



Livesey Saint Francis' Church of England School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119423
Local Authority Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number 291412
Inspection dates 2–3 November 2006
Reporting inspector Elisabeth Linley HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Cherry Tree Lane
School category	Voluntary aided		Cherry Tree, Blackburn
Age range of pupils	4–11		Lancashire, BB2 5NX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01254 201419
Number on roll (school)	208	Fax number	01254 200571
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Pat Rushton
		Headteacher	Mrs Sharon Thomas
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2001		

Age group 4–11	Inspection dates 2–3 November 2006	Inspection number 291412
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This church school attracts pupils from beyond its immediate locality. As a result, a significant proportion of pupils travel to school by car or bus. The majority of pupils who attend are White British and a very small proportion are registered for free school meals. Although the percentage of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, the percentage of pupils who have statements for their educational need is broadly average.

Since the time of the last inspection, building work has taken place and the school now has a dedicated ICT suite. There is no longer a class based in the hall and there are no longer mixed age classes. A breakfast club has also been established. The headteacher has been in post for just over a year and there is currently an acting deputy headteacher.

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. Since the time of the last inspection staff have worked hard to improve the quality of provision and pupils' achievement. In this, they have been successful. Standards attained in the national tests for pupils in Year 6, for example, have improved year on year and in 2005 and 2006 they were well above average. Writing, however, remains an area for development throughout school as standards are not consistently high enough.

Good quality teaching overall aids pupils' good achievement. The school's focus on the use of assessment to support learning is helping to ensure that learning and achievement are placed firmly at the heart of every lesson. However, as this is a recent development, there is still some inconsistency in the way that assessment information is used in lessons to ensure that pupils' needs are always met effectively. Equally, marking of pupils' work does not consistently aid pupils in knowing how to improve.

Improvements have been made in the tracking of pupils' progress. As a result, the school has a good overview of how well pupils are doing over time. This ensures that intervention strategies are well thought through and implemented to make a difference to pupils' learning. This good academic guidance contributes well to the overall care, guidance and support that pupils receive.

The care and welfare of pupils are good and reflect the school's Christian ethos, which is highly valued by parents. The vast majority of parents are supportive of the school and appreciate its contribution to their children's good personal development. Pupils are confident and keen to be involved, for example, as members of the school council. They enjoy school and this is reflected in their good behaviour and above average attendance.

Good progress has been made overall since the last inspection as a result of good leadership and management. Governors are effective in their role and contribute well as a critical friend to the school. The headteacher is ably supported by the acting deputy headteacher and together they provide a good lead for the school's future development. Some middle managers, however, have taken on new responsibilities and are yet to develop the full capacity of their roles. Nonetheless, monitoring and evaluation are now more robust and aid self-evaluation effectively.

Finances are managed well and the school is benefiting from the recent new build of an information and communication technology (ICT) suite. Further work is planned to improve the satisfactory quality and standards of the Foundation Stage through improvements to outdoor provision and through the school's focus to improve writing. Given the good progress made overall, the school is well placed to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they can in writing.

- Improve consistency across all classes in the use of assessment information to ensure that pupils' needs are always met effectively in lessons and in the marking of pupils' work.
- Develop the skills of coordinators to lead and manage their areas of responsibility effectively and so influence work across the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children start school with skills that are well developed and above what might be expected for their age across all the areas of learning. This was also the case at the time of the last inspection; however, at that time the standards pupils attained in the national tests in Year 6 were below average overall. Since then, there has been much improvement. Year on year, standards have improved. Now pupils in Year 2 attain above average standards overall in reading, writing and mathematics and in 2006 a greater proportion of them attained at the higher levels than in 2005. In the Year 6 tests, results in English, mathematics and science overall in 2005 and 2006 were well above average. A focus for the school has been to improve attainment at the higher levels and, in this, they have been largely successful. However, more remains to be done to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they can in writing. Nonetheless, all pupils, including those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and enhanced by their good behaviour and attitudes to work. They enjoy their lessons and say that teachers make them fun; pupils' good attendance reflects their enjoyment. As exemplified during the inspection when there was a 'themed week' on healthy eating, pupils know how to stay healthy and keep safe. They now take more responsibility for their learning and are involved in target setting and agreeing criteria for their success in lessons. Pupils agree school and class rules and know what will happen if the rules are broken. Older pupils help to look after the welfare of younger pupils by becoming 'playground pals'. They have 'a voice' in the running of the school through the school council and have helped to bring about change, for example, in the setting up of the breakfast club. Members of the school council visited the mayor in his chambers to discuss his role and organisation and used this to help develop their role in school. Through such activities, and by working cooperatively and collaboratively in school, pupils have a good basis on which to develop skills for later working life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Work on making assessment more useful to pupils is helping them to make good progress. Where particularly good practice occurs, pupils have a copy of the success criteria for their learning in their books and the teacher writes on it which areas need improvement. Marking is also evaluative and helps pupils to know how to improve. However, this good practice is not yet consistent across school. Many lessons are characterised by good practical activities that are enjoyable and help pupils to succeed. Tasks challenge higher attaining pupils well and teaching assistants provide effective support for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This support aids pupils to make good progress towards the targets in their individual plans. Effective questioning gives all pupils the opportunity to discuss with a partner, for example, when thinking of lines for a poem. When they work out the best questions for themselves, as seen during a presentation by an oral hygienist, they are helped to develop independent learning skills. Such characteristics exemplify the good quality of teaching and learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has effectively tackled issues raised by the last inspection and the curriculum is now good. Having established a good basic structure for teaching all subjects effectively, the school is now more creative in its planning. This was seen during the inspection, which took place during 'healthy eating week'. In history, for example, the food that might have been eaten by Roman soldiers was sampled and evaluated and a visiting oral hygienist gave good advice on looking after teeth. These are exciting experiences because they involve visiting speakers and interesting activities. Some teachers use this work effectively to develop pupils' skills in writing but this is not consistent across all classes. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well focused with additional teaching of basic English and mathematics skills that does not involve them in missing any lessons. The curriculum also provides good interest and challenge for higher attaining pupils, but there are not as yet systematic arrangements in place to provide for those pupils who are identified as gifted and talented. Outdoor provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory but remains an area for further development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The staff and governors ensure that school is a caring and friendly place where pupils feel secure and happy. Staff know the children well and the positive relationships that exist ensure that pupils can turn to an adult with confidence when needed. Child protection procedures are in place and attendance is carefully monitored. Pupils receive

positive guidance in their learning and this aids their good achievement. Good partnerships exist with external agencies and so advice about planning for the needs of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is readily available. The good care and support pupils receive from their assigned support assistants also ensure that they achieve well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good and this represents improvement since the time of the last inspection. The headteacher and acting deputy headteacher provide good leadership and management of the school. They are aided well by an effective governing body who offer an appropriate level of challenge and support. The senior leadership team monitor and evaluate the school's work effectively and know how well it is doing. Self-evaluation is therefore effective and the school has rightly prioritised areas in most need of development. This includes some middle managers who have taken on new responsibilities. They require further development to monitor and evaluate the school's work so they can positively influence work across the school and fulfil their roles well. Financial management is effective and supports planned developments for improvement. A larger than average surplus is planned to contribute to developments for outdoor provision in the Early Years.

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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	3
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

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

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.

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	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

Livesey Saint Francis' Church of England School

Cherry Tree Lane

Cherry Tree

Blackburn

Lancashire

BB2 5NX

6 November 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you for welcoming us into your school. We visited to find out what makes your school special and to find out what it is doing well. We also wanted to find out where your school could be even better.

When we visited school it was 'healthy eating' week and you were doing lots of exciting things and enjoying the many visitors that came to school, like the firemen. You told us that lessons are fun and we could see that they are. We could also see how well behaved you are and that you care and look after each other well. You are proud of your school and take the responsibilities you have as school councillors and playground pals seriously. Well done! You also told us that you feel safe in school and that you know the adults who work with you look after you well and care about you.

Everyone tries hard to do their best and you do well in your different subjects, but writing is an area where some of you could do even better. Most of you find your lessons just right and your teachers involve you in the success criteria for your learning and mark your work so you know how to improve. But, at the moment, this is sometimes better in some classes than it is in others. Also, some of your teachers have new responsibilities in school and so they are going to learn how to help each other even more than they do now.

So, these are things that we think could be improved in school, and we would like you to work hard with your teachers to make them good too:

- we are asking your teachers to make sure you always do the best you can in your writing
- your teachers are going to make sure you all have the right activities so that everyone can do really well in lessons and they will make sure their marking of your work helps you to know what to do to improve
- some of your teachers are going to get guidance from others so they know what to do to make things even better in different subjects.

We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Elisabeth Linley

Her Majesty's Inspector