



Great Harwood St John's C of E Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119421
LEA Lancashire
Inspection number 280554
Inspection dates 12 October 2005 to 13 October 2005
Reporting inspector Eric Jackson

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	St John's Street
School category	Voluntary aided		Great Harwood
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Blackburn, Lancashire
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01254 885926
Number on roll	168	Fax number	01254 877069
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Jack Hartley
Date of previous inspection	1 June 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Jill Walmsley

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is a voluntary aided Church of England primary school on two sites. The school has 169 children on roll. About 20% of the children are of Asian heritage, mainly Punjabi speakers, with very small numbers of children in public care. The area served by the school is below average socio-economically and the number of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. The number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average, but the number with formal statements of their need is above average. There have been significant staff changes recently, including a new headteacher. There is an acting deputy headteacher, and a supply teacher replacing the deputy who is acting head at another school. The school has a recent local authority Achievement Award, and is a Healthy School.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Inspection findings support the school's view that it provides a satisfactory education for its children. It is improving after a period of instability and weak performance that led the local authority to have serious concerns about the school two years ago. Since the recently appointed headteacher's arrival, these concerns have eased. There is a new mood of determined optimism in the school, which has the capacity to bring about further improvements. Although the school has improved, standards are not high enough at the end of Year 6 as many pupils, particularly girls, do not make fast enough progress in Years 3 to 5. This is because the staff do not use assessment information well enough to plan new learning for them. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has begun to improve the school's expectations of the pupils' achievements. This has won back the support of parents and pupils enjoy their learning. Pupils' personal development is good; they behave well and have good attitudes to school. Pupils in the Reception class make good progress because the provision is well planned to meet their needs. This is also the case for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities throughout the school and for bilingual pupils.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6 to match pupils' capabilities.
- Evaluate information collected about the pupils' progress and take speedy action to ensure that all groups of pupils achieve the targets set for them.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

After an unsettled period achievement is now satisfactory. Standards are beginning to rise from low levels, although by the end of Year 6 they are still below average. This matches the school's own judgement.

Children enter the Reception class with skills generally below average. They make good progress and achieve close to the levels expected in all areas of learning except language development by the end of their first year. By the end of Year 2, standards in national tests in reading, writing and mathematics are below average and fewer pupils reach higher levels than do so nationally. However, pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve satisfactorily overall.

For a number of years, many pupils in Years 3 to 6 have underachieved. Progress improved in 2004 and 2005, under the new headteacher's guidance, particularly in English. However, this was not enough to catch up on missed learning in the past. Progress is now satisfactory in Years 3 to 6, and better for some pupils in Years 3 and 4. Although the current Year 6 are making satisfactory progress, standards are still

below average overall, though improving. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well towards set targets. Pupils speaking English as an additional language achieve satisfactorily.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. The headteacher has ensured that working relationships between pupils and staff are good and this is helping the school to continue to improve. Pupils are willing to work hard and recognise that good behaviour is essential to their progress in learning. They respond to the school's high expectations enthusiastically and the atmosphere in the school is vibrant and welcoming. Pupils show positive attitudes and are friendly and cooperative and enjoy their lessons.

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. Cultural development is satisfactory, but the school could do more to embrace the cultural and religious heritage of its minority ethnic groups. Pupils develop their contribution to the community satisfactorily; for example, the school council has instigated the provision of drinking fountains. Pupils learn about healthy lifestyles and keeping fit, and older pupils help to run the thriving fresh fruit counter at playtime. They also learn how to be safe through projects about road safety, relationships and drugs awareness. Provision to promote future economic well-being is effective.

Attendance is below the national average. This is largely because some families take extended holidays to Pakistan, but there is also a very small number of poor attending families. The procedures to promote attendance are good, although sometimes not followed swiftly enough. The breakfast club is popular, helping to support attendance and healthy lifestyles.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, matching the school's view. In the best lessons, pupils are fully engaged in learning and know what they need to do to improve. In these lessons, the staff ensure that all pupils are challenged and that tasks are interesting. However, too many lessons lack sparkle. In these dull lessons, because there are good relationships between staff and pupils, behaviour and concentration are generally good but the teaching is undemanding.

The headteacher has successfully restored staff's confidence in their ability to improve and they are all committed to raising pupils' achievement. For example, they have successfully learned to use interactive whiteboards and helped pupils improve their skills in information and communication technology (ICT). However, in some mixed age classes the work set does not match the learning needs of the pupils, particularly girls and higher attainers, effectively. This is because teachers do not use what they know of pupils' attainment flexibly enough when planning their lessons. The staff do

ensure that pupils learning English as an additional language, or who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, receive effective support.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school judges the curriculum to be satisfactory and the inspectors agree. The coverage of ICT has improved since the last inspection and the curriculum meets all requirements. It provides well for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The pupils say that they like art and physical education best. The colourful and skilled displays, often involving visiting artists such as a local potter, support this view, as do observations of physical education lessons and good extra-curricular activities. The range of activities provided generally supports pupils' learning satisfactorily, and the staff have plans to engage girls more to raise their achievement.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. The school's strong caring ethos stems directly from the headteacher and is appreciated warmly by parents who speak of the school as 'a happy family'. Initiatives such as the breakfast club, run by the head and other staff, provide good evidence of this care. The school works effectively with outside agencies in support of vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties. The support staff help the efficient special needs co-ordinator and class teachers to meet these pupils' needs well.

All procedures to ensure pupils' care and welfare are in place, and child protection and risk assessment are efficiently managed. The relationships fostered at all levels ensure that the pupils feel secure, and know who to turn to for help. A Year 6 girl said, 'Bullying is sorted out straightaway by the staff'. Academic support and guidance are satisfactory, and improving. The staff are currently involved in assessment training to help pupils be clearer about what they need to do to improve their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. This matches the school's self-evaluation. The headteacher has brought much needed stability and vision to the improvement of the school. With the acting deputy headteacher, she has ensured that the quality of provision in the reception class is good. It is too soon to judge the impact of most of the improvements, but the headteacher has already gained agreement for required changes. There is a shared vision for the future and a commitment to meeting pupils' learning needs and raising standards.

The effects of past weaknesses still linger in below average standards. There are also residual problems caused by past overspends on staff and the repair and improvements to the buildings. The governors have agreed a plan with the local authority to bring

the school's budget back into balance by the end of next year. The school's increasing popularity will assist them in this. The financial constraints on spending affect the school's ability to make required changes quickly. For example, as there is no money to appoint extra staff, the headteacher provides cover for teachers to have statutory time out of class and this restricts her ability to monitor the work of the school. Governance is satisfactory and governors are now suitable involved in working for the school's improvement. The school's self-evaluation is generally accurate and reflects analysis of parents' and pupils' views. The results of the school's self-evaluation are used to determine priorities for further development. However, this information is not yet analysed swiftly or thoroughly enough to raise standards quickly.

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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	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

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	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	4	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	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	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?	3	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?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	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	3	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	3	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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14 October 2005

Dear Children

Thank you for welcoming Mrs Herring, Mrs Morrissey and me to your school in such a friendly and helpful way. We very much enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work. We particularly liked the colourful and expressive artwork displayed around the school. We also liked the way the children in Reception have settled with Class 1 in the Nuttall Avenue building. Yours is a healthy school, but playing netball at lunchtime with some of the older girls tired me out!

We feel that your school looks after you well and helps you make satisfactory progress in your learning, although some of you have not been helped as well as you could have been in the past. We have asked your teachers to help you do better and you can help here by working hard to reach your targets in English, mathematics and science. Those of you who speak more than one language are already skilled language learners and the staff help you to develop your skills in English effectively. The special help some of you have from the staff is also good.

Your parents told us that they were very happy with the school, and you told us the same. We could see how much you enjoy your work and how well you behave, concentrate and do what the staff ask. Mrs Walmsley is keen to develop many aspects of your school further. We have asked her to see how quickly improvements can be made with help from you and the staff. Those of you on the school council will probably be involved in some of the planning to make these changes. We hope that they work out well for you.

With best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

Eric Jackson, Inspector.

Annex B