

Ribbleton Avenue Methodist Junior School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 119354 |
| Local Authority | Lancashire |
| Inspection number | 291394 |
| Inspection dates | 28–29 June 2007 |
| Reporting inspector | Michael Onyon |

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

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| Type of school | Junior |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 7–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 247 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Rvd Peter Sheasby |
| Headteacher | Mrs Dillys Hone |
| Date of previous school inspection | 1 December 2002 |
| School address | Emerson Road Preston Lancashire PR1 5SN |
| Telephone number | 01772 792083 |
| Fax number | 01772 792083 |

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|--------------------------|-----------------|
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized school in an area with high levels of socio-economic deprivation. An above average proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and a significant number of are at early stages of English language acquisition. A high proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The number of pupils who have a statement of special educational need is also above the national average. Approximately two thirds of pupils are entitled to a free school meal. The school is affiliated to a local Excellence cluster and has gained the national Healthy Schools award and Active Sports mark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school that provides good value for money. Its partnerships with other local schools through networks and links with external agencies are outstanding and enhance the provision for pupils very well. The school is valued highly by the parents; it is a happy and welcoming community. The pupils' personal development and well-being are good, because the school works hard to help pupils to overcome the many difficulties that they face. Pupils enjoy their time at the school and speak of the activities available to them and the support they receive. They take on positions of responsibility around school with enthusiasm, and the work of the school council contributes well to the development of the school. Their behaviour is good. At breaks and lunchtimes, pupils play happily together and respond well to the 'positive play' programme. Incidents of bullying are rare and are dealt with effectively. Most pupils are open and friendly and there is a well-developed expectation that they will share their feelings honestly with each other and with staff. This contributes to very effective social awareness and ensures that pupils feel safe and have someone to talk to if they face difficulties. Despite the considerable efforts of the school to improve it, attendance is broadly average. Overall the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good. The pupils are well aware of the importance of healthy lifestyles and willingly take part in a range of physical activities. The effective work of the 'Behaviour Intervention Project' (BIP) successfully encourages good interpersonal skills and prepares pupils well for future learning. Pupils' positive attitudes reflect the good pastoral care they receive. Support for the most vulnerable pupils is particularly strong.

Standards on entry to the school are below average but the pupils make good progress and they achieve well. In the 2006 national tests, the school's results show that standards were in line with the national averages in English, mathematics and science, continuing the trend of steadily improving results over the past five years. This is because the school has worked successfully on improving the quality of teaching, which is now good, and by developing effective assessment systems. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully and potential underachievement halted by appropriate intervention and well-planned support. The targets set for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are sometimes too broad to guide the planning of learning, or to help the pupils recognise how well they are doing. Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive effective support from specialist staff that helps them make good progress. All pupils receive encouraging feedback about their work, but marking is not yet consistent enough to ensure that all pupils know what they must do to improve. The curriculum is good and meets the needs of all pupils well. There is a good range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities to support pupils' academic and personal development.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher has set a clear direction for the development of a school where all pupils are expected to achieve well. She is supported well by a dedicated leadership team, who share a strong vision and each plays an influential role in improvement. There are well established systems for monitoring which lead to effective self-evaluation. The school has good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use marking more consistently to enable pupils to understand what they need to do to improve their learning.

- Ensure that pupils know what they need to achieve and understand how well they are making progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children enter school with attainment below average, particularly in language and social skills. They make good progress throughout the school and achieve well. In 2006, standards were in line with the national average and had risen gradually over the previous three years. The school recognises barriers to learning and tackles them successfully, enabling all pupils to progress well. Learners with difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language achieve well. Pupils with statements of special educational need do particularly well. The school met its challenging targets for the proportion of pupils gaining the nationally expected levels at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2006. Internal monitoring data and observations during the inspection show that progress for pupils in the current Year 6 is good and they are on course to reach average standards in English, mathematics and science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being, including pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Pupils are attentive in class and enjoy their lessons. Overall, behaviour is good. The school acknowledges some challenging behaviour and manages it well. Pupils understand that bullying is not tolerated. They care well for one another; they understand and respect the feelings, beliefs and values of others. Staff work effectively to promote inclusion and equality. This was particularly evident in effective assemblies seen during the inspection. Attendance is average and regular class attendance awards enable pupils to work collaboratively and to develop teamwork and social skills. Pupils' understanding of economic well-being is enhanced through opportunities to take on responsibilities and contribute to decision-making. For example, the school council organises fundraising events for charities and enables the school to provide free fruit for the pupils. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers know their pupils well. Teachers and teaching assistants treat their pupils with kindness and respect. As a result, pupils respond positively and most behave well. Where teaching is good, relationships are good at all levels, pupils are well motivated and benefit by working with peer mentors, with whom they can share their ideas. Lessons have pace and a good variety of activities and resources are available to the pupils. Assessment, in subjects other than English, was an area for development at the time of the previous inspection. This is much improved and teachers track the progress of their pupils well. As a result, any difficulties pupils are having are highlighted and the school uses the effective intervention and mentoring groups to address identified learning issues. The quality of marking is inconsistent and guidance is not always offered to pupils to help pupils understand what they need to do to improve their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and meets all statutory requirements. Good provision for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) provides pupils with the basic skills they need in all subjects. Pupils are suitably prepared for further learning and their future economic well-being. In the main, the curriculum is adapted well to meet the needs of all groups of learners, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and pupils learning to speak English as an additional language. The school is beginning to make learning more meaningful by linking different subjects. Class work is enriched well by visits and visitors, projects and themed weeks, for example, the 'healthy schools' week during the inspection. Pupils are eager to attend the after-school clubs. The effective programme for personal and social development ensures pupils are happy, confident learners who enjoy school and progress well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. The school nurtures and values all its pupils and provides a safe, welcoming and stimulating environment. The quality of display is good and reflects the school's ethos of celebrating pupils' achievement in all its forms. Vulnerable pupils are looked after well and those with challenging behaviour are well supported, through effective links with a number of outside agencies. The Behaviour Intervention Project personnel, working in the school, are particularly effective in helping pupils to achieve well, through their sensitive and caring intervention. Relationships with parents and carers are positive and school surveys demonstrate a high degree of satisfaction with its work. Appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place. Most pupils are given clear and challenging targets, although those for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do not always enable pupils to recognise how well they have done.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good. A strong ethos and sense of purpose have been established by the headteacher. There is a clear focus on improvement and high quality provision to support pupils' personal development. She is supported well by a committed senior leadership team who work hard to bring about improvement. There are excellent well established partnerships with other schools, agencies and organisations that support pupils' learning well. There is a strong sense of teamwork and staff at all levels, together with stakeholders, are actively involved in planning for improvement. The process of monitoring is well established and involves subject leaders in reviewing their areas and senior staff regularly observing teaching. The process of self-evaluation is good and the school's judgements are accurate. The governors are supportive of the school and are well aware of the strengths and areas for development. They hold the school to account effectively for its progress. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
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Overall effectiveness

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| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 2 |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 2 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 2 |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes |

Achievement and standards

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|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve? | 2 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 3 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 2 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 2 |

Personal development and well-being

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|---|---|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 2 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners | 2 |
| The attendance of learners | 3 |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 2 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 |

The quality of provision

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

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

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| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 2 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 2 |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets | 2 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 2 |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money | 2 |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 2 |
| Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements? | Yes |
| Does this school require special measures? | No |
| Does this school require a notice to improve? | No |

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

3 July 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Ribbleton Avenue Methodist Junior School, Lancashire,

PR1 5SN

Thank you for making us so welcome in your school and for your help during the recent inspection. We thought you were well behaved, polite, treated each other well and worked hard in your lessons. We enjoyed talking to you and listening to what you had to say about your school. You are in a good school where all staff work hard to help you do your best. You told us that you liked your school and enjoy your lessons as well as the clubs, visits and visitors. You are rightly very proud of your status as a Healthy School and achieving the Active Sports mark. You know a lot about staying safe and being healthy. You take part in a range of themed weeks which help you learn about a wide range of topics. You also care for each other and take on responsibilities so helping you to become good citizens as you get older.

The school has the right ideas about what to do to improve. We have asked the staff to help you understand what you need to do to improve when your work is marked, and for your learning targets to show clearly what you need to achieve and reflect how well you are making progress. You can help by doing all you can to attend school regularly, and by trying your best at all times. It was a pleasure to visit your school. Keep working hard so that you continue to do well.

Best wishes

Michael Onyon

Lead inspector