

Bispham Endowed Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119411
Local Authority	Blackpool
Inspection number	291410
Inspection dates	27–28 March 2007
Reporting inspector	George Crowther

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	432
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	
Headteacher	Mrs Jo Hirst
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2001
School address	Bispham Road Bispham Blackpool FY2 0HH
Telephone number	01253 354672
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large primary school whose social context is slightly less favourable than most schools nationally. Pupils' attainment when they start school has declined in recent years and is now below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Almost all the pupils are from White British backgrounds and no pupil is at an early stage of learning English. In 2002, the school changed status from junior to primary.

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 with many good features. During the past three years, it has been on a steady path of improvement, but has not quite reached a point at which pupils are achieving well right across the school. Since it became a primary school in 2002, there have been many changes in the pupils' profile, staffing and building. These changes have been managed well so that the school is a very positive, friendly and caring community; much appreciated by parents and carers. Determined leadership is ensuring that everyone can now capitalise on these strengths to improve pupils' achievement further.

Achievement is satisfactory and, by Year 6, standards are broadly average. Pupils make good progress in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 because the teaching is good and a wide range of interesting, practical activities encourages them to be enthusiastic learners. Basic skills are taught well and provide a good foundation for future learning. Between Years 3 to 6, pupils' progress is satisfactory. Here, teaching is satisfactory but inconsistent. It is often good, occasionally outstanding but, in some lessons, there is too much emphasis on whole-class teaching, so the pupils are not sufficiently active in their learning. Occasionally, pupils do not learn as quickly as they could because their behaviour is not managed well enough. Teaching and learning overall, therefore, are satisfactory.

Pupils' personal development is good. They enjoy school, are keen to learn and behave well. A strong focus on spiritual, moral, cultural and social issues ensures that pupils develop a good understanding in these areas. Good experiences in school help pupils to know a lot about being healthy and staying safe. They make good contributions to the school community; for example, through the pupil council. Improving standards in Year 6 and good personal skills prepare pupils well for the future. A good curriculum, with some strong features, is enriched by a good range of activities outside lessons.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher, well supported by senior staff, has led the school successfully through a period of considerable change and development. Her good leadership continues to provide a strong impetus for further improvement. As a result, leaders are now focusing much more rigorously on improving pupils' achievement. This has already had a beneficial effect on the younger pupils' progress and has improved results in the national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, but some actions have yet to be seen through to successfully impact on pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6. The school's positive view of recent improvement led it to overvalue some aspects of its work. In practice, however, leaders have a clear view of what the school does well and what needs to be done to improve further. Progress already made in raising pupils' achievement gives the school a good capacity to tackle further aspects of its work that need to improve. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6.
- Improve the consistency of teaching in Years 3 to 6.
- Ensure the impact of action taken to improve pupils' achievement is measured rigorously to ensure that the required improvements are being made.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. However, the picture of achievement and standards is complicated because groups of pupils of varying abilities have joined the school at different times. Currently, children start school with below average attainment. In the Nursery and Reception classes, a rich range of activities and good support for learning help children to make good progress. By the end of the Reception year, they reach the goals expected of five-year-olds. In Years 1 and 2, pupils continue to make good progress. Over the past three years, results of the Year 2 teacher assessments have risen and, in 2006, were just above average. Pupils in the current Year 2 are making similarly good progress.

Standards in Year 6 have also improved. In 2006, they were above average in mathematics but average in English and science. Achievement from Year 3 to Year 6 has been improving but is still satisfactory. Pupils in the current Year 6 started school with average levels of attainment and have made satisfactory progress to reach broadly average standards. Pupils of all abilities, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make similar progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

This is a happy school that develops pupils' personal skills successfully and encourages positive attitudes to life and learning. As a result, the pupils really enjoy school and attendance is good. A typical comment was, 'I like all the lessons because we do lots of different things and the teachers make them fun'. Pupils also enjoy the wide variety of extra activities out of lessons. Behaviour is good. Pupils are friendly, polite and confident to discuss their views with adults. They get on very well together, working cooperatively in lessons and playing sensibly at break times.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Assemblies, living by the school's behaviour rules and opportunities such as residential visits all contribute to pupils' growing understanding of themselves and the wider world. Pupils have a good understanding of their own well-being. They know their school is a healthy school where exercise and eating the right things are important. They feel safe in school because, 'If you've got a problem, the teachers will help you'. Extra responsibilities, such as being a monitor, help pupils to make a good contribution to the school community. The views of the pupil council are listened to and acted upon.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. It is good and occasionally outstanding in many lessons throughout the school, but too often satisfactory for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Lessons are planned carefully and, for the most part, what pupils are intended to learn is shared clearly with them. Where teaching is good, the intended learning is a strong feature throughout the lesson and keeps pupils focused on their work. Good relationships and plenty of praise for success are strong features of many lessons. Whole class sessions are often lively and interesting, which capture and hold the pupils' attention.

In a few lessons, however, pupils are not involved actively enough and so the pace of learning slows. Occasionally, pupils do not learn as quickly as they could because their behaviour is not managed well enough. The school has good systems for assessing pupils' attainment. As yet, however, this information is not used consistently to ensure that work in lessons helps all pupils to make good progress. Most marking of pupils' work provides praise and points out errors, but only the best examples suggest how pupils can improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is well planned so that academic, personal, creative and physical skills are taught in a balanced way. A wide range of interesting experiences support pupils' learning effectively. For some pupils in Years 3 to 6, however, work in English and mathematics does not meet their needs fully because it is not ensuring good progress. A good curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage uses stimulating activities indoors and outside to develop children's skills quickly. Good support for pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities help them to play a full part in all activities and there is extra provision for pupils who are gifted or talented.

A good programme for personal, social and health education plays a strong part in nurturing pupils' personal development. Extra activities enrich the curriculum; including, French, a health week and visits to interesting places such as a Hindu temple. A wide range of activities outside lessons, particularly sport and music, adds greatly to pupils' enjoyment of school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Positive relationships and a very caring environment ensure that pupils are safe, happy and ready to learn. As one governor said, 'This is a very happy school that cares for all its children.' Parents and carers say their children are safe and well cared for in school. A good example is the lunchtime club, which is successful in helping pupils who feel they need a little extra support. Child protection and all other checks to safeguard pupils' well-being are in place. The school has strong links with other agencies in supporting pupils' needs for example, those agencies that help pupils to be healthy.

Systems to track pupils' academic progress are satisfactory. Teachers set targets for pupils' learning, in lessons and for the longer term, but these are not all consistently good. As a result, whilst pupils' progress is good in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2, it is satisfactory between Years 3 to 6.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher is an energetic and determined leader who, with good support from senior colleagues and governors, has guided the school successfully through a period of considerable changes. The school is still working its way through the change from junior to primary status, particularly in Years 5 and 6 where many pupils have not had the benefit of a consistent primary education. As a result, although pupils' progress during Years 3 to 6 has improved, and standards at the end of Year 6 have risen, pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory. Leaders have been very successful in sustaining a positive, caring environment for learning and nurturing strong teamwork amongst the staff.

The school's evaluation of its own effectiveness is satisfactory. Leaders are clear about what needs to be done to drive forward improvement but their judgements are rather more positive than the inspection findings. Leaders check carefully on pupils' progress and the quality of teaching and learning, and use the information to identify and tackle areas for improvement. Measures to improve pupils' achievement in mathematics have led to much better results in Year 6 national tests. In some areas, such as writing, the action being taken has not yet had a clear impact on pupils' achievement. Governors are very supportive of the school and recognise many of its strengths and areas for development. They are not afraid to ask searching questions of management. They do not have a clear enough understanding, however, of what the school is doing to tackle weaknesses in pupils' achievement.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<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

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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	3

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?	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

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	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	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

29 March 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bispham Endowed Church of England Primary School, Blackpool, FY2 0HH

Thank you for being so helpful when I visited your school to find out how well you are doing. There are lots of good things about your school, but I also found a few ways in which it could be even better. The strengths I found are:

- your school is a very happy school where everyone gets on well together
- you were very friendly, polite and helpful when we asked you questions
- you behave well in lessons, in assemblies and around the school
- in most lessons, you are keen to learn and you make good progress
- you know a lot about ways to be healthy
- the pupil councillors do a good job expressing your views
- most of the lessons we saw were interesting and helped you to learn quickly
- you enjoy all the clubs and activities outside lessons.
- the lunchtime club is a good idea
- you like the way the staff take good care of you
- your headteacher and all the staff are working hard to improve the school.

We would like you to work with your teachers to improve the way you learn.

- We think those of you in Years 3 to 6 could be making better progress. We have asked your teachers to make sure the work they give you in lessons helps you to learn quickly. You must also try your best.
- Your teachers check carefully on how you are doing with your work to find ways you can learn more rapidly. We want them to check carefully that these new strategies are helping you to improve your work.

Thank you for helping us with the inspection of your school.

Yours sincerely

George Crowther

Lead Inspector