



Leck St Peter's Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119535
Local Authority Lancashire
Inspection number 291451
Inspection date 16 November 2006
Reporting inspector John Heap

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Leck
School category	Voluntary aided		via Carnforth, Lancashire
Age range of pupils	4-11		LA6 2JD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01524 271538
Number on roll (school)	32	Fax number	01524 271757
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Gill Burrow
		Headteacher	Mr Kerry Stafford-Roberts
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a much smaller than average school. The two classes have more than one age group each. All pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly at the expected level. Since the last inspection the school has gone through a turbulent period, which culminated in a complete change of teaching staff. The headteacher was appointed in September 2005.

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 good features, which provides sound value for money. This is lower than the school's own self-evaluation. Improvements are now being made after an extended period of disruption but it is too early to see the full impact in terms of pupils' learning and standards. One quote from a parent reflects the general view, 'Since the appointment of the headteacher the atmosphere and morale within the school and amongst parents has increased greatly and in a very positive way'.

The strong direction the headteacher provides for the school is speeding up improvement and there has been satisfactory progress in the areas for development identified in the previous inspection report. Consequently, the school has satisfactory capacity to improve further. Pupils' annual progress reports are now good and pupils have a better understanding of life in a diverse society. Standards in writing could be higher, but basic skills are better than before. The use and development of assessment procedures is now satisfactory, but pupils still do not have a clear enough view of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Two factors are particularly important here: first, the good curriculum supports pupils' personal development well; second, the family atmosphere in the school is supportive and fosters high expectations. A parent summed it up by writing, 'The staff are very supportive and make themselves available to talk through any concerns. The children are given every opportunity to take part in a variety of clubs and activities. Everyone is valued.' As a result, pupils thoroughly enjoy school and make a strong contribution to its happy and family-like atmosphere.

Children have a satisfactory start in the Foundation Stage (Reception class), make sound progress and reach expected standards by the time they enter Year 1. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are broadly average. The school's own tracking shows that pupils make the expected amount of progress over time, but it is uneven. This is most noticeable in Years 4 and 5 where progress slows, particularly in writing. The combination of good attitudes to learning and average academic standards means that pupils are well prepared for secondary school and future life. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, and in science and music specialist teaching is effective in promoting good progress in these subjects. The wide variety of good links with partners, such as a local secondary school, is promoting better progress for some pupils.

Pupils' health and safety needs are met well because of the school's strong and caring ethos. Older pupils are pleased to contribute to this by supporting the youngest and helping them to settle quickly. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The effective leadership of the headteacher has gained good support from governors, staff and parents but important management tools have only recently been introduced and their impact is yet to be evaluated. Improvement planning lacks some clarity and precision; for example, too few targets are readily measurable.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve progress in writing.
- Improve marking and guidance for pupils so that they have a clearer view of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further.
- Improve the school development plan by making targets for improvement clear and measurable.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory and standards are average. Children in the Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress and are on course to reach national expectations by the time they enter Year 1. Attainment is highest in personal, social and emotional development and mixing with Year 1 and Year 2 pupils helps the youngest children to mature socially.

Owing to the small number of pupils in each year group, standards and national test results are liable to fluctuations because one pupil's results form a high proportion of the whole year group. Nevertheless, standards over time at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly average. National data and the school's tracking show that pupils make satisfactory progress from their average starting points but progress in writing is not as good as it should be. The school has recognised this and is beginning to take effective action to improve the quality of work, particularly in handwriting and factual writing.

Overall, pupils throughout the school make the most consistent progress in reading, but it is patchier in mathematics and particularly writing. In Key Stage 2, the oldest pupils make better progress than the younger ones but there is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. The few pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress. Year 6 pupils identified as gifted and talented in mathematics are making very good progress and are on target to exceed the expectations for 11 year-olds.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They thoroughly enjoy school and are very positive about all aspects of school life. These attributes, allied to average academic skills, mean that pupils are well prepared for future education. Pupils are highly appreciative of all that the staff do for them and reciprocate by showing high levels of respect to the adults. Pupils show a very strong appreciation of moral and social issues. As a result, behaviour is very good, attendance is consistently above the national average and there is no evidence of bullying or racism. Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good and reflect the caring and supportive ethos of the school. Pupils feel safe and secure in school and say that there is always someone near to turn to in times of need. They are well aware of the benefits of healthy

eating and exercise. Pupils enjoy making a good contribution to the school and wider community. Especially, older ones take on responsibilities to help with the efficient running of the school. They have a voice in the school and are looking forward to the imminent establishment of a school council. In broader terms, pupils are conscious of the needs of others and this has led to good fund-raising for charity.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Pupils' satisfactory learning and progress are a result of satisfactory teaching. Typical features of teaching are:

- effective classroom management that minimises disruption and encourages pupils' good attitudes to learning and strong concentration
- a good range of resources that are well deployed to support pupils' learning
- teachers' satisfactory knowledge and understanding of subjects and of pupils' previous learning
- sound questioning and pace, which foster an adequate match of tasks to pupils' varying needs and retains their interest
- the satisfactory emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills.

The school uses the skills of specialist music and science teachers well to increase pupils' progress and give them confidence. Pupils' work is marked regularly but, despite recent improvements, comments do not focus sufficiently on pupils' individual needs. For instance, they do not clearly indicate what they need to do to improve and move on to the next level of skills, knowledge and understanding.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The wide and varied curriculum effectively promotes pupils' good personal development and their ongoing well-being. Recent improvements have not, as yet, had a full impact on academic skills. Some very effective work is being done with a range of external providers. For example, the links with the secondary school provide challenging and inspiring mathematical experiences for gifted and talented Year 6 pupils. These opportunities are welcomed by the pupils and their parents and, importantly, they are having a very good impact on their achievement. Pupils are very positive about the really good range of additional activities provided by this small school. They talk very enthusiastically about performances, after-school clubs and educational visits, including a residential visit. Reading, information and communication technology and numeracy skills are used well across other subjects, but there are insufficient opportunities to use writing skills to a similar degree.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils are cared for well. Procedures for safeguarding pupils meet government requirements. Child protection arrangements are robust and staff know what the expectations are. All staff have received recent training. Attendance, behaviour and risk are monitored well. This all adds up to good support, particularly for pupils' personal development. As a result, pupils settle easily into school and approach work and relationships confidently.

Academic guidance is satisfactory. Tracking of pupils' achievements is good and provides a clear picture of pupils' progress. Satisfactory arrangements for marking and reporting achievements to parents are better than at the time of the last inspection. Although assessment procedures and target-setting have improved, they do not always provide enough accurate information about how well pupils are doing and what the next stage of their learning should be, particularly in writing.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher provides strong leadership and gets good support from staff, governors and parents. After a period when several important aspects of management were not developed sufficiently, such as school improvement planning and performance management, recent progress in these areas has been brisk. However, there are still shortcomings in the setting of improvement targets that are measurable and challenging. The roles of subject leaders are being extended so that they can make an improved contribution towards the monitoring and development of their subjects. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are highly supportive; they are making progress in their role as monitors and evaluators through linking of governors to subjects, but is in the early stages of development and it is too soon to see outcomes at present.

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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?	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	3
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?	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?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
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

Leck St Peter's Church of England Primary School

Leck

via Carnforth

Lancashire

LA6 2JD

16 November 2006

Dear Children

I thoroughly enjoyed being in your school this week. I am very grateful for the warm welcome, courtesy and help you provided. A special thanks to those who gave up their time to talk with me.

What I really liked about your school

- The very good relationships between children and staff.
- Your very good behaviour and good attitudes to school and work.
- The support that older pupils give to the younger ones and the family atmosphere this promotes in the school.
- The good teaching of music and science.
- The really good support that the secondary school gives to high achievers in mathematics.
- The way that you all contribute to the safe and caring ethos in the school.
- The wide range of activities that enrich your curriculum, such as the residential visits and your work in the community.

What I have asked your teachers to improve

- The quality of your written work. You can help greatly by always checking that you have done your best work, particularly in handwriting, spelling and punctuation.
- The way that they set targets for each of you and mark your work so you are better able to follow the advice and guidance given.
- The way they plan improvements and check what difference they have made.

Good luck for the future and all good wishes.

Yours sincerely

John Heap

Lead inspector