

Caton St Paul's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119524
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	291447
Inspection dates	23–24 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Shirley Herring

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	139
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Miles Rucklidge
Headteacher	Mrs Carole O'Hare
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2003
School address	Moorside Road Brookhouse Lancaster Lancashire LA2 9PJ
Telephone number	01524 770241
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Caton St Paul's is a smaller than average size school serving a rural village and its surrounding areas. Most pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. Children enter school with skills that are broadly typical for their age and indications of deprivation are low. Pupils are predominantly White British and the number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The school has links with the pre-school group on site, the church and local high schools, and supports student teachers in training. There is a Breakfast Club on site and some pupils are transported to an after school club.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Caton St Paul's is a good school that offers an exceptional range of additional activities to enrich pupils' learning and their personal development. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is good. During their time in school they develop into mature, confident people who generally get on well together. All the recommended procedures for safeguarding pupils are in place and activities such as Cycling Proficiency and Self Defence lessons help them to keep safe. They have a good awareness of a healthy lifestyle and participate well in a wide variety of sports. Pupils make a valuable contribution to school life by taking on responsibilities and they have a good social awareness developed through fundraising for many charities. The good level of basic skills and the opportunities to work together prepare pupils well for future life.

Children enter school with skills that are broadly typical for their age. The teaching and curriculum are generally effective so the pupils' achieve well. They make good progress to reach above average standards by Year 6. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good.

Teaching is good and pupils learn well. Lessons are interesting and teachers make skilful use of interactive whiteboards to explain and demonstrate new work clearly so pupils understand what they need to do and learn. Assessment procedures are well developed and pupils receive good guidance on how to improve. Occasionally, activities are not sufficiently challenging for all pupils in the class because the assessment information is not used as effectively as it might. Targets for literacy and numeracy are very successful in helping to focus the pupils' attention on learning. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support and they achieve well.

The school is led and managed well. The headteacher has forged good links with other schools in the area for their mutual benefit; for example, a minibus has been purchased to extend opportunities for learning outside the classroom. The subject coordinators analyse their subjects in detail to identify and remedy any comparative weaknesses and this has proved to be successful in raising reading standards. The school monitors its work regularly, but evaluation is a little generous in places. This is because insufficient emphasis is given to the impact of practice, particularly teaching, on the pupils' achievements. Consequently, the evaluation does not provide a firm guide on how teaching can be improved to raise standards and achievement even further.

There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and the school has a sound capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Focus more sharply on the impact of the school's provision, particularly teaching, on achievement and standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are above average and pupils achieve well. Pupils make good progress during their time in school because they are taught well. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because their needs are identified at an early stage and they receive good support.

Children enter the Reception class with skills that are broadly typical for their age. They achieve well in the Reception class because of the good level of support they receive in small groups: most achieve the recommended goals by the time they enter Year 1.

In 2006, after a four year period where standards were above average, assessments at the end of Year 2 showed results were average. This reflected the comparatively higher number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in that particular group of pupils. The school's reliable systems for tracking pupils' progress show that these pupils made satisfactory progress. Work seen during the inspection would indicate that the current Year 2 is working above the standard expected for their age and are achieving well. In the 2006 national tests in Year 6, results were above average overall and pupils achieved well. Standards were well above average in English and above average in mathematics. They were broadly average in science; enquiry skills are good but the school's analysis showed some gaps in scientific knowledge, which are already being successfully addressed.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. During their time in school, pupils develop into mature, confident people who generally get on well together. They enjoy coming to school and particularly like the extensive range of clubs and additional activities on offer. Attendance is above average. Relationships in the school are good and pupils feel safe and confident that they can approach an adult if anyone is unkind. Pupils understand the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and join in physical activities with enthusiasm. Even the youngest children can tell you that fruit is good for you. Pupils make a good contribution to the school community through being members of the school council and by taking responsibilities, such as helping younger pupils. They contribute well to the wider community through joining village activities such as The Caton Gala, and by raising money to sponsor two children in Kenya. Pupils' secure acquisition of key skills and the good opportunities to work together prepare them well for later life.

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, supported by the school's Christian tradition, is good. They respond well to the impressive level of mutual respect between all in the school community and behaviour is good. Cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils have a good understanding of the local culture but, although satisfactory, are not as well informed about life in a culturally diverse society.

The strong emphasis on personal, social and emotional development in the Reception class enables children to develop good attitudes to learning from an early age. These positive attitudes are reinforced throughout the school and this has helped, for example, the pupils in Year 6 to continue to work well during a time of unavoidable disruption to the teaching in their class.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good and pupils learn well. Most lessons are well planned, activities are interesting and sustain pupils' interest; they are keen to learn. Teachers use new technology well to give effective explanations and demonstrations so pupils know what to do and what they are expected to learn. The skilled teaching assistants are well informed and they support groups and

individuals well. A strong, developing feature is the way in which pupils are encouraged to assess how well they have learned in the lesson through a traffic lights system. This focuses pupils' attention and reinforces their learning. Work is usually well marked and teachers take time to explain how pupils can improve their work.

Pupils' progress is assessed regularly and assessment is generally used well to plan future work. However, in a minority of lessons the activities do not reflect the ability of different groups of pupils and so learning is less effective.

Teaching is supplemented well by specialist teaching in music, sports, French and information and communication technology (ICT). The specialist sports coaching has helped pupils to develop good skills. The school has been successful in football tournaments, which is particularly commendable for a small school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the needs of pupils well. There is a good emphasis on developing literacy and numeracy skills so pupils achieve a good standard by the time they leave school. The school's successful bid to become a Networked Learning Community has helped pupils to develop good ICT skills and the school is now identifying ways in which these can be used to enhance learning in other subjects, specifically numeracy. The comprehensive programme of personal, social and health education makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. The school has improved the opportunities for pupils to develop their investigational skills in science with some success and is now successfully seeking ways to ensure that further opportunities are provided to remedy comparative weakness in scientific knowledge.

An excellent range of clubs and additional activities to promote pupils' enjoyment, interest and healthy lifestyles enhances the curriculum. The two residential trips for older pupils encourage adventure and help pupils to develop confidence and independence. The school participates in the Wider Opportunities for Music scheme, which has enabled many pupils to learn to play an instrument.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides a good level of care, guidance and support for its pupils. All the recommended procedures are in place to safeguard pupils and activities such as cycling proficiency help pupils to keep safe. The effective induction procedures for new children in Reception ensure that they settle quickly into school. Pupils who joined the school at a later stage recall how welcoming staff and pupils were.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified at an early stage and are given good support in class to help them achieve well. Where needed, specialist advice and help is sought.

There are good procedures to assess and track pupils' progress in English and mathematics. Similar procedures for science are less advanced but are evolving as different methods are tried. Targets to help pupils improve are in place and these are successful in focusing pupils' attention on what they need to do in lessons to improve. However, it is too soon to judge their overall effect on standards. A useful aspect is the way in which pupils with learning difficulties and/or

disabilities with individual education plans are given a simplified version of their targets to help them concentrate their efforts.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is led and managed well. Staff are good role models for pupils and the consistent application of the behaviour policy also promotes good behaviour. Subject coordinators have a very secure understanding of their subjects and their analysis of assessment and test results is thorough and identifies areas of comparative weakness. For example, the analysis of the English results showed a weakness in aspects of reading; additional resources were purchased and activities devised, which resulted in an improvement in reading standards.

The school monitors its work regularly but its own evaluation of some important aspects is a little generous. For example, the quality of teaching was judged as outstanding rather than good because insufficient account was taken of its impact on pupils' achievement. Consequently, the monitoring does not provide a firm guide on how to raise achievement and standards even further.

Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is organised and managed well so these pupils are fully included in all activities, make good progress and achieve well.

Governance is good. The governors are in school regularly, are well informed and provide constructive support for the headteacher. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and the school has a sound capacity to improve further.

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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?	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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
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.

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	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

26 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Caton St Paul's Church of England Primary School, Lancaster, LA2 9PJ

Thank you for making me so welcome when I inspected your school. I enjoyed talking to you in lessons and in groups, and listening to the violinists in assembly.

Caton St Paul's is a good school and you clearly enjoy being there. You told me how much you enjoyed the clubs and sports after school and I am sure you appreciate how hard your teachers work to provide such a good variety of activities for you.

Teaching is good, I particularly liked the way the teachers used the interactive whiteboards to explain new work. You work hard in lessons and behave well. I was impressed with the way you showed your traffic light colours to say how well you had learned in lessons.

You make good progress in your time in school and by the time you leave most of you do well in English and mathematics. You are ready to learn even more at your next school.

To make Caton St Paul's even better I have asked the school to look closely at lessons to decide what could be done to make the good teaching even better.

With best wishes for the future,

Yours sincerely

Mrs Shirley Herring

Lead Inspector