



Read St John's C of E Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119389
Local Authority Lancashire
Inspection number 291405
Inspection dates 7–8 November 2006
Reporting inspector Jackie Barnes

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Straits Lane
School category	Voluntary controlled		Read, Burnley
Age range of pupils	4–11		Lancashire, BB12 7PE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01282 771065
Number on roll (school)	179	Fax number	01282 772759
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Clive Bennett
		Headteacher	Mrs Joyce Shaw
Date of previous school inspection	1 April 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is located in a semi-rural area on the southern edge of the Forest of Pendle. About half the pupils live locally with the remainder travelling from further afield. The area is reasonably prosperous with most families having at least one parent in paid work. Entitlement to free school meals is low. Most families are of White British origin, with a small number from minority ethnic backgrounds. No pupil is at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The pupils start school with different skills and knowledge but overall their achievement tends to be above the expectations for their age group.

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, which is improving and has the confidence of its parents. Pupils make good progress in their personal development. They are well behaved, enjoy school and are keen to learn. They respect adults and each other, and know how to live safe and healthy lives. Pupils are well cared for by staff and current requirements for safeguarding them are in place.

Satisfactory teaching in the Foundation Stage encourages them to settle quickly and the teaching meets the needs of most of the children. By the time they enter Year 1, most attain above nationally expected standards. By Year 2, pupils attain well above average standards. In the next four years, pupils' progress is satisfactory overall, but varies from year to year. Some pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Standards are above average. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall with examples of consistently good teaching in the middle years where pupils make their best progress. The satisfactory curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to make progress. The additional activities the school provides are well attended and pupils particularly enjoy their participation in sport and the arts.

Leadership and management, including governance, are satisfactory. The school has a calm and welcoming atmosphere. Most staff with leadership responsibilities have successfully improved their skills, with the help of the local authority. However, these individual skills are not yet integrated into a leadership and management team that is fully effective in making sure that pupils' achieve as well as they can. As a result, the school's self-evaluation is not well informed in this key aspect of the school's performance.

What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate the rate of pupils' overall progress in Key Stage 2.
- Increase the amount of good teaching and learning for pupils of all abilities, especially in the oldest year groups.
- Make more efficient use of the skills of senior staff to have a greater impact on the consistency of pupils' achievement and to improve the accuracy of the school's self-evaluation.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory and standards are above average. Children start school in the Reception year with differing pre-school experiences and their competence varies widely. A few do not have the skills and knowledge expected for their age, but many exceed these. The children enjoy school, make satisfactory progress and, by the end of the Reception year, the attainment of most is better than expected for their age.

The school's national test results for Year 2 pupils in 2005 were significantly above average overall. The 2006 results for Year 2 maintained this high standard with an increase in the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 in reading and writing. The results for Year 6 were about average overall in 2005 with too few of the more able pupils attaining the higher Level 5. Compared with when they were in Year 2, they underachieved. These results represented a dip compared to the previous year. In 2006, the results for Year 6 improved, especially in mathematics. They were above average overall with the more capable pupils attaining suitably high standards. Pupils' work in lessons and in their books indicates that progress is satisfactory overall. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve consistently well through the school, mainly due to the additional support they receive. The pace of other pupils' progress is inconsistent from year to year, resulting mainly from the variable quality of teaching and planning for learning in class lessons. This inhibits pupils' achievement, especially in the oldest year groups.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils' personal development is good; they are friendly, polite and well behaved. Pupils have good attitudes in the classroom and show enjoyment in their learning. Most pupils attend well. Pupils clearly know right from wrong and say they feel safe and secure. As one pupil said, 'Some people have arguments but there is no bullying'. Pupils know how to follow a healthy lifestyle and there is evidence that they do so. For example, they enjoy after school sporting opportunities. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They enjoyed the recent multi-cultural week and speak knowledgeably about faiths and cultures that are different from their own. Their spiritual development is enhanced through links with the church. Pupils show their concern for others less fortunate by engaging in charity fund raising. Through meetings with elected members of the school council, they develop an awareness of democracy and make their views known. They have helped to design and finance an exciting playground development due to start shortly.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In all year groups, relationships are good and encourage confident learners. Consistently good teaching is evident in the small support groups and in Years 2, 3 and 4. In these lessons, teachers' knowledge is good and the pupils' learning is carefully planned with a lively approach, which captures and keeps their interest. Teaching points are clearly sequenced and due attention is paid to the progress made by individual pupils. Pupils across the ability range have teaching and tasks that provide challenge well matched to their needs. The pace of lessons is brisk, and pupils are enthusiastic and proud of their rapidly growing

competence. Although some of these elements are evident in all year groups, there is a lack of consistency. Especially variable is the focus on planning the pupils' learning and on checking that each makes the progress needed to attain suitably high standards. Too often, teaching and tasks are similar for the whole class. As a result, some pupils have work that is too hard or too easy and this slows their progress. The progress of some older pupils tends to level out, especially in the final two years in school. Where marking successfully involves the pupils, they have a good understanding of the extent of their learning and take an active part in deciding what they need to do next. Where the teaching is satisfactory, marking is not used with similar success as an integral part of planning for further learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. All the required subjects are taught and the school has good provision for visits and visitors. Voluntary out-of-school activities, including sport, the arts and French, are well attended and add to the pupils' enjoyment and personal development. The provision for the Foundation Stage curriculum is in the process of undergoing considerable updating. This is working well; although, not yet complete. Pupils' personal development is well provided for, with due attention given to learning how to live safe and healthy lives. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good and they achieve and develop well. The planning for other pupils to make the best of the curriculum, especially in literacy and numeracy, is satisfactory but not yet good enough for all to achieve as well as they can. Too often, the useful guidance and lesson plans provided nationally for teachers are not well enough adapted to the wide range of pupils' needs in each year group.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school takes good care of pupils and keeps them safe and happy. There is a trusting relationship between adults and pupils. Staff guide pupils well in their personal development, especially their behaviour, and pupils take correction well. The most vulnerable pupils are well supported and generally achieve well. The academic guidance for other pupils is satisfactory but not yet good enough to provide consistently brisk progress through school. The school's assessment information is now close to providing the data to enable all pupils' progress to be checked regularly and expectations set for the next stage of their learning. This is already working well in a minority of year groups.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school has a calm and welcoming atmosphere and well-established daily routines mean that it runs smoothly. The headteacher, with support from middle managers, has ensured that improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. They

have responded well to additional help and advice from the local authority and the momentum for change and improvement has increased over the past two years. This has helped to maintain above average standards at the end of Year 2, improve the curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage, improve the overall quality of teaching and strengthen the arrangements for assessing pupils' progress. The headteacher has provided much of the enthusiasm and foresight for these improvements. New and sometimes inexperienced staff have been encouraged and supported in developing their leadership skills to the point where they are now having an impact on teaching and learning.

Changes in staffing and more clearly defined responsibilities for teachers with management roles have strengthened the school's leadership and management. The school's self-evaluation, although satisfactory in quality, lacks accuracy in its appraisal in some elements of the school's effectiveness, particularly in evaluating the quality of teaching and its impact on the pupils' progress. Middle managers have insufficient input to this process and their improved skills in management are not used efficiently to decide on actions to add greater consistency to the pupils' achievement. Governors are supportive, have a suitable range of committees and good contact with the school. Their ability to contribute towards setting accurate priorities for further development is limited by the quality of the school's self-evaluation. Overall, the leadership and management provide the school with satisfactory capacity to improve.

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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

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	2
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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
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	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

Read St John's C of E Primary School

Straits Lane

Read

Burnley

Lancashire

BB12 7PE

7 November 2006

Dear Children

Thank you for making the inspectors so welcome when we visited your school. You helped us to understand how much you enjoyed school, and valued your friends and teachers. You behave well, have good manners and look after each other. You say you feel safe in school and you are growing into mature young people who take their responsibilities seriously. You know how to have fun, and how to make good decisions about your health and safety. You make satisfactory progress in your work and many of you attain good standards.

We feel that you can do even better. So, we have asked your school to make sure that you have more of the good teaching that we saw, and that your progress is watched carefully to make sure you are succeeding as well as you can. We are sure that you will help by continuing to work hard and behave well. We liked the way you gave a 'thumbs up or down', to let your teachers know if you found your work too hard or too easy.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

J M Barnes

Lead inspector