



Walton-le-Dale, St Leonard's Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119575
LEA Lancashire
Inspection number 280599
Inspection dates 16 November 2005 to 17 November 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs Jennie Platt

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Walton Green
School category	Voluntary aided		Walton-le-Dale
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Preston, PR5 4JL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01772 556021
Number on roll	246	Fax number	01772 258194
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Mike Simmons
Date of previous inspection	1 October 2000	Headteacher	Mr Mike Phillipson

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 16 November 2005 - 17 November 2005	Inspection number 280599
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average size school. It serves a socially advantaged area with a falling birth rate although the school is full. The attainment of pupils starting school is broadly average. Very few take free school meals. Similarly, very few pupils are from minority ethnic groups and none requires help because English is not the home language. An average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and nine have formal statements of special educational needs. The school is working in partnership with another school and shares the same headteacher. There is out-of-school care for 37 pupils.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school is providing a good education and has some outstanding features. This is similar to the school's evaluation and shows that it knows itself very well. The success of the school is the result of highly effective leadership and team work although planning does not yet make a close enough link between actions and their impact on standards. Teaching and learning are good and enable pupils to make good progress. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and children exceed the standards expected by the end of the Reception class. This firm foundation is built on well and standards as pupils leave school are high and have been so for several years. The only group of pupils that could achieve more are the higher attaining pupils in writing in Key Stage 1. Excellent support for pupils with formal statements of special educational needs means their needs are fully met. They flourish in this friendly community and make very good progress. Personal development is outstanding and pupils really enjoy school. As yet, pupils are not clear about how to improve their work because of a lack of consistency in setting them targets and ensuring that marking tells them how to improve. The school has successfully resolved the concerns identified in the previous inspection and has good capacity to improve. Value for money is good.

not applicable

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement of higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 1 in writing by targeting these pupils more closely and providing more opportunities to extend their skills.
- Improve pupils' knowledge of their own learning by consistently setting them targets and ensuring marking makes it clear how they can improve.
- Improve strategic planning by ensuring priorities are linked to raising standards and are easily measurable.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Overall achievement is good. Children start in the Foundation Stage with average standards. They make good progress and exceed the standards expected by the end of the Reception class. This firm foundation provides the basic skills needed to make progress in Key Stage 1. Results of national tests in Year 2 and Year 6 have been high since 2000. However, in Key Stage 1, higher attaining pupils have not been making enough progress in writing and this continues to be the case. These pupils are not always sufficiently challenged to write at length and they could achieve more. Results of tests in Year 6 pointed to underachievement by higher attaining pupils in mathematics. The school has effectively dealt with this issue by increasing the challenge in lessons and including additional time specifically for problem solving. Assessments have also revealed some underachievement by boys in writing and the school is tackling this successfully. With these improvements the school is meeting its challenging targets.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make very good progress with many reaching the level expected for their age. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have improved due to better resources and training; pupils reach the standard expected for their age.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is impressive. It is much higher than usually seen and pupils thoroughly enjoy school. Pupils behave extremely well throughout the day. In lessons, there is often an atmosphere of eager anticipation and a willingness to try hard and please their teachers. In science, Year 2 pupils were so involved in their investigations that they groaned at the end of the lesson. Teaching fosters high levels of concentration even with the very young children. Older pupils collaborate extremely well. In mathematical games, pupils share and help each other. Learning is great fun. As a result, attendance is higher than usually seen. Older pupils and members of the school council take their responsibilities very seriously and carry out their roles very well.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. In assembly, pupils learn to help others and act this out in practice by fund raising; they show considerable support for the local and wider community. Pupils are adamant bullying or harassment is not tolerated and they feel safe and secure. Pupils respect those with beliefs and customs different from their own. However, more use could be made of the variety of faiths in school to deepen pupils' understanding of different values, customs and traditions. Pupils have a very thorough understanding of the need to be healthy and stay safe. The good level of basic skills, including ICT, contributes very well to pupils' future economic development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Some outstanding teaching was seen when teachers' enthusiasm inspired pupils and made learning exciting. In many lessons, the focus on practical activity means pupils quickly become absorbed in their learning. This is especially beneficial for the children in the Foundation Stage where staff use their good knowledge of this age range to plan stimulating activities. Humour and excellent relationships mean pupils have confidence to try out new ideas and extend their knowledge and skills. Well organised classrooms and very good use of talking partners are other key factors in successful teaching. For example, a rigorous debate in Year 5 regarding the impact of railways in Victorian times brought out the very best in pupils' speaking and listening skills. Improved resources in ICT are used well and standards are rising. However, some opportunities are missed to use computers in class.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported in lessons, and those with statements receive outstanding support. Teaching assistants make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. Information from the good analysis of test results is used well to improve teaching. For example, additional mental arithmetic sessions have been provided to drive up standards. However, in writing in Key Stage 1 teachers are not sufficiently challenging the higher attaining pupils. As a result, writing tasks do not lead to effective learning for those pupils. Although teachers mark work regularly, their comments do not always provide pointers for improvement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a rich and relevant curriculum. The curriculum is varied to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Provision for those with statements is outstanding. Considerable thought is given to the mixed-age classes to ensure activities match pupils' ages and experiences. The focus is successfully on learning through activity. The very exciting outdoor area for children in the Foundation Stage is being used well to extend learning. Occasionally, too many tasks are included for the young children and this leads to some moving too quickly between activities. Provision for ICT is good. However, its use in other subjects is not yet fully developed. The school effectively promotes a healthy lifestyle through a well planned programme of personal, health and social education. The school's music, art, dance and drama week and its curriculum collaboration with a local school are both good examples of curriculum innovation. There is good enrichment through sports and games, French lessons, instrumental tuition and residential visits.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents are appreciative of the good standard of personal care that children receive. This is summed up by the comment, 'My child has been given space to grow resulting in one happy child and two happy parents'. Staff are sensitive to children's feelings and anxieties. They take particular care that all children are included in every aspect of school life. Induction arrangements for children starting school are exemplary. Children settle quickly because many have been attending weekly sessions for a year before starting school. The school shows strong concern for children's welfare and safety. Close links are established with a range of local agencies. Arrangements for child protection and ensuring pupils' safety in school and on visits are of a high quality. The school is aware that more needs to be done in setting pupils targets so that they are more closely involved in their learning and can check their progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The overall quality of leadership and management is good with strong leadership from the headteacher and his deputy. Their determination to keep the fun element in

learning is appreciated by pupils and parents. As a result, the school is held in high esteem locally. The drive and resolve of the headteacher and staff have sustained high standards and resolved previously identified weaknesses. This is apparent in ICT which is well led and standards have improved. The school is eager to involve itself in many initiatives to keep abreast of change. The exchange of ideas with another school has motivated staff as they learn from others.

The school is totally committed to social inclusion. The management of the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is a significant strength especially in the involvement of parents so that they can help their children. The school is self-critical and has an accurate picture of itself. Priorities for development are decided following rigorous monitoring, analysis of performance and canvassing of opinions. Subject leaders contribute through the monitoring of their subjects. The next step in strategic planning is to link priorities more to raising standards and to ensure targets are measurable. Resources are generally used well although the library does not encourage independent research. Financial management is good. The headteacher is very skilled at acquiring additional funds from local industry which have been used wisely to improve the outdoor area. Governance is good. Governors are well informed about what is happening in school. Following their contribution to the self-evaluation process, governors are more involved in decision-making.

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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	2	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	2	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	2	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	2	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?	2	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	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	1	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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St Leonard's C of E Primary School
Walton Green
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PR5 4JL
18 November 2005

Dear Pupils

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your school. We appreciated the way you greeted us and told us about your school.

We liked these things the most:

your willingness to work hard is excellent and you behave very well

you told us teachers make lessons fun, especially in mathematics, and we agree lessons include lots of variety so that they are exciting

the support from you and your teachers for pupils who find learning difficult is outstanding

we appreciate your real concern for others and know you have raised lots of money to support local and national charities

you know how to keep healthy and look after yourselves

Mr Phillipson looks after the school well; it is a happy and orderly place to learn.

We have asked teachers to look at the following things to make your school even better:

in the infants some pupils could improve their writing

we would like you to have more information about how to make your work better so that you can check for yourselves how well you are doing

Mr Phillipson has targets to improve your school; we would like it to be easier to check that they have been met and have improved your standards even more.

We hope you enjoyed your non-uniform day and are sure you will recall these special days as you move on to your next schools. Best wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully

Mrs J E Platt and Mr G Yates

Inspectors

Annex B