



# Nelson St Paul's Church of England Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 119438  
**Local Authority** Lancashire  
**Inspection number** 291420  
**Inspection dates** 9–10 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Dave Byrne

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Hibson Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Nelson, Lancashire
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		BB9 0DZ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01282 617035
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	208	<b>Fax number</b>	01282 699174
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Alan Saddler
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Barbara Dewar
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 April 2001		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school serves an area with above average deprivation. The attainment of children starting school in Reception is mostly below that expected for children of their age. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage with a small minority from minority ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average and there are five looked after children. The school is accredited with the Investors in People Award and has gained National Healthy School Status status.

## 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, which gives good value for money. It has a very caring ethos that contributes to good levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This enables pupils to thrive, both personally and academically, preparing them well for their future. The headteacher is held in very high regard by staff, pupils and parents. Together with a united staff team she provides good leadership and management. As a result, pupils achieve well and reach above average standards. Behaviour is good and pupils develop good levels of confidence and a very caring attitude to others. From a below average starting point when children start school, good provision results in children doing well and reaching nationally expected standards by the end of Reception. In Key Stage 1, pupils also learn well and reach above average standards overall, particularly in reading and mathematics. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to progress well. By the end of Year 6, they have a good understanding of information and communication technology (ICT) and English and do very well in mathematics and science.

Good teaching ensures that pupils achieve well overall. Throughout the school however, the more able girls tend to do better than the more able boys. Although lessons are mostly well managed and planned to meet the needs of the large majority of pupils, the strengths of teaching are not evident in all lessons. There are, for example, inconsistencies in the pace of lessons and in the level of challenge provided for the more able. In these lessons, boys in particular lose some of their enthusiasm for learning and progress slows.

The curriculum provides a well rounded education for pupils that develops pupils' good academic and personal skills. They develop a good understanding of how to be safe, keep fit and be healthy. A good partnership with the local community, in particular with the church, enriches learning. Close links with an orphanage in Tanzania, develops amongst pupils a good awareness of the needs of others less fortunate than themselves. Pupils' care, guidance and support are good and ensure that pupils feel safe and secure. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who are looked after receive good support and as a result make good progress.

The school is well resourced and finances are wisely spent. Governors and staff accurately evaluate the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school has improved significantly since the last inspection with a better curriculum, higher standards in ICT and improvements to resources and accommodation. This indicates a good capacity for improvement in the future.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that more able pupils, in particular boys are sufficiently challenged to achieve the standards of which they are capable.
- Ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is consistent in all lessons.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well in their time in school. They benefit from a good start in the Foundation Stage where improvements since the last inspection have resulted in good provision. Children make good progress and reach the expectations for their age by the end of Reception. In Key Stage 1, good progress continues and by the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading and mathematics. The indications from the unvalidated national test results for 2006 are that pupils did very well in mathematics and reading and as well as expected in writing.

In Key Stage 2, progress is good although there is some variation between classes. By the end of Year 6, pupils successfully achieve challenging targets in English and mathematics. In 2005, standards were in line with the national average. In the 2006 national tests, results improved significantly, restoring the good standards achieved between 2001 and 2003. Unvalidated data for 2006 indicates that pupils performed at a higher level than most pupils nationally with particular strengths in mathematics and science.

Good support and guidance for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and for those who are looked after, means that these pupils make good progress. School assessment data indicates that girls tend to do better than boys, particularly the most able.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Good levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development contributes to good behaviour. Pupils say they feel safe and that bullying is very rare with no acts of racism. Pupils are courteous and polite. They are keen to help others and willingly help out during lunchtime and throughout the school day. Good attendance reflects pupils' enthusiasm for school; although girls tend to be more enthusiastic than boys. Pupils willingly raise funds for charities, for example, working hard to support an orphanage in Tanzania. Through the Building Bridges project, pupils in Year 6 develop a good understanding of the diverse nature of society. However, the understanding of other pupils in the school is less well developed. As a result of the school's good provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship, pupils know how to stay safe, fit and healthy. Many pupils take advantage of the tasty and nutritious school meals and enjoy participating in sport. Pupils express their views through the completion of questionnaires and by their participation in the thriving school council. Pupils are confident that their views are valued by staff. Pupils' good academic, social and moral standards prepare them well for being good citizens and this provides a good basis for their economic well-being.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good and results in pupils achieving well. Productive teamwork between teaching and support staff in the Foundation Stage gives children a good start to school life. Good teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants ensures effective support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and for looked after children. In Years 1 to 6, mostly good teaching of English, mathematics, science and ICT gives pupils a good academic foundation. Typically, teachers adopt traditional teaching methods that enable pupils to develop good basic skills, although at times, the quality of the presentation of pupils' work is not consistently maintained. Lessons are well organised and managed and most motivate pupils to learn. Lessons generally move along at a good pace although at times pupils are expected to listen for too long, which reduces their scope for learning. Effective assessment systems enable teachers to identify pupils' achievement and progress so that lessons are planned to meet the needs of the majority. There are occasions, however, when the most able are not given enough challenge, as a result, their progress slows. The quality of marking also varies from class to class; at its best, it effectively informs pupils about how to improve their work and reach higher standards.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum has improved considerably since the last inspection and is now good. Children in the Foundation Stage are involved in lively activities, which result in good progress in their personal, social and academic development. In Years 1 to 6, an appropriate emphasis is given to developing pupils' skills of reading, writing, mathematics, science and ICT. Opportunities for exploiting links between subjects are planned but not yet fully implemented. The curriculum is enhanced by access to music and French and for Key Stage 2 in particular, to a broad range of extra-curricular clubs. Personal, social and health education and citizenship is effectively planned to promote pupils' knowledge of keeping fit and healthy. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is good but whilst gifted and talented pupils are identified, specific support is in the early stages of development and could be better.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Pupils benefit from good quality care, guidance and support. A very caring ethos pervades the school creating a caring community where every member of the school is valued equally. Staff and governors are vigilant in maintaining pupils' safety. All requirements are met related to managing child protection, performing risk assessments and safeguarding pupils. Pupils are given good academic support and guidance and

their personal development is highly valued and encouraged. Guidance for pupils is based firmly on the teachers' assessments of what pupils already know. As a result, it is used effectively to plan pupils' next steps in learning and give direct support to those with learning difficulties and disabilities. The needs of the most able are recognised but not always fully met. The school works hard to involve parents in their children's education. Good communications exist through regular newsletters, parents' workshops, support for homework and the 'Dads and lads Club'.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The school is led and managed effectively and well governed. The headteacher has created a very caring ethos in which pupils are able to thrive. As a result, pupils do well in their academic and personal development. The senior leadership team monitors the school's performance effectively in order to select the most crucial areas for improving the school. Action taken in recent years to successfully improve standards in English, demonstrates the determination and skill of the headteacher and her staff to tackle issues when necessary. Performance management successfully engages all staff and directs the most beneficial form of staff development and training. Key areas of the school's provision, such as the Foundation Stage and English, mathematics and science, are managed effectively. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and for those who are looked after are also well provided for. Governors know the school well and ensure that it meets statutory requirements. They work closely with the headteacher and staff to efficiently monitor the school's performance whilst also offering constructive support. Finances are carefully spent to maintain good quality resources and staffing levels. The accommodation, although far from ideal in terms of space and design, particularly outdoors, is very well managed with an exceptional contribution by the site supervisor.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Nelson St Paul's Church of England Primary School

Hibson Road

Nelson

Lancashire

BB9 0DZ

9 November 2006

Dear Pupils

Well done! Your behaviour and levels of courtesy make your school such a friendly and welcoming place. You seem to like coming to school and work so hard in lessons that you do well in English, mathematics and science. Your teachers take great care of you and make most lessons lively and exciting. The school is very caring and places your needs at the heart of all that it does. We feel that those of you that find learning difficult are given lots of good support so that you can do as well as you can.

We agree with you that the school is safe and caring place to be and are impressed by how much you help others both in school and by raising funds for others. You are rightly proud of the support that you give the Bethany Project in Tanzania and the way you support others less fortunate than yourselves.

The good quality of education that St Paul's provides for you doesn't happen by accident, it is because of the efforts of your headteacher, teachers, support staff and also the governors. There are some things however that we feel can be even better. We agree with the school's judgements that even more can be done to support those of you who find work easy. We also feel that the way marking is used and the quality of presentation of your work in books could be improved in some classes.

Thank you for chatting with us and being so helpful during the inspection. We wish you luck in your future education. You have certainly been given a good start that should prepare you well for being good citizens of the future.

Yours sincerely

Dave Byrne

(Lead Inspector)