



Tarleton Mere Brow Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119574
LEA Lancashire
Inspection number 280598
Inspection dates 28 February 2006 to 1 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Michael Onyon

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	The Gravel
School category	Voluntary aided		Mere Brow
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Tarleton, Preston PR4 6JX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01772 812689
Number on roll	65	Fax number	01772 815697
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Father Nicholas Davies
Date of previous inspection	1 May 2000	Headteacher	Mr Ian Cookson

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an additional inspector.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized primary school in the village of Mere Brow between Southport and Preston. Although most pupils live nearby, others travel a significant distance to attend. Entitlement to free school meals is below average. Children start school in the Reception year and most have the skills and knowledge expected for their age, although individual pupils vary widely in what they know and can do. English is the home language of almost all pupils. Throughout the school, an above average number of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children are accommodated in three classes, with mixed ages in each class. Currently the deputy headteacher is acting as headteacher in the absence of the headteacher through illness.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school, a judgement with which the school agrees. It has the confidence of its parents and good capacity to improve further. The provision in Reception is satisfactory and nearly all pupils reach the expected standards by the time they begin Year 1. Throughout the school, teaching is satisfactory overall but varies in quality between classes and is not challenging enough for the more able pupils. Overall standards are average in Years 2 and 6 and most pupils make satisfactory progress, although some pupils are capable of reaching still higher standards, especially in writing where standards have declined by the end of Year 6 in English in the last four years. Action taken recently to remedy this is beginning to have an effect and has, for example, begun to improve standards in reading. Pupils are well cared for and taught how to live safe and healthy lives. They are well behaved, have positive attitudes and enjoy school. The curriculum provides satisfactory opportunities for personal growth and learning. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall but, with the exception of the mathematics subject leader, the work of subject leaders has little effect on standards in their subjects. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

not applicable

What the school should do to improve further

The school should:

- raise standards in English, particularly in writing
- provide a consistent level of challenge for more able pupils to enable them to reach the higher levels by Year 2 and Year 6
- extend the involvement of subject leaders in the leadership and management of the school, enabling them to contribute effectively to raising standards in their subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. From average attainment when they start school, children in the Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress and recently almost all have reached the expectations for their age by the end of the Reception year. In Years 1 and 2, most pupils make satisfactory progress, and by Year 2, standards are average, as shown by the results of national tests, with the best results in mathematics and the weakest in writing. Almost all pupils achieve the expected Level 2 but few achieve the higher Level 3. Pupils continue to make satisfactory overall progress in Years 3 to 6. Results of the 2005 national tests for Year 6 were broadly average but were lower in English than in mathematics and science.

Pupils' progress in lessons, although satisfactory overall, varies considerably between year groups and subjects. In particular, the more able pupils in every year group are

capable of achieving higher standards than at present. The variability in progress results mainly from differences in the quality of teaching.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their spiritual, moral and social development is well supported by the faith community and pupils make good progress. They care about each other; they are polite and know the importance of good manners of which they are proud. Their cultural development is satisfactory but not enough is done to help pupils gain a deeper understanding of the multicultural nature of British society.

Pupils contribute to the life of the school through such things as fund-raising events. There is no school council though the pupils have made plans for one. In discussions with pupils they give their views on improvements they would like and they demonstrate through their mature responses that they are preparing themselves well for the next stage of education and their future economic well-being. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and their parents agree. Attendance is good.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. Pupils feel safe in school. Their sensible behaviour at playtimes means that there are few accidents. Pupils receive good advice about healthy eating and the benefits of physical exercise and the school is working towards the healthy schools' award.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall but vary from class to class. The acting headteacher is working to improve teaching and to make it more consistent. This is beginning to make a difference. Recent changes in teaching of the Reception children are having a positive effect on their learning. The new arrangements successfully include more practical activities related to the needs of young children and are helping to increase the pace of their progress.

The marking of pupils' work has recently begun to provide better guidance for pupils, showing them how to improve. The teaching assistants support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities effectively and make a significant contribution to their steady progress. Although teachers know their pupils well, they do not make enough use of the assessment information available to plan lessons to meet the differing needs and abilities of the pupils. As a result, pupils do not always achieve as well as they should, especially the more able pupils, and particularly in English. However, opportunities for pupils to work with partners encourage them to become more involved in their own progress, especially in learning to be critical of their own work and that of others. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are becoming more independent, and this is increasing their rate of progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. The school makes the expected provision for all subjects and provides enrichment activities suitable for primary pupils, including visits to places of interest and opportunities for sport. Following recent changes, literacy and numeracy lessons are now given high priority in the timetable, as is learning about healthy life-styles and how to keep safe. The curriculum in Reception has recently improved with an increased emphasis on children's progress towards the nationally recommended early learning goals. Overall, the curriculum assists most pupils to achieve the standards expected for their age, encourages them to enjoy school and to develop their personal skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The staff take good care of pupils and the school gives due attention to welfare and safety procedures and ensuring that pupils have a good knowledge of how to look after themselves. The school is particularly successful in helping pupils to overcome any personal difficulties, so that they gain confidence in their ability to achieve. As a result, their attitudes to learning are good but the school is at an early stage of making the most of these positive attitudes to improve standards and progress. Pupils' progress is assessed and regularly monitored; however, assessment information is not yet used effectively in planning lessons to set work at the right level. This is already recognised by the school.

The introduction of the group targets for pupils in English and mathematics has increased their enthusiasm to take part in improving their own work especially when they can help to contribute to these targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher is currently absent through illness and two of the three classes are partly taught by temporary teachers. The deputy headteacher has been acting as headteacher for a only a term but has already set a clear direction for the school and is introducing important developments which are well supported by the staff. As a consequence, there are signs of improvements in pupils' progress; for example, in Year 2, which show that the school has the capacity to improve further. The teaching in Reception has also improved, as has the physical environment of the school. The work of the subject leaders in the management of their subject is inconsistent. Where it is effective, as in mathematics, it is leading to improving standards.

The school's self-evaluation includes a regular review which involves the local authority (LA) and takes account of the views of parents and pupils. The latest findings of the review are an accurate assessment of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and

clearly summarises pupils' progress and the standards achieved. The current school improvement plan reflects these findings and is, therefore, focused on the right priorities.

Governance is satisfactory, overall. The governors have a reasonable understanding of the school, fulfil their legal obligations and are supportive, but they do not always challenge the school, for example, about the declining standards in English.

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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?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	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?	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	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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Tarleton Mere Brow Church of England Primary School

The Gravel

Mere Brow

Tarleton

Preston

Lancashire

PR4 6JX

2 March 2006

Dear Children

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school. You helped me to understand how much you enjoy school, and how important your friends are in helping you to learn and to have fun.

I found your school a welcoming place that looks after you well, makes you feel safe, and helps you to learn about being healthy. Your behaviour is good, you look after each other, and your attendance is good. Your school is a happy place and your teachers care for you. Your headteacher has helped to make sure that the school looks good and that you are having opportunities to be successful.

Most of you make steady progress, and in your tests you reach the levels expected for your age. I think you could do even better, so I have asked your school to make sure that you are helped to make quicker progress, especially in English, and to make sure all of you are challenged to do your best.

I send my best wishes to you all.

Yours sincerely

Michael Onyon

Lead Inspector