



Richard Durning's Endowed Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119409
LEA Lancashire
Inspection number 280547
Inspection dates 14 September 2005 to 15 September 2005
Reporting inspector Alastair Younger

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Chorley Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Bispham
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Nr Ormskirk, Lancashire
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01257 462968
Number on roll	82	Fax number	01257 462968
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Jane Cowin
Date of previous inspection	1 May 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Catherine Hodgson

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector over a period of two days.

Description of the school

This is a small primary school in Bispham, a pleasant village near Ormskirk. There are 82 pupils on roll. Pupils' ability on entry to the school is average, or slightly above. All pupils are white and English speaking. There are ten pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and seven identified as gifted or talented. The headteacher has been in post for only two weeks.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Inspectors share the school's view that that it is a good and effective place of learning, where all pupils thrive. With strong leadership, carefully managed finances, higher than average standards, happy, hard-working pupils and very satisfied parents, the school is very well placed to continue to improve. It gives outstanding value for money.

The school's main strength is that it helps pupils to grow up into well educated, polite and characterful young people. This is achieved through good teaching and an outstanding curriculum which strongly promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development alongside their academic learning. The main weakness is that formal systems for monitoring and evaluating of standards are underdeveloped and not closely enough linked to school improvement planning.

There is a good Foundation Stage. Pupils join the school in the reception class, which is shared with pupils in Years 1 and 2. Quick, accurate assessments are made and if any support for learning is needed it is quickly forthcoming, and very effective. Pupils meet their goals and their move into National Curriculum studies is very smooth, with the result that the good progress they have been making continues uninterrupted.

Suggestions for improvement, made by the previous inspection, have been fully and successfully addressed and the accommodation has been much improved.

What the school should do to improve further

- Link the school's plan for development more precisely to the raising of standards.
- Monitor the quality of lessons more thoroughly to ensure that pupils are consistently challenged.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

As the school correctly identifies, pupils achieve well. Nearly all parents say they are very happy with the progress their children are making and all the pupils feel they are doing as well as they can. Standards are slightly higher than average for all ages and it is rare for any pupil to leave at the end of Year 6 without having met the level expected for their age in English, mathematics and science. In a typical year, such as last year, about a half of all Year 6 pupils do better than this. Pupils make good progress right from the start. Potential learning difficulties, however minor, are quickly identified and extra support given to those pupils. This is very effective and results in nearly all of these pupils achieving better than expected by the end of Year 2 and nearly all of them attaining the age related expectations for all pupils by the end of Year 6.

Throughout the school, a very close check is kept of individual attainment and this information is exceptionally well used to set challenging targets. These are nearly always met, and often exceeded. Last year, targets for English were met and those for mathematics and science were comfortably exceeded. There is no subject where progress by any group of pupils is unsatisfactory.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

This is an area where the school achieves outstanding success. Its own evaluation is that pupils' personal development and well-being are good but, in reality, they are much better. It is the main aim of the school to produce 'well rounded' individuals and it does exactly this. As a result, the pupils are a delight. Almost without exception, pupils say they love coming to school and parents confirm the fact. Many pupils said they could not wait to get back to school after the summer holiday. As a result, attendance is amazing. There has been no unexplained absence in recent years, attendance has improved over each of the last three years and, last year, was 97 per cent. The atmosphere around the school is happy, calm and purposeful. Pupils are strongly encouraged to reflect on their own, and other's, lives and their awareness of other cultures grows apace, often through high quality musical and artistic experiences. Misbehaviour is almost unheard of, there are high moral values and pupils enter into work and play with equal enthusiasm and exuberance.

Pupils are given many opportunities to show how they are becoming more mature and independent. Last year's leavers, for instance, organised, prepared and managed a hugely successful buffet lunch for invited guests entirely on their own initiative. Sport and healthy living are very strongly promoted; just watching the energy that pupils expend at breaktimes on the huge playing field is ample proof of this. Pupils show a very strong awareness of the importance of good relationships, safe and responsible actions and contributing positively to the community. Their self-confidence, coupled with their politeness shows how good their social development is and bodes well for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good for pupils of all ages. This is a view backed up by the school's own evaluation and by the almost unanimous views of pupils and parents. This overall judgement hides the fact that teaching is occasionally outstanding, such as in a Year 3/4 mathematics lesson, which was pacy, dynamic, fun and made use of a wide range of simple resources, including a ventriloquist's dummy, to help reinforce pupils' understanding of number facts. What is stopping more teaching from being outstanding is that, occasionally, teachers do not ring the changes often enough, or push learning along as fast as they could, especially for average and above average pupils. All teachers plan work carefully, varying it to suit the different ages and abilities of groups of pupils but, occasionally, not enough for the most able ones within a group. Pupils who need the most help get it, often from the skilled classroom assistants. The assessment of pupils' progress is good. It is accurate and used well to plan for future learning. Teachers and the new headteacher, however, are not content with

this and are improving links between all assessments conducted throughout the school by using the Pupil Attainment Tracker to analyse, monitor and evaluate progress, learning and teaching more precisely.

Pupils learn well because their work is interesting, they like their teachers and they are always learning something new

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Each day, pupils arrive at school, eagerly anticipating an exciting variety of activities. They are rarely disappointed, because the curriculum is outstanding. The school's own evaluation is slightly lower than this but it does not take sufficient credit for the huge range of enrichment activities that it provides for pupils. There are many visits to places of interest, often to stimulate interest and learning in topic work, and there is an impressive programme of lunchtime and after-school clubs, which pupils eagerly look forward to. Many visitors have come to school to share their skills, beliefs and experiences. These visitors frequently include people of different faiths and cultures. The real glory of the curriculum, however, is the way it so carefully balances the academic side with pupils' personal development, thus providing exactly the right diet to promote the main aim of the school – well-rounded pupils.

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Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

An environment has been created that is as safe as possible whilst not being over-protective and thus removing any sense of excitement and adventure. Staff feel that they give good support and guidance to pupils and take great care of them. This is a fair judgement. Possible risks are identified before activities are allowed to take place and there is safe practice in subjects such as science, design and technology and physical education. Pupils are taught to understand the importance of behaving sensibly to avoid accidents. Break and lunchtimes are carefully supervised and child protection procedures are well understood by all staff.

Staff are quick to recognise pupils who need extra help with their learning and to arrange support for them. Pupils' and parents' views are carefully listened to and there is a strong sense of working together to encourage pupils to do their best. Pupils say that this is a safe, happy school, where there is no bullying, racism or harassment

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The new headteacher is a natural successor to the previous one, sharing a very similar vision, one that is also shared by the governing body and all other staff. This singularity of purpose is an outstanding feature of leadership and explains why the school is so successful in meeting its aims and targets.

Management is judged to be good overall; which tallies with the school's own evaluation. The school runs very smoothly, with everyone fulfilling their responsibilities to a high standard. There is a very good programme of staff development and the management of staff performance is good. Finance is exceptionally well managed, with the result that the school has been able to make good improvements to the building and to fund extra staffing. However, there is very little formal monitoring of teaching and improvement planning is not linked closely enough to anticipated benefits and the raising of standards. The headteacher has recognised this and has very quickly made a start to remedy the situation.

Many governors are parents of either past or present pupils. They have great pride in the school and a good grasp of what goes on and how high standards are. Alongside the new headteacher and the dedicated staff this means that the school is well placed to continue building on the many, good improvements since the previous 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>	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?	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	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?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	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	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	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	1	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	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

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16 September 2005

Dear Pupils

How lucky you are to be attending such a good school; come to that, how lucky the school is to have such delightful pupils. You may remember my visit a while back. I came to see how well you were getting on and if there was anything I could suggest to make the school even better. You made me very welcome and I thoroughly enjoyed your company. Thank you.

Two days isn't long to look at everything that is going on in school but I saw an awful lot and had good chats with staff, some of your parents, and quite a lot of you. It's obvious that you are very happy and most of you love coming to school. Hands up those of you who told me how much you wanted to get back to school after your long summer holiday! There are lots of good things about your school. Here are a few.

It is a happy school, you work hard and you do well in tests

At playtimes you are so friendly to each other and to staff and visitors

There are so many interesting things going on, you have lots of trips and get to meet all sorts of visitors; remember the drummers?

Your teachers are good, they make you work hard and sometimes you work so hard that they can hardly keep up with you.

There are only a few things that I felt could make the school better. The main one is that it would be good if staff made it a bit clearer how they wanted the school to improve and how any new developments would help you to get even better results. Perhaps they might get you to help them. Be careful though, because it might just be that they make you work even harder. Good luck anyway.

All the best,

Alastair Younger

Lead inspector

Annex B