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Hereford Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Hindley
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Wigan, Lancashire WN2 4DH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01942 255578
Number on roll	209	Fax number	01942 525675
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr N Hancox
Date of previous inspection	5 October 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Gill Brennan

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3 to 11	14 June 2006 - 15 June 2006	277570

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school serves the parish of All Saints and the community of Hindley. It is a popular school and in most years, all available places for pupils are taken. Pupils come from a range of backgrounds; the vast majority are of White British origin and have some pre-school experience in a Nursery setting. Upon entering school, pupils bring good skills in personal and social development but have below average skill levels in communication, language and literacy. The percentage of pupils receiving free school meals is around the national average. A very high number of pupils are identified as having additional learning difficulties and/or disabilities and this is seen particularly in certain year groups. A high number of pupils leave and enter the school other than at the beginning and end of primary school. Of the Year 6 pupils who left in 2005, 35% did not start in the Reception class originally. Recent reorganisation of schools in the local area added a significant additional number of pupils. In 2005, new appointments were made to the posts of headteacher, deputy headteacher and to a senior leadership post.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory and improving standard of education with good features in respect of the personal development of pupils and leadership and management.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher are having a remarkable impact in improving the school. At the time of their appointment, approximately a year ago, results shown by national tests at age 7 and 11 indicate standards were below average, particularly in mathematics and science at Key Stage 2. Inspectors judge that pupils now achieve satisfactorily overall and standards are broadly average. The staff team follow the inspirational lead given by the headteacher and deputy headteacher; they share the same high expectations and are fully committed to improving the school. A new leadership team is in place, which rigorously monitors the performance of pupils and constantly seeks to improve the quality of teaching and learning. There is some inadequate teaching in the school but this is being tackled effectively. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory and improving because weaker practice is identified and good training is provided for teachers. There is insufficient challenge for pupils in some lessons, and assessment data are not used well to target what pupils should learn next. In the Foundation Stage, standards are average and children make good progress due to the good quality of teaching. Governors are well informed and effectively hold the school's leadership to account for the school's performance. They show a strong determination to seek the very best provision for the pupils and this is shown in the high quality of recent appointments to the school's staff.

Pupils are happy and enjoy life in school. This is because the staff show interest and value every individual. An ethos of care is engendered by the good role models provided by all staff. As a result, pupils feel safe and secure in school and are confident they can turn to someone for help if they need to. Pupils are becoming responsible young citizens who increasingly help out as council members, organise recycling and receive visitors with courtesy. Behaviour is good and pupils generally get on well with each other. They are well prepared for the next stage of education and acquire the skills they will need. Arrangements for the transfer to secondary education are good.

The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that assessment data are used effectively to set challenging targets for pupils' learning.
- Raise standards of attainment in mathematics and science at Key Stage 2.
- Improve the quality of teaching to satisfactory or better in all cases.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve broadly average standards.

The majority of children enter school with skills which are similar to those expected nationally. They make good progress in the Reception class, especially in the way they acquire speaking, listening and communication skills. Children learn how to cooperate with each other, become more independent and develop good social skills. Standards at the end of the Foundation Stage are in line with those found nationally overall; they are below those expected for language and literacy but much ground has been made up.

In Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory progress overall, so that standards by age seven are in line with those expected nationally. Recent national test results for the end of Key Stage 1, which show standards that are below average, are the consequence of a high number of pupils with additional learning difficulties and/or disabilities in these year groups. While this group of pupils make good progress, their standards are below average. There are also significant numbers of pupils who have recently joined the school with standards of attainment which are below average.

Inspectors judge that pupils in Key Stage 2 make satisfactory progress so that by age 11, standards are average. This is a big improvement compared to the performance of pupils in the last two years of national tests at age 11, when standards were below average, especially in mathematics and science. Test results have also been affected by the large numbers of pupils entering and leaving the school at different times.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils really enjoy coming to school and readily discuss ways in which they are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles and make a positive contribution to the community. The school has a caring ethos and this means that pupils feel safe and secure. They have opportunities for reflection and spiritual development through the good quality of collective worship, close links with the church and thoughtful displays of pupils' work. Pupils are keen to be involved in the community and have invited elderly residents to take part in some school events. The school council provides opportunities for pupils to offer their opinions and help to effect changes in school. Under its direction, individual classes take responsibility for the school environment; they recycle waste materials and keep the playground free of litter. Elected counsellors from the older year groups are encouraged to play a positive role in the community, producing an election manifesto with a personal profile and some reasons why they believe they should be elected. Pupils' behaviour is good; they show trust and respect for adults and for one another. Incidents of bullying are extremely rare, and pupils speak with confidence on appropriate ways of dealing with any unpleasantness.

Pupils are encouraged to prepare for their future economic well-being, developing personal and social skills, self-esteem, spiritual awareness and a sense of right and wrong. They happily anticipate their move to secondary education because of the good links the school has established with schools in the locality, to support the transition to the next phase of education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and has many good features. Lessons observed during the inspection were mostly good; teachers successfully engaged pupils in their learning through well paced lessons, high expectations of behaviour and interesting and well prepared activities. Teachers have developed good relationships with the pupils, recognising individual learning styles and effectively deploying support assistants. Recently installed interactive whiteboards add to the pupils' enjoyment of their learning.

There is some inadequate teaching where lessons lack pace and appropriate challenge for the learners. The school has recognised this and has drawn up sound plans for improvement.

Lesson planning is detailed and has improved considerably over the last year, but as yet does not make sufficient use of assessment information to differentiate activities to the needs of individual pupils. This means that in some classes there is insufficient challenge for the pupils and they do not achieve as well as they should do. Pupils' work is marked consistently, although teachers' comments do not always indicate specific areas of strength, or give guidance on how to improve further. Pupils with additional learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified at an early stage and their needs are well met by detailed individual educational plans and focused support strategies.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum which meets the needs of all the pupils. A recent review effectively links different subject areas together and this maximises opportunities for learning, and the school plans to further develop this for the next academic year. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of activities, including visits to places of interest and visitors invited into the school to share their culture, knowledge and expertise. Artists in residence have worked with pupils to develop an area of the hall dedicated to collective worship, and this reflects the strong Christian ethos of the school. Older pupils are offered the chance to visit a residential outdoor centre in the Lake District, and the school offers a wide range of extra-curricular clubs for sports, computers, choir and recorders, which are much enjoyed and have high levels of participation. In addition, pupils may learn to play a musical instrument; lessons for guitar, violin, brass and woodwind are available during the school day. The pupils are well prepared for their future and learn how to adopt healthy lifestyles and keep themselves safe. Good use of information and communication technology (ICT) lays strong foundations for future economic well-being.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school provides satisfactory care, support and guidance for pupils. All statutory requirements are observed, with robust child protection and health and safety procedures. Pupils know that they can turn to adults for help, and say that they are listened to and treated fairly. Parents appreciate this as demonstrated in their very positive responses to the inspection questionnaire. A recently appointed learning mentor supports vulnerable pupils and has already had a positive impact on their behaviour. Teachers track pupils' progress as they move through the school, but have not yet fully established systems to use this information to set individual targets for improvement. This means that while achievement is improving, it is not yet as good as it should be. However, the school identifies a high proportion of pupils as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities and caters well for their needs so that they make good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Overall, leadership and management are good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher make a formidable team. The changes they have made to the internal organisation, the curriculum, assessment procedures, classroom practice and the high expectation they have of everyone, are tackling underachievement and inadequate teaching effectively. Together they inspire and unite a staff team which is unanimously committed to improving the school. Through robust monitoring and precise prioritising, the headteacher and deputy headteacher are outstanding in providing clear direction. The leadership team is well aware of the school's strengths and areas for development. The school's self-evaluation matches closely with inspectors' view of the school. Insufficient use is made of assessment information to improve outcomes for learners. The

leadership team is aware of the need to continue pursuing this, and to also achieve greater consistency in the quality of teaching and learning. Subject leaders have received good training for their role in raising standards, but the impact of this is yet to be realised.

Governors are well informed and knowledgeable about the school; they successfully challenge the school leadership where appropriate and provide effective support. Improvements are being made in many areas of the school in response to underachievement in Key Stage 2 in 2004/5. A rigorous and systematic approach to

school improvement planning, utilising measurable criteria for success, is fully in place. Resources are well deployed. The recruitment and retention of staff are well managed as evidenced by the governors' determination to appoint the right person to the headship. There is a good partnership with the local authority. The school leadership demonstrate good capacity for further improvement.

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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>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	NA

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	2	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	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
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
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
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
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
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
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
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

Following our visit we would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome and for talking to us about your lessons and life in school. We would like to tell you what we found out about your school.

- Since your new headteacher and deputy headteacher arrived, your school is quickly improving and lessons are getting better and more interesting so that you learn more.
- You told us that you enjoy school and are happy. We think this is because all the staff care about you and look after you so well.
- You behave well and are responsible.
- We have asked the school to improve some lessons.
- We think that you will learn more if you are given targets for what to do next and we have asked that the school does this.
- In mathematics and science, we think you could do even better and get better results in your tests, so we have asked your school to make sure that you do.

Thank you for helping us so much with the inspection of your school. We all hope you will carry on enjoying learning and helping your teachers to make Castle Hill St Philip's Primary School an even better place to be.