

Oswaldtwistle Hippings Methodist Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 119398 |
| Local Authority | Lancashire |
| Inspection number | 291408 |
| Inspection dates | 20–21 March 2007 |
| Reporting inspector | Keith Bardon |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 211 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mrs Dorothy Barnes |
| Headteacher | Mrs Janice Lewer |
| Date of previous school inspection | 1 January 2002 |
| School address | Heron Way Oswaldtwistle Accrington Lancashire BB5 3BT |
| Telephone number | 01254 234089 |
| Fax number | 01254 234089 |

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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 primary in a small industrial town. The school serves an urban area with social and economic characteristics that are below the national averages. With very few exceptions, pupils are from White British families. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average but an average proportion has a statement of special educational need. Children's attainment on entry to Reception is a little below that typical of the age group. The school has had a change of headteacher since it was last inspected.

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 which is popular with parents. Under the watchful guidance of the headteacher, the school provides pupils with a stimulating education which promotes all aspects of their growth and development. Good teaching combined with a responsive and caring environment and lively curriculum ensures that pupils of all ages achieve well.

Provision for Foundation Stage children is good and gives them a secure start to school. By the end of Reception standards are broadly average with most children showing the skills and knowledge expected of young learners. By the end of Year 2 standards have risen and are above average. Standards are maintained at this level through Key Stage 2 and by Year 6 are above average. Pupils' performance in the national assessments and tests is often good. In 2006, Year 6 pupils did particularly well in English. Results in mathematics were around the national average but not as good as English and science and there is room for improvement.

Pupils work hard and their learning is good. Most lessons are planned carefully and taught well and this enables pupils of all ages to maintain a good rate of progress. Teachers' knowledge is generally good but not as secure in mathematics as in other subjects. Pupils value the good relationships they have with staff and appreciate the help and support that is readily available should they need it. Teachers make learning interesting so that pupils enjoy school and attend regularly. At times teachers' marking does not give pupils sufficient information about how to improve.

Pupils are well behaved and sensible. They listen carefully to their teachers and concentrate hard on the tasks they are set. On occasions, pupils do not have opportunities to evaluate how well they are doing for themselves. Pupils recognise what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and show very caring attitudes to the needs of others, particularly those less fortunate than themselves. The many personal qualities and academic skills pupils acquire lay a firm foundation for the future.

Leadership and management are good. Since she took over the school the headteacher has used her experience to build on the school's firm foundations and to put it on the road to further improvement. A core of effective management procedures ensures that the school runs smoothly. Senior staff work closely as a team, monitoring the school's work thoroughly and making well informed decisions to ensure pupils' needs are met. Governors fulfil their responsibilities well and play a full and active part in the life of the school. They visit the school regularly, support all aspects of its work and constantly challenge it to do even better. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics, particularly for higher attaining pupils.
- Provide pupils with better opportunities to evaluate their progress and achievements for themselves.
- Improve the quality of marking so that pupils have a clearer picture of what they need to do better.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and by the end of Year 6 standards are above average. When they first start at the school, children's attainment is slightly below that which is typical for their age. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage and by the end of Reception their attainment meets expectations in all areas of learning. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1. For some time Year 2 pupils have performed consistently well in the national assessments. In 2006 results were above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The standards attained by Year 6 pupils in the national tests have also been above average in most years. 2006 saw a marked improvement in English results stemming from a successful focus on raising standards in writing. By contrast, results fell in mathematics. Overall results in 2006 were well above average in English, above average in science and broadly average in mathematics. The school exceeded the targets it had set in English but missed its target for higher attaining pupils in mathematics. Although boys performed better than girls in 2006 this was due to the make up of the classes and across the school as a whole there is little gender difference in attainment. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make similar good progress to other pupils, and achieve well relative to their abilities.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good and they make rapid progress in all aspects of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school's relaxed but purposeful atmosphere encourages good relationships and makes for a caring environment. As a result pupils mature into sensible, confident young people with a strong sense of personal and social responsibility. Pupils of all ages behave well both in and out of lessons. Pupils say they feel safe and secure, and the school is without bullies. They smile readily and join in all activities enthusiastically. They show a healthy curiosity for new ideas and listen attentively when others are speaking. Although pupils will occasionally ask questions of their own this is not something they do often enough. Pupils' appreciation of the need for a healthy lifestyle is good and most try hard to eat sensibly and to take regular exercise. As they progress through the school pupils acquire a wide range of interpersonal and academic skills which lay a firm foundation for future learning and life. Reception children make a secure start, quickly gaining the personal skills they need to enjoy learning in the company of others.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good in most lessons and subjects. Pupils enjoy their lessons and make good progress because, as they told inspectors, the work they are given is interesting and fun. Teachers plan and organise lessons well, building carefully on what pupils have already learned and making productive links between subjects. The teaching of mathematics is less effective than in other subjects because the work is not always matched well enough to pupils' individual needs. Good relationships help pupils to work with confidence; this ensures good behaviour and positive attitudes to work. Pupils concentrate hard, think carefully before answering questions, and work well in groups and on their own. Although not afraid to ask

questions they do not always ask enough. Lessons usually commence with teachers sharing clear objectives with pupils, although these have a tendency to focus on what pupils are to do rather than what they are to learn. This reduces their efficiency as learning targets and pupils' involvement in evaluating their work and progress are under- developed. Teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously but there are inconsistencies in the amount of information they provide to help pupils improve. Provision in lessons for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. Well structured support from teachers and teaching assistants enables them to participate fully, do their best and make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum provides a wide range of experiences that meet the needs of the pupils. All the required subjects are taught with French the most recent addition. Colourful experiences encourage pupils' learning but the curriculum in mathematics lacks the scope of that provided in other subjects. Reception children receive a well-planned curriculum which covers all the areas of learning. They enjoy an exciting range of activities both in the classroom and outdoors. The outside learning area is small but plans for improvement are in hand. The programme for personal, social and health education and citizenship is good. As well as examining and reflecting on important issues during assemblies and lessons pupils are given opportunities to take part in performances, lead Sunday worship in Church and participate in various activities with their parents. Pupils value the regular visits they make to places of educational interest and enjoy meeting the many visitors to school.

Well planned creative and sporting extra-curricular activities enrich learning for pupils of all ages.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school takes good care of its pupils and guides and supports them well. The required procedures for safeguarding and child protection are in place and good links with outside agencies help ensure that the needs of vulnerable pupils are met. The care and attention they are shown combined with good relationships give pupils a strong sense of security. Support staff work sensitively and skilfully with pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, enabling them to make full use of the opportunities the school provides.

The academic guidance pupils receive is good overall. Pupils' progress over time is tracked carefully and the information used to target those who need support or additional challenge. Procedures for the short term monitoring of pupils' progress are developing satisfactorily and starting to give staff a much fuller picture of how well pupils are doing than they have had in the past.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher, provides the school with clear direction and effective day-to-day management. The close attention paid to pupils' care and welfare makes for a happy school with a strong Christian ethos. Parents hold very positive views of the school which have continued through the change of leadership. Since it was last inspected, the

school has made satisfactory improvement in raising standards and addressing issues from the previous report, although some essential management procedures have only been introduced quite recently.

The school's capacity for further improvement is good. Senior staff and governors have a clear picture of how well the school is performing. Since her appointment a little over a year ago, the headteacher has carefully analysed what is needed to move the school forward. Clear plans have been formed using reliable information gained from effective self-evaluation. Staff have been fully involved and there is a shared vision and purpose. At times the key objectives and success criteria of the school development plan do not focus sharply enough on the key elements of achievement and standards. Governors make a strong contribution to school management. They visit the school regularly, support all aspects of its work and constantly challenge it to do even better.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| <i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i> | 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? | 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 | 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 | 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 | 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 | 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? | 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 |

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

20 March 2007

Heron Way

Oswaldtwistle

Accrington

Lancashire

BB5 3BT

Dear Pupils

Thank you very much for the very friendly greeting you gave us when we visited your school recently. Lots of you smiled and spoke to us, which made us feel comfortable and welcome. Although we were with you for only two days, we thoroughly enjoyed finding out about the work you do, and a special thanks to those who talked with us about the school.

Hippings is a good school and we can see why you enjoy it so much. You told us that you are happy at school and your good attendance shows this. It is good that everyone gets on so well. We are pleased that you feel safe and cared for and that you can get help if you need it. In lessons and around school your behaviour is good. You listen carefully to your teachers and try hard with the work they set. We think that you are growing into sensible young people with a strong sense of responsibility. The progress you make is often good.

Older pupils do not make quite as much progress in mathematics as in other subjects and this is something we have asked the school to look at. You can help by learning as many number facts as you can and always trying to work things out for yourselves.

We looked at other things the school might do to get even better. We have asked your teachers to give you more opportunities to check what you have learned for yourselves. You can help by always thinking carefully about how well you have done and whether you have learned what your teachers wanted you to. When your teachers mark your work we have asked them to write comments on to tell you how to improve next time

Thank you once again for a very enjoyable two days and we wish you lots of luck in the future.

Yours sincerely

Keith Bardon and Sue Sharkey

School inspectors