



Melling (St Wilfrid) Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 119536
LEA Lancashire
Inspection number 280585
Inspection dates 7 December 2005 to 8 December 2005
Reporting inspector Mr Martin Bradley

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Lodge Lane
School category	Community		Melling
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Carnforth, Lancashire
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01524 221538
Number on roll	44	Fax number	015242 22253
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Pat Bell
Date of previous inspection	1 September 2003	Headteacher	Mrs Geraldine Andrews

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspector's of Schools.

Description of the school

Melling (St Wilfrid) Church of England School is a small school with 44 children who are taught in two classes. One caters for Year Reception and Key Stage One, and the other for Key Stage Two. The children's attainment on entry is roughly typical for their age, although the small numbers in each year group mean that this attainment varies from year to year. The children come from a wide rural area and several travel to school by bus. Few children are eligible for free school meals and almost all of the children are from white British backgrounds. Nine pupils (20%) are identified as having additional learning needs and/or difficulties.

A playgroup meets in the school two afternoons a week. This was inspected at the same time as the school and is reported on separately.

The last school inspection identified the school as having serious weaknesses. Since then, a new headteacher has been appointed following a period when an acting headteacher was in post. The school has received a significant amount of support from the Local Education Authority (LEA) over the last two years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The inspector agrees with the school's view that its overall effectiveness is satisfactory. The school's previous designation as having serious weaknesses no longer applies.

Good progress has been made since the last inspection. Development planning has been established. It has the potential to improve further although, currently, aspects including policy reviews and clearer statements linking development planning with curriculum monitoring are not incorporated. Statutory requirements are now fully met and the governing body has developed its role and effectiveness. Resources are being carefully developed. The school now provides satisfactory value for money.

Behaviour is generally good and the children care well for one another.

Teaching is good. However in some lessons insufficient account is taken of the full range of needs in the class. There remains a need to sharpen planning to match activities more closely to the different levels of children's attainment, especially in Key Stage 2. Furthermore, planning does not always specify ways of organising and managing classes with a wide age range.

The use of specialist teaching for music, information and communication technology and dance successfully promote good standards of achievement.

Good progress has been made in the Foundation Stage, and standards are now good. The organisation of the classroom for the younger children supports good standards of achievement. The playgroup leaders are working with the Reception year staff in completing the Foundation Stage Profile and appropriately wish to link their planning to that of the class.

The school is in a position to make further progress, with the support of the LEA.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in Key Stage 2 by planning for the different levels of attainment in the class and by providing a more varied range of tasks.
- Ensure that the development plan identifies specific ways in which the quality of teaching and learning can be improved and monitored, and includes dates and details of curriculum policy reviews.
- Ensure that the targets set for children are fully embedded in teachers' planning with a clear understanding of how they are to be used.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The school's achievement and standards are satisfactory. The small numbers in each year group lead to some fluctuations in attainment, but overall the children achieve at, or slightly above, the expected levels when compared to national figures. The value added to the children's attainment at both key stages is satisfactory. The

under-achievement noted by the last inspection in Key Stage 2 has been addressed, as have weaknesses in science in Key Stage 1 where the curriculum was not fully covered.

The children make satisfactory progress in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding. At the start of the present term, targets were set for groups whose attainment is comparable: they are to be reviewed at the end of term. However, they do not sufficiently inform planning, which instead deals with whole class or year groups rather than providing more directly focused challenges for learners. This particularly affects the work in Key Stage 2 when some class discussions are mainly directed towards the older children. Where these discussions are a feature of successive lessons, the limited variety in teaching style does not promote children's learning with sufficient rigour. Overall, progress is satisfactory.

The new coordinator for special educational needs has updated individual education plans for all children identified. These are useful documents which link to assessments made for all year groups except Year 1. The wider use of these assessments to inform planning varies.

Handwriting at both key stages has rightly been identified as requiring review. Where specialist staff are used, for example, in music and ICT, achievement is particularly good.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall, rather than good as the school views it. There are good church and community links, and the vicar takes a weekly assembly. The children have several opportunities for spiritual reflection, including class and school assemblies and in their work in religious education (RE). In a recent innovation, children have prepared their own assemblies in groups. The children's contribution to the community includes developing skills for their future economic well-being through events such as a Tsunami concert and a Children in Need coffee morning.

The parent-teacher association organises weekly swimming sessions after school to supplement the school's lessons for Key Stage 2 children. The association also funds a gardening club run by parents and, working with the school governing body and the parish council, has developed the school grounds for community use outside school times. As some children come to school by bus, there are limited opportunities for after school clubs, although an art club and the gardening club have been held at lunchtimes. Social development is good, and children reported that they could ask each other for help if needed. For example, during the inspection older children dealt particularly well with a younger one who had fallen over and needed sympathy and tidying up.

The good quality of work in music is well-linked to multi-cultural work, with an Indian dance and music theme having been enjoyed earlier this year. It also relates well to multi-faith work.

Attendance is good, and the children comment that they enjoy coming to school. They are safety conscious and considerate of each other. Some parents noted that behaviour has improved recently and observations indicate that this is now satisfactory overall.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. In Key Stage 1 teaching is consistently good whereas, in Key Stage 2 slightly more lessons are satisfactory than good.

The well-organised classroom for the younger children provides for some activities to be available continuously and for others to be taught at specific times. This works well and the teaching team effectively deploy themselves to ensure that children work well and make good progress. The children quickly settle to activities and work independently whilst the adults support other groups. Work is well planned using targets for groups of children who may be drawn from different years. Their concentration is good and their targets provide appropriate challenges.

In Key Stage 2, termly targets were set for groups at the start of the present term. The children are aware of these but do not yet make full use of them. Literacy and numeracy are taught in two-yearly cycles for Years 3/4 and Years 5/6, the younger children mainly working with different teaching assistants. When working with the groups, the assistants are effective, but at other times they are less well used. Any unsatisfactory behaviour in class is generally well managed.

Assessment is satisfactory. Each year group, apart from Year 1, have annual assessments which inform target setting. Work is marked in ways which inform the children's future work. Assessment is accurate. Good support for reading is provided by a specialist teacher from a nearby LEA residential school using an assessed programme over six months. The school is in a good position to further develop its use of assessment.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and gaps in the Key Stage 1 science provision have been reviewed. Statutory requirements are met. The recently purchased lap top computers used by Key Stage 2 children are useful assets which are being well used. Provision for literacy, numeracy and ICT is satisfactory overall.

Children are encouraged to take responsibility for aspects of their own learning and respond well when set tasks whilst adults supervise others. Specialist provision for music, ICT, and dance enhances the curriculum and provides good learning opportunities. All children, including those with additional needs and/or disabilities, make at least satisfactory progress. Children are being satisfactorily prepared for their future well-being.

Curriculum documentation was reviewed following the last inspection, with a comprehensive range of areas being covered. At present, there is no oversight of the review dates for these documents which, in turn, are not included in the school development plan.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school promotes the care, guidance and support for children: however the inspector considers that it is satisfactory, rather than agreeing with the school's assessment of it as good. This is since the guidance and support is not linked sufficiently closely to the achievement targets currently identified for the children. As the targets are not embedded well enough in the work set, their impact is reduced, and their intended challenges reduced.

Health and safety is well promoted, and risk assessments are carefully considered. Healthy eating is encouraged through topics, such as that in Key Stage 1 which also formed the basis of a children-led assembly, and through the lunches cooked on the premises.

Any children at risk or with additional needs and/or disabilities are identified early. They are well supported and the school works well with their parents and other agencies to promote their progress. These arrangements were reviewed and updated for the start of the present term.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

At the time of the last inspection, leadership and management were considered to be unsatisfactory. The inspector agrees with the school that it is now satisfactory. However, there remain significant areas for improvement.

The school has sought to raise standards by establishing development planning for both the current year and for three years ahead. This is satisfactory, but the improvement plan is now subsumed in the development plan which does not separately address the issues for improvement. The school does not ensure that the plans' intentions are fully carried out or properly monitored. For example, the development plan does not record the dates for reviewing policies, thus making monitoring difficult. Also, there is no policy on target setting linked to lesson planning to benefit children of differing abilities.

Staff curriculum responsibilities have been reviewed, and performance management procedures are in place. These are satisfactory and staff are in a good position to begin to influence practice in both classes. The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis, although some lessons lose time when they start late. Resources have been developed well during the last two years, with interactive whiteboards placed in both classes. The school now provides satisfactory value for money.

The governing body has improved its oversight of the school in the past two years. Link governors for subjects and other aspects make regular visits, committee systems are in place and the governing body's annual report now fulfils its legal responsibilities. The governors are in a good position to act as a critical friend. Vetting procedures are in place for adults who work in the school. Liaison with parents is supported by the homework diaries and a weekly newsletter as means of regular home-school communication.

The school has satisfactory capacity to improve.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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	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	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	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	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?	2	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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Melling St Wilfrid Church of England Primary School
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9 December 2005

Dear Children

Thank you for the welcome you gave me when I visited your school recently. I really appreciated the help you gave me, and especially sharing your work and ideas about the school.

I thought that you get on well with each other and liked the ways in which you help one another around the school and in the playground. The teachers and other staff in the school give you a good range of lessons and activities, which show how hard they work for you. I particularly enjoyed your enthusiastic singing in assembly, the ways the older class used the lap top computers and how the younger children were able to get on quickly and quietly with their activities.

I thought that your school has improved in many ways recently, although there are still several things to be done. I have asked the staff to continue to make use of the targets which you are set and to make sure that you use these in as many lessons as possible. I have also asked them to continue to improve the ways that they plan their work and to make sure that all the learning and teaching is as good as the best which I saw. You can help with this by making sure that you know your targets for literacy and numeracy and by continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely

Martin Bradley

Her Majesty's Inspector