



Chorley St Peter's Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119806
Local Authority Lancashire
Inspection number 294309
Inspection dates 26–27 September 2006
Reporting inspector Brian Dower

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Eaves Lane
School category	Voluntary aided		Chorley, Lancashire
Age range of pupils	4–11		PR6 0DX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01257 262625
Number on roll (school)	274	Fax number	01257 261608
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Father Lionel Atherton
		Headteacher	Mr S Whittaker
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2005		

Age group 4–11	Inspection dates 26–27 September 2006	Inspection number 294309
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Peter's serves a mixed urban area in Chorley which has pockets of social and economic deprivation. Standards on entry to the school are broadly in line with those expected for children this age but the attainment of about a fifth of the pupils is below national expectations. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average but the number with English as an additional language is low. Pupils are taught in mixed age and single age classes, with no one boy or girl remaining in a mixed age class in consecutive years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

In the September 2005 inspection report, the school was asked to improve the standards and progress of the older and the more able pupils, raise pupils' performance in mathematics, and make more effective use of assessment. There have been significant improvements in all these areas because of good leadership and governance and the skill and commitment of able teachers. The school is therefore in a strong position to move forward. In accordance with section 13(5) of the education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

'Working together to build firm foundations'

This good school is a harmonious working community where, as the above statement of intent highlights, pupils receive a firm grounding for their personal and academic development. Parents are justified in the confidence they have in the school and it is held in high esteem. Past staffing difficulties have been resolved and standards have risen rapidly, particularly in mathematics. Most pupils, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds and those with learning difficulties, are now making rapid progress because of the school's strong leadership, effective teaching and good governance.

Pupils make good progress in lessons and achieve well. Standards are broadly average, but are improving quickly, with the exception of pupils' writing skills which are not improving rapidly enough. The school has this as a priority for improvement. It is also the case that the work of the highest attaining pupils, when engaged in group activities in lessons is not monitored with sufficient rigour to ensure that they always make the progress they should. Children in Reception achieve well and attain standards that are at least at nationally expected levels. This is because they settle quickly, feel safe and cared for, and receive the guidance and support they need.

Pupils are safe and secure in school and enjoy their work. They are confident and articulate young people who are curious and keen to learn. They are sensitive to the needs of others and contribute to the local community through charitable activities and involvement with the church. Communication, numeracy and computer skills are sufficiently developed for pupils to make the most of their future education. Relationships are strong and pupils say that the few instances of name calling or teasing are dealt with effectively when brought to the attention of the teachers. They know there is always someone to turn to who will listen and help if they have problems. Behaviour is good. The school has been anxious for some time to use the welfare service to greater effect to improve the average attendance and the poor punctuality of a small number of pupils. Pupils air their views and play their part in the day-to-day running of the school. The members of the school council, newly appointed in this fourth week of the academic year, are keen to contribute to the school's development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards by improving the fluency and accuracy of pupils' writing.
- Increase the rate of progress made by the highest attaining pupils when working collaboratively.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and standards are improving at a good rate because the progress for all groups of pupils has been rapid during the last 12 months. Currently, most pupils are making at least good progress in lessons.

The children in Reception make good progress and attain standards that are above those expected nationally in their personal, social and emotional development. They are in line with nationally expected standards in all other areas of learning.

Standards at the end of Year 2 in 2005 were average and achievement was satisfactory. Results in 2006 show a similar level of attainment and achievement. The Year 6 2005 results were below average because of the lower ability of pupils when they entered the school. Their achievement was satisfactory and an improvement on the inadequate achievement in 2004. Pupils with learning difficulties did particularly well in 2005 and their level of achievement was good. There has been a significant improvement in standards in the 2006 national tests in English and mathematics, except for higher attainers in English. As a result achievement is now good.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They behave well, enjoy school and have a positive attitude to learning. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Spiritual education is particularly strong and is supported by the Christian ethos which pervades the school. Pupils know right from wrong and how unkind actions may distress others. They work well together, are polite and courteous to adults and to other children. Members of the school council take their responsibilities very seriously. They show an interest in raising issues, which will benefit the school community; for example the provision of additional litter bins and 'quiet areas' outside for reflection. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. For example, the school has received the Quality Mark for 'Healthy Eating' and the close links with a local sports college reinforces pupils' learning about how exercise will benefit their health and well-being. There are good community links. For example, close links are established with the local church and the school has developed a special relationship with the clients of the local day centre for the elderly. The school is seeking to improve its average attendance figures through more effective working with the welfare services. It is also working hard to improve the punctuality of a minority of pupils who do not arrive at school on time.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and learn best when engaged in practical and collaborative activities. They are provided with opportunities to speak about their work and they listen with respect and learn from each other's contributions. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and use a wide range of teaching techniques to good effect. Lesson activities are adapted to take account of the different learning needs in the mixed age classes. Explanations are clear and question and answer sessions used to check and increase understanding. Teachers temper their high expectations with encouragement and sensitivity. This was seen in the Reception Year, for example, where the teacher's friendly and welcoming approach encouraged the children to participate actively in the lesson and talk about their learning. Pupils are often grouped according to ability when doing work in a lesson. Good support is then targeted at the weakest. There is insufficient checking of the learning of the higher attaining groups in lessons to ensure that they are making enough progress. Marking is of high quality and used consistently to guide pupils' learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and well planned. It takes good account of pupils' experiences in the mixed-age classes, so ensuring that, over time, pupils of all abilities and ages have access to similar learning opportunities. Teachers have a good understanding of how and where their work links into the overall plan. The school's priorities for development, which focus on writing and the comprehension of text, are at the heart of teachers' short and medium term plans. This aspect of English underpins work across the whole curriculum. Its effect is evident in rising standards and improved progress in written work. Good progress has been made with the application of literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum but there is scope for still more. Extra-curricular activities play a significant part in pupils' school life. They build on pupils' interests and talents, acting as a springboard for lifelong enjoyment.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support for all pupils are good as a result of an effective personal, social and health education programme. Regular risk assessments are carried out for visits and the use of equipment. Child protection procedures are comprehensive and effective and the school is complying with recent safeguarding requirements. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe and are supervised well both in school and in outdoor areas. Assessment systems have improved significantly over the last year and

are now used effectively to track the progress of all pupils and to identify those who need additional support.

Parents are kept well-informed by having opportunities to discuss their child's progress twice during the year and receive detailed reports annually. Parents and pupils are encouraged to approach any member of staff if they have particular concerns. Pupils make use of a 'listening box' where they can communicate their worries to teachers by written note and they know their teachers will respond.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good, as is the governance of the school.

The recent rapid improvements in pupils' progress, together with the robust and effective way in which the issues from the last inspection have been dealt with, testify to the strong leadership at all levels. The school has received very effective support from the local authority in addressing those issues. Financial management is secure and staff and resources are well deployed. Morale is high in the school. Governors, teachers and all who are involved in the school work effectively as a team and are committed to the pupils' welfare and progress. The school is now rigorous in its monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning and staff participate in a range of training opportunities to improve their skills. Through good self-evaluation, the headteacher has a thorough knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and what is needed to make it even better. He must take much of the credit for the sense of harmony and unity that now prevails. His able deputy has led the improvements in mathematics and monitors and supports pupils' progress as they move through the school. The challenge they now face is to keep their staff focused on raising standards further and maintain the good rate of school improvement.

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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
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	3
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	3
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	3

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.

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

Chorley St Peter's Church of England Primary School

Eaves Lane

Chorley

Lancashire

PR6 0DX

28 September 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you for the courtesy and welcome you extended to us during our recent visit to your school. We appreciated the time several of you gave to talk to us about your work and the activities you enjoy doing outside of lessons. You are making rapid progress in your work and your school does many things well.

- We saw how much you enjoy school and how well you behave.
- You get on very well with each other and with the staff.
- You feel safe and secure in school and so work hard.
- You appreciate the care and support you receive and know there is always someone to turn to if you need help.
- You like the clubs, activities and trips which are organised for you outside of lesson time.

Your teachers and the inspectors found two things to work on to make your education even better.

- The standard of your writing needs improving.
- You need to work faster and so learn more from each other when working together in groups.

We would like to wish you and your school every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Brian Dower

Lead Inspector