



Wheatley Lane Methodist Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119702
Local Authority Lancashire
Inspection number 291510
Inspection dates 25–26 January 2007
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	Wheatley Lane Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Fence, Burnley
Age range of pupils	4–11		Lancashire, BB12 9ED
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01282 617214
Number on roll (school)	202	Fax number	01282 605765
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Ian Wheeler
		Headteacher	Mrs Amanda Kroukamp
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2001		

Age group 4–11	Inspection dates 25–26 January 2007	Inspection number 291510
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average-sized primary school that has a mainly White British population. It serves a residential area with few signs of disadvantage and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. The school has a below-average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and a small number of looked after pupils. Children enter the Foundation Stage Reception class with standards that are slightly above average. The school is managing a number of issues related to staff absence.

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 which gives sound value for money. Parents are mostly supportive and positive about the school, particularly in the way it promotes Christian values and gives their children an enjoyable start to their schooling.

Pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory. Children join the Reception class with attainment a little higher than average for their age. They benefit from good teaching and make good progress in their personal and academic development. In the rest of the school, pupils make satisfactory progress and standards are above average at the end of each key stage. Pupils join Year 1 with standards that are above those typical for their age and generally make reasonable overall progress because of sound teaching and a satisfactory curriculum. Those with learning difficulties and looked after children make the same progress as other pupils and benefit from the school's good links with outside agencies. In Year 6, the school meets its targets but the more able pupils could reach higher standards than they do. This is because the work set for them is not always at the right level. The marking of pupils' work does not show well enough how the pupils are doing, or what they need to do to improve further.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The relatively new headteacher is doing well to stabilise the school during a period of change. She benefits from the sensitive support of the governing body. The school's own evaluation of its effectiveness as good is a little too generous. Prolonged disruption of the school's plans for improvement owing to staff absences has meant that progress in important areas has stalled. At present, for example, the monitoring of teaching and academic progress lacks rigour. Nevertheless, the improvement made since the previous inspection is satisfactory. Overall, the school has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- set more challenging work to improve the progress of the more able pupils;
- ensure that the marking of pupils' work shows clearly how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further;
- monitor and evaluate teaching and pupils' progress more rigorously.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and overall standards are above average. Children join the Foundation Stage with attainment a little above average for children of their age. They make good progress because of good teaching and provision. They leave Reception with standards that are higher than those typically found, particularly in their personal, communication, mathematical and creative development.

Pupils make satisfactory progress in the rest of the school and, by the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are above average, as shown by the results of national assessments and tests. Year 2 pupils do particularly well in reading, but the more able pupils could

achieve higher standards in writing. The results of Year 6 national tests are generally above average, and in 2006 were higher than those of the previous year. Girls tend to do better than boys and the school is already working successfully to improve boys' performance. The school meets its targets for pupils to reach the expected levels in English, mathematics and science but these targets are not challenging enough for the more able pupils and the work set for them is sometimes too easy. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and looked after children make satisfactory progress, although some of the pupils who were below average in Year 2 did well to reach average levels in the national tests at the end of Year 6. Pupils reach high standards in art and design and technology because there is a high priority placed on these subjects through the curriculum.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. The school's ambitious expectations for moral and social development are matched by the respect and consideration shown by pupils for themselves and others. Pupils adopt safe practices and, as one said, 'We feel safe because we know we can go to adults or to our friends if we have worries'. They know the benefits of regular physical exercise and eating healthily. Relationships are very good and pupils are polite, friendly and courteous. They have good attitudes to school, good attendance and excellent behaviour in response to a happy and enjoyable learning environment. School council meetings develop pupils' decision-making skills well, for example when contributing to plans to improve the playground. Pupils show initiative in lessons and develop their capacity to take responsibility for their own learning. Their effective grounding in social and basic skills prepares them well for their future lives and for contributing to their community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In most lessons teaching is lively, proceeds at a brisk pace and relationships are good. Pupils contribute confidently to lessons and enjoy learning. In Reception class lessons, the teaching is good. The children know exactly what is expected of them and teachers adopt a range of effective approaches, for example in enabling children to develop their knowledge and understanding of letter sounds. In these classes, individual targets for the children result in children of different abilities working to their capacity. In the rest of the school, however, there are some weaknesses in matching tasks to the different abilities of pupils. This means that the more able pupils, in particular, do not always make the progress that they should. This is most evident in the marking of pupils' work, which does not accurately

indicate how well the pupils are doing and what they need to do to improve. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets the needs of the majority of pupils. It contributes effectively to the learning of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and is a key factor in pupils' good personal development. Good personal, social and health and citizenship education ensure that pupils learn about healthy living, how to keep safe and what being a good citizen means. Pupils' creative skills are well catered for through a good programme of art and design and technology. External providers contribute to the satisfactory range of additional activities, for example, French, music, art and drama. The curriculum does not, however, provide enough opportunities for pupils to use and develop their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills in all subjects. Consequently, it is less effective in ensuring pupils' academic progress than it might be.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Parents are rightly pleased that the care the school takes of their children enables them to feel happy and secure. Procedures for child protection, safeguarding pupils and for safety and security of the site are good. The monitoring of behaviour and attendance contributes effectively to pupils' personal development so that these aspects are strengths of the school. The school gives careful attention to the needs of its vulnerable children and provides them with good personal support. Children's progress is monitored well and additional support is provided for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities which enables them to make similar progress to their peers. Parents are kept informed about their children's progress and school events. The arrangements for induction into Reception and transfer to a number of high schools are smooth and effective.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher is managing effectively a difficult period caused by staff absences and is introducing better monitoring arrangements to show a clearer picture of pupils' progress. Nevertheless, there are still some areas that need improvement, such as monitoring the quality of provision and, in particular, teaching and learning. Governance is satisfactory and the headteacher is supported well by the governors. The management of some subjects is in the hands of newly-appointed staff or staff who have been absent and it is too early to judge its effectiveness. The school's self-evaluation is satisfactory and planning identifies important targets for improvement. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection and has a sound capacity to improve further.

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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	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?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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	1
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?	3
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?	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

Wheatley Lane Methodist Voluntary Aided Primary School

Wheatley Lane Road

Fence

Burnley

Lancashire

BB12 9ED

25 January 2007

Dear Pupils

Mr Onyon and I thoroughly enjoyed being in your school this week. Your warm welcome, courtesy and the help you provided were features of the inspection that made our short stay in the school so pleasurable and interesting. Please give a special thanks to the many children and adults who talked with us.

We particularly liked these things:

- the improvements in national test results that were made in 2006
- the good standards and progress in Reception
- your exemplary behaviour, good attitudes to school and the very strong relationships you develop
- the hard work you all put in to make your school such a caring place to live and work
- the good contribution that you make to the life of your school and the wider communities.

To help you make even better progress your teachers are going to:

- set harder work for some of you
- show you more clearly how to improve when they mark your work
- check on lessons and your progress more often to see how you are getting on.

You can help by always doing your best work and we are certain that you will want to follow the advice from your teachers when they mark your work.

The inspection team wishes you well and good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

John Heap

Lead inspector