



Aughton Christ Church Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119370
Local Authority Lancashire
Inspection number 291399
Inspection date 8 February 2007
Reporting inspector Joe Clark

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Long Lane
School category	Voluntary controlled		Aughton, Ormskirk
Age range of pupils	4-11		Lancashire, L39 5AS
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01695 421391
Number on roll (school)	182	Fax number	01695 423805
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Reverend Ross Moughtin
		Headteacher	Mrs Barbara Stevens
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Aughton Christ Church Primary School is of average size. Most children come from areas of relative social and economic advantage. Very few children are entitled to free school meals. Children's attainment at entry to the Reception class is above average. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and disabilities is average. Almost all the children are of White British heritage and only a tiny minority do not speak English as their main language. The school has a Healthy School Award and a Basic Skills Award. There is a privately funded Nursery on site which had a separate inspection in 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school where children attain high standards and achieve well. Results in national tests at the end of Year 6 are usually above average. In 2006, results were above average in English and science but dipped in mathematics to average. Children enter and leave the Reception class with standards that exceed national expectations. They make good progress as they move through the school, maintaining high standards and achieving above average results at the end of each key stage of learning. Children with learning and physical disabilities make excellent progress because the support they receive is outstanding. The achievement of all children is due to their excellent attitudes to work and to good teaching. Teachers' planning is good and the tasks set in lessons take account of the different ability groups within the class. Teaching assistants offer valuable support.

The nurturing of children's personal qualities is outstanding. Teachers and other adults are very good role models. Relationships between children and adults are very supportive. Boys' behaviour is good; girls' behaviour is outstanding. Attendance is above average. Children enjoy coming to school where the care, guidance and support they receive is good. They take full advantage of the good range of extra-curricular activities the school provides, especially in sport and music. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptional, reflecting the school's strong Christian values and the emphasis the curriculum places on developing the whole child. The curriculum is well matched to children's needs. Children talk knowledgeably about the importance of healthy eating and keeping fit. They are eager to take on responsibility and they contribute well to the life of the community, for example in the local parish.

Children consistently achieve well because school leadership, particularly by the headteacher, maintains a clear focus on ensuring children achieve their full potential both academically and in their personal lives. The day-to-day management of the school is good, despite recent and current staffing difficulties. Links with other schools and institutions are good. The school is beginning to use data effectively to track children's progress and identify underachievement but more could be done, especially to support higher attaining pupils. The current vacancy in senior leadership is a major impediment to the school's capacity to improve further, because the school is not able currently to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Governance is satisfactory. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and very happy with what the school provides. As one parent wrote: 'My children are benefiting from being part of a wonderful school with an extraordinary headteacher, and enthusiastic and caring staff.'

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics.
- Track the progress of individual children to identify those who may be underachieving and need extra support, including higher attaining children.
- Monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning more effectively.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children enter the Reception class with standards that are generally, but not always, above national expectations. They make good progress and, by the end of this Foundation Stage, they are achieving above expected levels in most areas of learning. Through Years 1 to 6, both boys and girls continue to progress well and, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, results in national tests are usually above average. Results in English have been above average in each year since 2002 and were significantly above average in 2003 and 2004.

Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 in 2006 were above average. Fewer children than expected achieved the higher levels in both English and mathematics. Statutory targets at the end of Key Stage 2 provide appropriate challenge and are usually achieved in English and science, but not mathematics. The school has correctly identified standards in mathematics as an area for development. Throughout the school, children with learning and physical disabilities make excellent progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, reflecting the school's strong Christian commitment to personal values. Local clergy, and other Christian groups such as the Jaffa Club, make an excellent contribution to children's spiritual and moral development. Community involvement is good and children give very generously to local and national charities, such as the British Heart Foundation. Children enjoy taking on responsibility through the several opportunities the school provides, such as class monitors and playground buddies, or as members of the school council, but did say they would enjoy even more!

Children like coming to school. Their attendance is above average, with very few unauthorised absences. Boys' attitudes and behaviour are good; girls' are excellent. Children enjoy their lessons and take part enthusiastically in the good range of extra-curricular activities the school provides, particularly in sport. They feel secure and happy in their relationships with both adults and each other. The development of good fundamental skills in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) bodes well for future economic well-being. Children are well aware of the benefits of safe practices and adopting a healthy life-style, as a result of good curriculum provision, especially in sport.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Classrooms at Aughton Christ Church Primary School are inspiring places. 'Teachers make lessons fun and interesting' was a typical Year 6 comment. Consequently, children are well motivated and learn well. ICT is used effectively to help children learn, for example, in using video to analyse and improve performance in physical education. Relationships are excellent and provide invaluable support and encouragement in motivating children to want to learn. Although lesson planning is generally good and takes into account the different ability groups in the class when setting tasks, it does not always ensure that higher attaining children are challenged enough to reach the higher national curriculum levels. Teaching assistants provide effective support. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are good because teachers have a good understanding of how children learn and there is good emphasis on practical activities.

Assessment is satisfactory. There is good practice in some areas, such as English, but more consistency is needed in other subjects. Children's work is marked regularly but teachers do not always provide them with enough detailed information of how well they are doing and what it is they need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets the needs of children well. All statutory requirements are met and the provision of two modern foreign languages for most children, and three for Year 6 children, extends and enhances children's learning. Good links exist with the local high school, for example, in music, and with other local primary schools in mathematics. Provision for children with learning and physical difficulties is excellent. The school has spent generously on providing extra resources for this group of children and their progress is outstanding. The curriculum support for higher attaining children is not as effective so they do not all achieve Level 5 grades in national tests at the end of Year 6. The good range of extra-curricular activities and the very good residential visits and trips enrich the curriculum. Visiting artists, musicians, actors and story tellers add colour and variety to children's learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of the care, guidance and support the school provides for its children is good. Links with outside agencies and other providers are good. Child protection procedures are in place. Children feel safe in school and trust their teachers and other adults. They say there is no bullying in school. Relationships and communication with parents are good. Good links with the partner high school help pupils transfer at the end of Year 6. Support for children with learning and physical difficulties is outstanding, particularly in the provision of specialist teacher support, and they make excellent

progress. The guidance children receive on how to improve their academic work is satisfactory. Assessment data is not used consistently well to track all children's progress as they move through the school, in order to identify any underachievement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership. Supported by a highly experienced and effective team of teachers and other staff, she has provided the focus that has ensured children achieve well academically, and exceptionally well in their personal development. Parents and other carers, over 50% of whom responded to a questionnaire, expressed overwhelming support for the way the school is run and were very pleased with the high standard of education they believe their children receive.

The school knows itself well and has accurately identified where improvements are needed. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed. The management of the whole school is satisfactory. There is currently no deputy headteacher and the headteacher teaches three days a week. As a result, the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is currently on hold. This situation also makes it harder for the school to ascertain the reasons for the dip in mathematics in the national tests.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors are very supportive of the school and ensure all statutory requirements are met. They have established good links with curriculum areas. However, as a result of budgetary difficulties, now under control, governors have been unable to ensure the school has a viable management structure. Because of this, and despite the effective progress since the last inspection, the capacity to improve is only satisfactory.

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Inspection judgements

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

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?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
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

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.

Leadership and management

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	3
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	3
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

Aughton Christ Church C of E Primary School

Long Lane

Aughton

Ormskirk

Lancashire

L39 5AS

2 February 2007

Dear Children,

Thank you so much for your warm welcome when I visited your school recently. I really appreciated the help you gave me and the interesting things you told me about your school. The next time I go to Chester Zoo I will certainly look out for the elephant you have adopted!

These are some of the things I thought about your school:

- Your school is a good school; it does some things brilliantly, such as helping you to become thoughtful, considerate, well behaved and kind to others, for example.
- You really enjoy school and your attendance is better than most other schools.
- Your teachers teach you well and the standards you achieve in English and science are higher than in most schools, but I think you can do better in mathematics.
- Those of you who have learning and physical difficulties make excellent progress.
- You are very generous and each year you raise an amazing amount of money for charity. I enjoyed watching the preparations for your Charity Balloon Launch.

I have asked the school to help you do even better by:

- Helping you to improve your work in mathematics.
- Carefully tracking your progress, so that your teachers can spot if you start falling behind in your work and then help you improve.
- Check the quality of teaching and learning regularly.

Thank you once again for being so friendly and helpful and good luck for the future!

Yours faithfully,

Joe Clark

Lead Inspector