

Pott Shrigley Church School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 111462 |
| Local Authority | Cheshire |
| Inspection number | 310605 |
| Inspection date | 8 November 2007 |
| Reporting inspector | Angela Westington HMI |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 47 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mrs Alex Douglas-Kane |
| Headteacher | Mr Philip Mellen |
| Date of previous school inspection | 9 December 2003 |
| School address | Shrigley Road Pott Shrigley Macclesfield Cheshire SK10 5RT |
| Telephone number | 01625 573260 |
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

Pott Shrigley Church School is a very small rural primary which serves a socially advantaged area close to Bollington in Cheshire, although a number of pupils come from beyond the immediate vicinity. Currently there are 47 pupils on roll, 21 boys and 26 girls, in three mixed-age classes. The number of pupils in receipt of free school meals is very low. The vast majority are of White British heritage and there are no pupils learning English as an additional language. Fourteen pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, of whom three have a statement of special educational need.

The school has gained the Inclusion Quality Mark, the Football Association Charter Standard and Investors in People recognition. It has also recently received a 'Developing Internationalism' award from the British Council.

The school is located in rented premises in the village hall which is shared with other groups for village activities.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Pott Shrigley Church School is an extremely happy, friendly and welcoming school. Parents overwhelmingly testify to its strong and vibrant place in the community and its links with the parish church and local groups. Without exception, parents support the school and appreciate the work of its headteacher and staff.

Pupils' development and well-being are outstanding. They are friendly, helpful, confident and outgoing. They are also very well behaved and are developing into well rounded, thoughtful and reflective young people. They enjoy school, participate in the many sports and extra-curricular activities on offer and are proud of the

fundraising they undertake for various charities.

Standards are broadly average by the end of Key Stage 1 but achievement overall is inadequate. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are average. The progress made by different groups of pupils and individuals in Key Stage 2 is variable, but overall it is satisfactory. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and some of those who are relatively new to the school make good progress. More able pupils, in contrast, do not make as much progress as they should.

Care, guidance and support are good. The school's pastoral support systems are outstanding, but its systems for providing academic guidance are underdeveloped. The curriculum is good. Pupils particularly benefit from the very wide range of activities, clubs and trips that take place at lunchtime and after school.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good, but teachers' skill in assessing pupils and moving them on to the next steps in their learning is variable.

The leadership and management of the school is satisfactory overall. Governance is good and the school has an accurate view of its work. The school has addressed the issues identified in the previous inspection. It provides satisfactory value for money. The school has satisfactory capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

When children enter Reception their skill levels are above, and in some cases well above, what one would expect of this age group. They join Year 1 with skills that are still above expectations; their progress is therefore satisfactory.

Overall, the provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory but the accommodation is inadequate. The children are taught in a mixed Year 1/ Reception Year age group in cramped accommodation which does not allow the school to offer the full range of provision such as outdoor activities. Although the children are assessed against the Foundation Stage six areas of learning, the planning for the Reception children does not currently follow national guidance. Nevertheless, the children are happy, safe and well cared for.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the accommodation for the Foundation Stage.
- Improve standards and rates of progress in Key Stage 1.
- Improve standards and rates of progress for more able pupils.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

This is a very small school and the numbers in each cohort are extremely small; nevertheless it is possible to look at the trend in average scores and the progress made by individuals to evaluate achievement and standards overall.

On entry to the school, children have skill levels that are above national expectations. They make satisfactory progress and by the end of the year most exceed the early learning goals for their age group. They are well equipped to tackle the National Curriculum work that starts in Year 1.

Progress slows in Key Stage 1. The trend in national assessment results for seven-year-olds shows a sharp decline from a very high position in 2003 to the position in 2007 where the school's average score is now slightly below the national figure. Achievement in Key Stage 1 is therefore inadequate.

Standards by the end of Key Stage 2 have been average for a number of years. Although the vast majority of pupils reach the expected Level 4, in the core subjects, too few reach the higher levels. The exception to this was in the 2007 tests when 70% of pupils gained Level 5 in science compared to 29% in English and mathematics.

The progress made by different groups of pupils and individuals is variable, but overall it is satisfactory. The school has experienced a large intake of pupils in recent years and seen its population rise by 50%. It also attracts pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities because of its small, family atmosphere. Of the 47 pupils currently on roll, three have a statement of special educational need. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and some of those who are relatively new to the school make good progress. More able pupils, in contrast, do not make as much progress as they should do.

The school has correctly identified writing as an area for development. Pott Shrigley pupils are, in the main, highly eloquent, articulate and very capable. Even the younger pupils exhibit extended speech and are confident enough to engage in conversation with adults. However, across all year groups, pupils' writing does not reflect this ability. The gap between pupils' writing skills and their reading scores is very wide. Much of this is due to the lack of attention to mastering basic writing skills such as correct letter formation, handwriting, spelling, grammar, presentation and layout of work in the early years. The children at Pott Shrigley have a wealth of ideas to write about but their work lacks finesse.

Since the last inspection, improvements have been made in science and standards in science have risen. Improvements have also been made in the provision for Information and Communication Technology with a consequent improvement in standards.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The very strong Christian, caring, community ethos permeates the life of Pott Shrigley and is a feature of the school that is highly regarded by parents. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. They are knowledgeable about and reflect upon a wide

range of important issues. The school is involved in a large number of charity fund-raising events: Unicef, Operation Christmas Child, Comic Relief, Christian Aid and so on, and last year raised £11,500 for its partner school at Makonge, Uganda. The school is the hub of the local community with a variety of events centred there; for example, family services, the Rose Queen festival, and the Winter fair, all of which the pupils enjoy taking part in.

Pupils behave extremely well; they are very polite and considerate. Older pupils look after younger ones. Activities such as sports, gardening, cooking, caring for the school chickens, school council and participating in community events give the children a sense of teamwork and responsibility. The school council has its own budget to run. Pupils know why they need to adopt safe practices and follow a healthy lifestyle; the take up of after-school sports clubs is very high. Pupils are very keen to learn and enjoy school and attendance is good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is variable but is satisfactory overall. The strongest teaching was observed in Key Stage 2.

The strengths of the teaching observed across the school include the very good relationships between teachers and pupils, the levels of enjoyment and the care provided for pupils. Areas for further development include the overlong teacher input leaving pupils too little time to work in a sustained manner for a lengthy period of time and the lack of challenge for the more able pupils.

Teachers' skill in assessing pupils as the lesson progresses is variable and in two classes is still embryonic. Marking of pupils' work is also variable in quality and helpfulness. Not all marking points pupils to the next stage of learning or explains how to improve their work. The process of setting targets is not as robust as it could be: pupils know their targets in some areas, for example, in writing, but not in others. The school does not set sufficiently challenging targets for its more able pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

All subjects of the National Curriculum are covered and the new literacy and numeracy frameworks are in place. A significant feature in this school is the wealth of after-school activities on offer, especially the range of sports available. Many parents commented positively on this aspect of the school's provision. These clubs are well attended and contribute to learners' enjoyment and achievement. Visits from organisations such as Young Enterprise and Peak Park Rangers enhance and extend the curriculum. Swimming lessons enable children from Years 3 to 6 to gain awards in distance swimming and life-saving skills. The school has very strong links with local high schools and their staff support teaching in music, science and information and communication technology (ICT). Currently, the school offers Spanish and Italian and has plans to deliver a rolling programme of French and Spanish for Years 2 to 6. Trips, including a residential visit, and visitors to school all contribute to making the curriculum vibrant and enjoyable.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral care and support for pupils is outstanding. The school takes the highest possible care of its pupils and is committed to their welfare. The staff know the pupils and their families very well. Pupils trust staff and know who to turn to if they need help. There is very good support for them when they are upset or troubled. Parents and carers feel very welcome in the school. The arrangements for preparing pupils for their transfer to secondary school are good. Child protection and health and safety procedures are in place and there are good links with other agencies. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are particularly well supported.

Academic guidance is satisfactory. Procedures for setting targets and challenging more able pupils are not yet robust enough.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides good day to day management of the school and has the full support of parents, governors and the local community. Until this academic year, he had a teaching role and divided his time between teaching and running the school. He has created a very welcoming, caring and friendly school where all parents agree they and their child feel welcome. His self-evaluation of the school is accurate and succinct.

Subject leadership is underdeveloped. The school has recognised this and in recent years has entered into a management programme designed to develop staff. There have been improvements in leadership of science and ICT, but elsewhere progress has stalled as a result of staff turnover. However, the school has plans to look again at this aspect of its work.

Governance is strong. The governing body is knowledgeable, very committed and highly supportive. Administrative systems to manage the work of the governing body are well embedded.

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

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| 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

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| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 3 |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage | 3 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 3 |

Achievement and standards

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| 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

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|---|---|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 1 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 2 |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 1 |
| The attendance of learners | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners | 1 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 1 |
| 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? | 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

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| 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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 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 | 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 |

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

As you know, I visited your school recently and I would like to thank you for talking to me, telling me about your school and making me feel so welcome.

I looked at many of the things you do in school and talked with your teachers and some of the people who help you. I thought that you behaved very well and I could tell that you and your families are very proud of your school. These are some of the things that I really liked.

- The people in school work very hard to make sure that you learn how to be good, sensible and caring and you showed me that you can live up to their very high expectations.
- You are very proud, and rightly so, of the fund-raising you do for the school in Uganda.
- You enjoy being with each other and get on well with the adults in school. You know about staying fit and healthy and eating sensibly. Isn't it good that you now have your own kitchen in school and have hot lunches made on the premises?
- You have a super range of clubs, sports and activities to take part in. I learnt that everybody really enjoys these and your parents think they are great.
- The adults in the school take very good care of you.

Mr Mellen and the teachers are going to look again at the work that the children in Key Stage 1 do because I think they could do even better. I also think that some of the older children are really rather clever and could probably do harder work. (Sorry about that L). I know that you will continue to behave very well and help Mr Mellen and the teachers when they ask you to.

Thank you again for helping me with this inspection. Good luck for the future.