

Adlington St Paul's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119460
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	291427
Inspection date	11 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Kathryn Dodd

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	177
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Father David Morgan
Headteacher	Mrs Marilyn Robertson
Date of previous school inspection	1 December 2002
School address	Railway Road Adlington Chorley Lancashire PR6 9QZ
Telephone number	01257 480276
Fax number	01257 474849

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	11 May 2007
Inspection number	291427

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Almost all pupils attending this average sized village school are from White British family backgrounds. It occupies two separate buildings a short distance apart. The proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals and those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are below average. Children are working at the levels expected for their age when they start school. The school holds the Healthy Schools and ActiveMark accreditations.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This good school has an accurate view of its effectiveness and provides good value for money. Pupils across the school, including those in the Foundation Stage and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make good progress and reach above average standards by Year 6. Making sure that pupils enjoy learning, are safe and healthy, and play an active part in the school community is high on the school's agenda. It is not surprising, therefore, that pupils enjoy school a great deal, behave extremely well and that attendance is well above the national average. These good academic and personal achievements signpost a bright future for the pupils, and parents, rightly, feel proud of their children's success.

Pupils make good progress as a result of good teaching and learning and an effective curriculum that focuses on boosting learning where it is needed most, for example, in writing. Although the overall quality of teaching and learning is good, there are also examples of outstanding teaching. Pupils are making most rapid gains in their learning in Years 5 and 6. This is because, in these classes, teachers make full use of their assessments of what pupils already know and can do in order to provide work that always matches tightly to pupils' varying capabilities. As a result, pupils capable of achieving the higher levels of attainment are continually challenged to achieve more. Pupils in these classes also benefit from high quality guidance, for example, through helpful marking and regular opportunities to understand what they still need to do to reach their learning goals. These best teaching practices now need to be shared effectively and applied consistently across all classes.

A key factor in the school's success is the very good leadership of the headteacher. She makes sure that each pupil achieves well in a caring and supportive environment. In order to achieve this, she has developed a well-focused plan, which accurately pinpoints improvement priorities. She works hard to ensure that there is a sense of common purpose amongst staff so that everyone shares in her vision and with the same determination. This approach is well supported by senior leaders and governors. Subject coordinators and staff who have recently taken on additional responsibilities are keen to make a greater contribution. In order to further the school's improvement, they now need to develop their roles, particularly monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning and the curriculum. Although this is a good school, there is no complacency. There is shared determination to achieve more. This, along with the good improvement since the previous inspection, demonstrates that the school has good capacity to improve in the future.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make sure that the good teaching and learning practices, particularly evident in Years 5 and 6, are effectively shared and consistently applied in all classes.
- Ensure that teachers with leadership and management responsibilities contribute more fully to improving provision and raising standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The achievement of boys and girls of all ages, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good, and standards in Year 6 are above average. When children start in Reception, their attainment is similar to what is typical for their age. A strong focus on personal, social and emotional development ensures that they get off to a good start. By the time children

enter Year 1, the vast majority attain the learning goals set for children of this age. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress and standards are above average by the end of Year 2. Standards in writing, however, are not as high as in reading or mathematics. This is because fewer pupils attain a higher level than expected for their age in this subject. Over the last four years, standards reached by the end of Year 6 have been rising. Pupils who took national tests in 2006 reached above average standards in English, and almost well above average in mathematics and science. This represents good progress from their starting points. In English, however, pupils do better in reading than in writing, because fewer more capable pupils reach a higher level than expected for their age. The school has already accurately identified a need to improve pupils' writing and has taken swift action. Efforts are already starting to pay dividends, particularly in Years 5 and 6. School data show that a greater proportion than in previous years are on track to reach the nationally expected levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in the 2007 teacher assessments and national tests.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. The fact that pupils really enjoy school is reflected in their attendance which is consistently above the national average. Pupils are friendly, polite and their behaviour is exemplary. There is little need for continual rewards or sanctions to persuade pupils to behave well. This is because they develop a very good understanding of the appropriate ways to behave from a very early age. Nevertheless, recognition of academic and personal achievements, both in and out of school, is valued highly by the pupils. Through regular achievement assemblies, even the very youngest children quickly develop a sense of pride in their own achievements, for example, for good writing. They say that this makes them want to try hard and to do their best. Older pupils are wonderful role models for younger ones. They willingly take on responsibilities around school, such as looking after play equipment or selling healthy snacks at break time. They understand that they can make an important contribution to making their school a happier, safer and healthier place to be. Although the recently formed school council enables pupils to get involved in decision-making, there remains scope to develop this further, particularly to consider the views of younger pupils.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils progress well as a result of good teaching and learning. Good organisation, interesting and purposeful activities that involve pupils and positive relationships are strong features of most of the teaching. As a result, pupils are attentive, behave really well and are open to learning. Particularly strong teaching in Years 5 and 6 makes a significant contribution to the rapid gains in learning. In these classes, teachers use the regular assessments they make of pupils' attainment particularly well to make sure they always plan and provide work that tightly matches the varying capabilities of the pupils within the class. As a result, pupils who are capable of achieving the higher levels of attainment are continually challenged to achieve more. Furthermore, very helpful marking and a greater involvement of pupils in assessing their own learning, contribute further to their good achievement. Following a number of recent changes of teaching staff, these best teaching practices now need to be shared effectively and applied consistently across all classes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum enables pupils of all ages to make good progress. The school places a high priority upon providing an enriching curriculum that enlivens learning. This is seen in a good range of interesting lessons, extra-curricular activities, educational visits and visitors. Consequently, pupils really enjoy their learning. Partnerships with other organisations and schools in the locality ensure that pupils have a particularly good range of sporting activities, promoting a good understanding of how to keep healthy. A wide range of additional support programmes ensures that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities get the help they need to boost their learning. The curriculum has recently been adapted to address weaknesses in pupils' achievement in writing. More curriculum time devoted to learning writing skills, for example, along with a tighter focus in the Reception class, develop children's literacy skills more quickly and at an earlier age. In Years 5 and 6, there are particularly good opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills across the subjects of the curriculum. There remains scope, however, to ensure that these opportunities are provided consistently across all classes.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Most parents agree that their children are well cared for. As one parent says, 'our children's welfare is paramount'. Appropriate arrangements for safeguarding pupils are in place, particularly to ensure that pupils move sensibly and safely from one school building to the other. Pupils say they are confident that adults are always on hand to help them to overcome any difficulties, and so they feel safe in school. Carefully thought out arrangements to allow pupils to visit their new school in the term before they join ensure that those in the Reception class settle quickly into school routines and get off to a good start with their learning. Classroom assistants contribute well to the good progress made by pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has, rightly, identified that the academic guidance given to pupils could improve further. Opportunities for pupils to discuss their learning targets and their personal development are increasing. Older pupils already have a good understanding of how well they are getting on, especially in writing. This is because they are encouraged to continually review their own progress. These good practices, however, are not yet applied consistently across all classes or all subjects of the curriculum.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The caring, nurturing and strong Christian ethos that promotes good academic achievement and personal development underpins the good leadership, management and governance of the school. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. She has led the school positively through a difficult period. Developing a greater sense of unity and teamwork amongst staff and governors, minimising disruption following staff turnover and the allocation and development of new management roles are high on the agenda. At the same time, she is successfully bringing about improvements in standards and pupils' achievements, particularly in writing. Although most parents have a very positive view of the school and appreciate the improvements made, a minority feel that the pace of change has been rapid and that they have not always been fully consulted in the process. Nevertheless, the school has an accurate understanding of its strengths

and weaknesses and has pinpointed correctly the most important improvement priorities. Staff who have recently taken on additional responsibilities and subject coordinators are keen to make a greater contribution to monitoring and evaluation, and there is scope for development of their role to enhance this process.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	-----------------------

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	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

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	1
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
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

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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

14 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Adlington St Paul's Church of England Primary School, Chorley, PR6 9QZ

Thank you so much for the very warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school. You answered all my questions really thoughtfully. You were all very friendly and polite, your behaviour was extremely good and you worked hard in lessons. I can see why you told me that you enjoy coming to your school so much and why most of your parents are pleased with it. All the adults care about you and want you to do well. I particularly enjoyed hearing how proud you are of the awards you receive to celebrate that you have done something well, for example, doing good writing. It is also good to hear that, if you have any problems or are upset about anything, there is always an adult on hand to help. You get lots of chances to take part in interesting and exciting activities in your lessons and after school.

Your school is a good school, you do well in your learning and the school makes sure you are well prepared for when you leave at the end of Year 6. All the adults in your school work hard together to make things even better for you. I have asked your school to make sure that:

- you all learn as well as the children do in the really good lessons that are taught in the school
- your headteacher has even more help from your teachers and other leaders in the school to keep a closer check on where you are learning well and where you might be able to do even better.

You can help your school to become even better by making sure that you understand what your targets are and checking all the time what you have to do to reach them. Please continue to try your very best in everything that you do.

I wish you all the very best for the future.

Kathryn Dodd

Lead inspector