

Fulwood, St Peter's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119416
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	313285
Inspection dates	14–15 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Jim Bennetts

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	221
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Miss Claire Bailey
Headteacher	Mr David Merritt
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2004
School address	Meadowfield Fulwood Preston Lancashire PR2 9RE
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Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Peter's C of E Primary School is of average size. It is located in north Preston and draws pupils from the immediate area and in some cases from a mile or two away. Most families are in comfortable circumstances and the proportion of pupils entitled to free meals is much lower than normal. More than a quarter of the pupils are from minority ethnic families. The majority of these are of Indian family heritage, but there are pupils who have recently come to England from Eastern Europe and other parts of the world. About one in five of the pupils speak English as an additional language and a few are at an early stage in developing English. Whilst this is a Church of England school, there are pupils from a variety of faiths; a significant minority are Muslim. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than normal, and exceptionally high in the present Year 6. The proportion of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need is similar to the national proportion, but high in Year 6. The number of pupils joining and leaving the school other than at the normal admission times is higher than in most schools, and increasing. There is a private nursery that operates in the school buildings, a breakfast club and after school club. These are inspected separately.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. Pupils are happy and achieve well. They thrive in the caring culture that this church school promotes. Parents greatly appreciate all that the school does for their children.

Standards have risen and achievement is good in the Reception class and in Key Stages 1 and 2. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Year 2 pupils did very well in national assessments and their results were well above those of 2007. Standards at the end of Year 6 have generally been higher than national standards. The unconfirmed 2008 results show improvement in science, but lower standards in English. Almost all targets were met or exceeded. Pupils throughout the school are self-confident and articulate, but for a few in Key Stage 2 skills in writing are not as secure as they might be.

Pupils enjoy school; they are attentive and eager to learn. Attendance is satisfactory. Behaviour is very good in lessons and about the school. Pupils get on well together and say that unpleasantness is very rare. They are confident that staff will help sort out any problems that arise. They are keen to keep healthy and know how to look after themselves. They influence decision making through the school council and make a very strong contribution to the life of the school and the wider community. For example, pupils act as buddies to younger pupils and put on ambitious and much appreciated performances. Spiritual development is outstanding and moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are well prepared for later life. They are well looked after.

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers are well supported by teaching assistants, enabling those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to achieve as well as others. Pupils get plenty of opportunities to learn by doing things themselves. There is generally provision for pupils of differing ability, but sometimes pupils of middle ability struggle a little with challenging tasks for want of extra guidance. The good curriculum offers a particularly rich menu of extra-curricular opportunities and visits.

The school is well led and there has been significant improvement since the last inspection. Senior staff are well supported by their colleagues; all join in a common endeavour to do the best for pupils. There are productive links with other providers, including the private nursery that operates in the school. The school gives good value for money. It has good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Most children starting in the Reception class have abilities that are slightly above what is typical for their age. The great majority have attended a private nursery that is on the school premises adjacent to the Reception classroom. They make good progress in the Reception year, most reaching or exceeding the expected learning goals. In mathematics, some are already beginning National Curriculum work. Progress has improved since the last inspection. Staff use time efficiently and carefully avoid spending too much time introducing activities; they quickly get children started on practical tasks. Informal activities in the classroom and outside are purposeful. Children get ample opportunity to develop language and social skills by role play and collaborative fun with toys. Support staff make a strong contribution to the provision.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve achievement and standards in writing in Key Stage 2.
- Ensure that for pupils of middle ability the steps in learning are clear and that guidance is readily available.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are above average and pupils' achievement is good. Achievement in the Reception class has improved; Reception children now do well. Standards in national assessments at the end of Year 2 were similar to national standards for several years. This year, they are well above previous years' in reading, writing and mathematics. These pupils have achieved well in relation to their abilities when they started school.

Between the last inspection and 2007, standards in national tests at age 11 were above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils generally made the progress expected of them from age 7 to age 11; those who were at the school for the full four years did quite well. In 2007 results were strongest in English and weakest in science. Unconfirmed results for 2008 show that almost all targets were met or exceeded. The results are strongest in science, showing a considerable improvement on results in 2007. Results are weakest in English, particularly in writing. Though the 2008 results are lower overall than last years', they represent good achievement for these pupils, many of whom have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Some pupils in Key Stage 2 have competence in speaking and listening that is ahead of their capabilities in writing. A few have weaknesses with spelling, presentation, punctuation, syntax or style that might have been tackled more effectively. Throughout the school pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language are well supported and make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Good relationships and positive attitudes make the school a friendly and harmonious community. The ethos and Christian values ensure outstanding spiritual development. Social, moral and cultural development is good. Pupils enjoy school and most attend well, though too many are late at the start of the day. Pupils say they feel safe and are confident that any concerns will be listened to. They generally behave very well in lessons and about the school. Most understand and accept the expected standards of behaviour and show concern for the well-being of others. Misbehaviour is uncommon and exclusions are very rare, nevertheless, behaviour in the playground occasionally leads to feelings of insecurity in some younger and more vulnerable pupils.

Pupils know the importance of exercise and nutrition in keeping healthy. They are well informed about substance abuse and road and internet safety. Pupils' input to the classroom, school and wider communities is outstanding. Their willingness to share ideas makes a major contribution in lessons. Pupils delight in serving as prefects, buddies to younger pupils, school councillors, office assistants and librarians. They are closely involved in local activities, notably through the Community Kids police project. They devote time and energy in fundraising to support a child in Zambia. They are well prepared for the next stage of education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. The great majority of lessons were good, but none were outstanding. Good lessons are characterised by good relationships and pupils' enthusiasm for learning and conscientious effort. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from the sensitive and encouraging guidance of support staff. Lessons engage pupils' interest and usually have a suitable balance of guidance and opportunity to learn by doing. For instance, pupils' refined ball skills by practising throwing and catching; they also valued, and noted well, advice about bending elbows and cupping hands.

Most lessons have alternative tasks for pupils of differing abilities. In the main, these are well matched to pupils' capacity to learn. The most able are often well challenged. However, sometimes middle ability pupils are expected to cope with much the same tasks as the most able without additional structure to provide the necessary stepping stones to master them. For instance, brisk guidance on algebra left a few insecure. In another class, some middle ability pupils struggled to set up sentences with subsidiary clauses without guidance on intermediate steps. Elsewhere, a middle ability group that was struggling received, briefly, the teacher's undivided attention.

Occasionally, instructions are unclear. Sometimes opportunities are missed to reinforce literacy by structuring writing tasks in other subjects. There is sometimes helpful oral guidance to pupils as they work, but marking is not always as thorough as it might be in attending to weaknesses in literacy.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It has an appropriate focus on literacy and numeracy, with well targeted additional support for pupils needing extra help. There is enrichment of the curriculum for gifted and talented pupils, though this is not coordinated into a coherent programme. Opportunities to improve writing in subjects across the curriculum are sometimes missed.

A comprehensive personal, social and health programme is effective, particularly in developing pupils' understanding of how to keep healthy. The school is developing a flexible approach to planning that links subjects to increase relevance and give opportunities for independent enquiry. Interesting themed weeks promote understanding of different cultures and faiths across the world. Frequent visits to museums, theatres, religious centres and industrial sites widen pupils' horizons and enhance their learning. Their appreciation of the range and quality of after-school activities is apparent in high participation rates.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Strong Christian values ensure a warm and caring environment in which pupils feel safe and confident. Staff know pupils well and are skilled in meeting their particular needs. Good relationships give pupils the confidence to approach an adult should they have any worries. There are clear guidelines for behaviour which are well understood by pupils. Procedures for risk assessment, safeguarding and child protection are in place. Support for pupils with language,

learning or emotional difficulties is sensitive and well targeted, drawing on a wide range of external assistance when required. New pupils are welcomed and helped by adults and their peers to settle quickly. Good procedures for improving attendance have brought about a significant reduction in unauthorised absence. Those for addressing the issue of punctuality at the start of the day are less rigorous.

Pupils and parents are well informed about progress towards long-term targets. On a day-to-day basis, pupils are not always sufficiently aware of where they are, where they should be, and the steps they need to take to get there.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school has successfully tackled all the points for improvement from the last inspection. The Foundation Stage curriculum is stronger; progress is better in Key Stage 1; behaviour has greatly improved; and the more able pupils often have demanding work to do. There have been skilfully managed changes to the staffing of some classrooms. All staff pull together well as a team. Senior staff and curriculum leaders have managed improvement effectively. They have set ambitious targets for many aspects of the school's work. Achievement and teaching have improved. However, there is scope for further improvement, particularly in tailoring work for middle ability pupils and ensuring that achievement in writing is as good as possible. Senior staff are clear and candid in evaluating how things stand, resulting in some well focused action for improvement. Governors give support and encouragement to staff. They are discerning in deliberations on personnel matters, such as the employment of a large number of effective teaching assistants. They have given strong and perceptive leadership on the development of the premises. However, they rely too much on the headteacher for interpretation of academic standards and achievement.

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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
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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
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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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?	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.

Annex A

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	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

16 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fulwood, St Peter's Church of England Primary School, Lancashire, PR2 9RE

Thank you for the welcome that you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you and seeing you at work in lessons. We think Fulwood St Peter's C of E Primary is a good school.

The school is well run and many things are improving. Standards are generally higher than in most schools. Pupils at the end of the Reception year are doing well. Those who are at the end of Infants have done very well and standards are very high this year. Though some in Year 6 find learning hard work, pupils in that year group have done well and standards in science are greatly improved. We saw lots of good lessons. Staff put on interesting activities and you work very well. You are keen to learn. The school provides opportunities for exciting trips and fun things to do in school; it was good to hear how you enjoyed doing the Year 6 play, and how you were looking forward to the trip to the Lake District. You relish chances to help one another and other people. You learn how to look after yourselves, for example by keeping fit and safe, and you are well looked after by the staff. You get on very well together, and you enjoy coming to school – though a few of you should make more effort to get in on time. We thought the assemblies were wonderful – and we noted in lessons how thoughtful you are in reflecting on what people believe and how they worship.

To make the school even better, we have asked staff to make sure that you always do your writing as well as you can – sometimes you could help yourselves by being more careful in checking for slips in spelling and punctuation and how sentences are set out. In many lessons we saw those who were struggling quite a bit getting plenty of help, and the fastest shooting ahead by themselves. We have asked your school to make sure that everyone in each class gets the best of chances to make good headway.

We wish you every success in your education.

Yours sincerely

Jim Bennetts

Lead inspector