

# Claremont Community Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 119240           |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Blackpool        |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 313228           |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 12–13 March 2008 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Dave Byrne       |

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

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| <b>Type of school</b>                     | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                    | Community  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                | 3–11   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed  |
| <b>Number on roll</b>                     |  |
| School                                    | 530  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body                                     |
| <b>Chair</b>                              | Mr Colin Garner  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                        | Miss Eileen Brierley                                   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 1 October 2004   |
| <b>School address</b>                     | Westminster Road<br>Blackpool<br>Lancashire<br>FY1 2QE |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                   | 01253 621703   |
| <b>Fax number</b>                         | 01253 290268   |

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a large school serving an area with well above average levels of deprivation. The school population is constantly altering because of significant numbers of pupils who begin or leave school at times other than the normal dates. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is almost three times the national average. An above average percentage has learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds with a small number from other ethnic groups. There is a small but significant number of looked after children. The percentage of pupils needing support for English with an additional language has risen in the last three years, but remains below the national average. The school provides before and after school care. There have been significant changes in staffing in the last two terms including a new headteacher. The school manages a children's centre and provides before and after school care.

## 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 is improving. A great emphasis is placed on supporting pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities so that they are included in all that the school offers. Pupils like school, but a significant minority do not attend enough and attendance is well below average. Parents are supportive of the school but a small number have concerns about behaviour. Inspection findings are that behaviour is satisfactory overall and good in lessons. There has been a significant drop in exclusions this year from being high to being very low. Improved strategies introduced by the headteacher to manage behaviour are having a positive impact. The deployment of support staff into classrooms has enabled better learning.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Lessons have a positive ethos but, in some classes, the assessment of pupils' previous knowledge is not used enough to plan work that meets the needs of all pupils. In addition, many pupils don't know what they need to do to improve their work. This restricts learning, especially for the more able pupils.

Standards have been falling in recent years. In 2007, results at the end of Year 6 were well below average in English, mathematics and science. Test results are adversely influenced by the varying population of pupils from year to year. Governors and the new senior management team recognise that, despite these challenges, pupils can do better. In Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress from a low starting point. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics have tended to be well below average by the end of Year 2, but better teaching using higher targets for pupils has improved progress. The school quite rightly targets the improvement of speaking to raise standards in writing and the development of pupils' investigative skills in mathematics and science. Inspection findings show that current standards are improving and results in 2008 are set to rise.

The curriculum meets requirements and is enriched by a good range of sporting and musical events. Pupils develop a good understanding of how to be fit and healthy and develop a sound knowledge of how to stay safe. Productive links with support agencies within the health and education services assist the school in meeting the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Strategies to challenge more able pupils have not been given enough focus and these pupils could do better. Overall, pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education.

Leadership and management, including governance, are satisfactory. Concerted action is improving pupils' behaviour and starting to tackle attendance. An effective senior management team is moving the school forward, but not enough staff contribute to the monitoring of the school's provision and performance. Governors are supportive of the school in its quest to raise standards. They make sure all statutory requirements are met, including the safeguarding of pupils. Financial difficulties in the past are being resolved and the school gives satisfactory value for money. Given the current circumstances, the school has the capacity to improve in future.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

When children start Nursery, their level of development is well below that typical for their age. Children have a satisfactory start to their education in this and the Reception class. They feel safe and parents are encouraged to help their children at home. Strong leadership is bringing

about many important changes that are accelerating children's progress. Resources for learning, both inside and outdoors, are adequate but in need of upgrading. Staff make the best use of what is available and provide a variety of suitable activities which promotes children's development. The balance between children receiving adult led activities and developing independence through free choice is not yet quite right. Assessment has been recently brought up to standard. It is increasingly enabling staff to refine what they plan so that children's individual needs are met. Despite satisfactory progress, most children still do not reach the levels typical of children of this age. Children have a particular weakness in their speaking and communication, language and literacy, as well as knowledge and understanding of the world.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve standards in speaking and writing, and extend pupils' skills in investigative mathematics and science, particularly for more able pupils.
- Strengthen the quality of assessment so that lessons meet the needs of all pupils and ensure that pupils know what to do to improve.
- Improve the contribution of staff to the monitoring of standards, the quality of teaching and the impact of school improvement strategies on progress.
- Improve pupils' attendance.

A small proportion of the 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**

Achievement is satisfactory with strengths in music and sport. In 2007, standards were well below average at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2. Results in tests are pulled down by the challenging backgrounds of many pupils. In the past, achievement has not been good enough and standards have been declining. This is not now the case. Progress is picking up and is currently satisfactory. Strong leadership by senior staff is successfully developing an ethos across the school in which good achievement is expected. Initiatives introduced since September 2007 are boosting the rate of learning particularly in mathematics and writing, especially amongst boys. Results in the end of Key Stage 2 tests are predicted to be better in 2008, but still below the national average. Inspection evidence shows that progress is increasing across the school. This reflects high expectations within the school and the setting of much higher targets across the school. Academic progress is satisfactory for pupils requiring additional support, such as pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, those with English with an additional language and children in care. More able pupils, however, are not yet doing as well as they should.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Pupils are usually friendly, polite and eager to please. Behaviour is a concern for some parents. Inspection findings are that it is generally good but, at times, mild disruption occurs. Pupils say that behaviour is much better than it was; they feel safe and are confident that any bullying is dealt with by staff. Most pupils are enthusiastic to learn, but this keenness is not always exploited by staff enough to get maximum learning in lessons. Pupils understand the choices required to be healthy and safe. Good

opportunities for sport help pupils to keep fit. Pupils contribute to the school community through the school council, being class monitors and in the production of an on-line newspaper. Pupils in Year 6 willingly take on break and lunchtime duties such as serving others their dinner. Concerts led by pupils raise money for charity and contribute to the local community. By Year 6, most pupils have good social skills but their spiritual development is relatively weak. Moral and cultural development is satisfactory but the pupils' understanding of the cultural richness and diversity of society is underdeveloped. Attendance is well below average.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Some teaching is good, mostly in Years 5 and 6, with most being adequate. Many staff are relatively new to the school and this contributes to some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. The level of expectation varies and is not always high enough for average and more able pupils. Good relationships are the norm in lessons but, at times, praise is not used enough to encourage good learning. Good lessons are typified by teachers using a good knowledge of pupils to provide tasks that take pupils' existing knowledge and understanding to a higher level. In some classes, however, pupils' existing knowledge and understanding are not assessed carefully enough. Where this is the case, pupils consolidate rather than extend what they know and can do, and progress is reduced. At times, pupils are expected to sit and listen for too long and are not involved enough in, for example, discussions, debates and practical activities. As a result, the development of pupils' speaking skills and of independent learning, for example in investigational mathematics and science, is held back. Teaching assistants successfully support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and ensure that their behaviour is well managed so that they are fully included in school life. Some marking is good, but overall it is not refined enough to consistently guide pupils towards how they can improve.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory with good provision for music and physical education. Pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education is well planned. There is a strong concentration on literacy and numeracy in order to raise basic standards, but not enough attention is given to developing pupils' speaking skills. Improvements are under way in the planning of subjects. Pupils are being given more opportunities to read, write and use ICT in all subjects and more thought is being given to meeting the needs of boys. Where links are made between subjects, they contribute to improved progress, particularly in writing. Visits to places of interest add to the pupils' enjoyment of subjects such as geography and history. The curriculum is successfully modified to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities but not to meet the needs of the more able. Older pupils say that they really enjoy the variety of experiences the school provides, including the opportunity to prepare a school newspaper in a well attended after school club and publish it on the school website.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Close links with educational and health support agencies contribute to the support provided for vulnerable pupils. Child protection and safeguarding procedures are securely in place. The headteacher has given very good leadership in improving many aspects of support and guidance. Procedures to raise attendance have been reviewed. They are thorough, and meticulously applied, but have not yet had a significant impact on the level of attendance. The decision to re-deploy teaching assistants to work in class has improved behaviour throughout the school and reduced the previously high number of exclusions to low levels. Good support enables pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, those with English as an additional language and the vulnerable pupils to make satisfactory and sometimes good progress. Academic guidance is satisfactory and beginning to improve. The new assessment systems are increasingly being used by staff to pick out underachievement so that support can be provided. Pupils' involvement in their own assessment is at an early stage of development.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Leadership and management benefit from the headteacher's determined leadership and a clear vision for the school's direction. Staff morale is high and there is a shared commitment to raising academic standards, reducing absence and enriching the curriculum. Together with a skilled senior leadership team, the headteacher accurately evaluates the school. This gives a clear focus for school improvement. Systems for monitoring the standards are satisfactory but staff are not involved enough in the monitoring process. There is too much reliance on the overview of senior managers. The value of using targets to raise standards is accepted by everyone. The process of target setting is contributing to better teaching, a more efficient deployment of staff and more rigorous evaluations of the effectiveness of strategies for removing underachievement.

Governance is satisfactory. The governing body is well chaired and ensures that governors work with the school to raise academic standards. Since the last inspection, the school has declined and improvement has been unsatisfactory. The school has now turned a corner and is heading back up to where it once was and its budget is now rapidly returning to balance.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
|---|----------------|

### 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  |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection  | No |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?   | 3  |
| The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage   | 3  |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements   | 3  |

### Achievement and standards

|  |   |
|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve?  | 3 |
| The standards <sup>1</sup> 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?                                  | 3 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development                                     | 3 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles   | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices   | 3 |
| How well learners enjoy their education   | 2 |
| The attendance of learners  | 4 |
| The behaviour of learners   | 3 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community                                    | 3 |
| 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?          | 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?   | 3 |

<sup>1</sup> 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**

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>                                       | 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  | 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

14 March 2008

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Claremont Community Primary School, Blackpool, FY1 2QE

I have good memories of talking with you at playtime, during lessons and around the lunch table. Thank you for being helpful and sharing your thoughts with me.

Your school is caring and secure; it gives you a safe place to learn in. Staff do a good job helping those of you who need extra help with your work or being there for you when you are upset or troubled. In lessons, your behaviour is good and you seem to enjoy school but too many of you stay away. This stops you doing as well as you could in your work. Many of you do not achieve well enough in speaking, writing, mathematics and science, but you do well in sport and music. The school is doing a lot to improve your test results and the quality of work in your lessons. I have asked the school to work with you in improving attendance and in raising your standards in speaking, writing and some parts of mathematics and science.

Better use of assessment would help teachers to ensure that you improve faster. Those of you who find learning and aspects of day-to-day life difficult are given good support. At times, though, those of you who find work easy need harder work and also a better understanding of how you can improve your work. The school is planning to work with you to make work harder and give you better guidance about how you can improve your work.

Your headteacher is very caring and wants the best for each and everyone of you. She is the leader of the team and is still finding out about the strengths of all of the staff. I have asked that staff are more involved in keeping an eye on how well you all do, so that the school can go from being satisfactory to good.

Please thank your parents for returning their questionnaires; most feel the school is just right for you.

I send you all my wishes for the future, and remember – keep smiling, be helpful and always try your best.

Dave Byrne

Lead inspector