

Great Harwood St Bartholomews Parish Church of England Voluntary
Aided Primary School
Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119420
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	313288
Inspection dates	9–10 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Geoffrey Yates

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	233
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Teri Hodson
Headteacher	Mr Graham Boyes
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2004
School address	Ash Street Great Harwood Blackburn Lancashire BB6 7QA
Telephone number	01254 884534
Fax number	01254 887527

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	9–10 July 2008
Inspection number	313288

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average-sized school situated just outside the town centre of Great Harwood. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Pupils are predominantly from White British families and there are no pupils who are at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language. The school has a below average number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. When children start school, they have broadly average skills. The school has achieved a number of awards including the Healthy Schools' award. At the time of the inspection a major building project was taking place.

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 and provides good value for money. All members of staff ensure that the school successfully encourages pupils to achieve well within the school's strong Christian ethos. As a result, for a number of years pupils have consistently achieved above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 2. The overwhelming majority of parents have very positive views about the school as reflected in comments such as, 'There has not been a single day when my child has been unhappy to go to school and indeed he is upset if he has time off.'

Pupils' achievement is good and standards are above average. Pupils enter Year 1 with skills typical for the age group. The school has convincing evidence to show that current standards at the end of Year 2 are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards by Year 6 are consistently above average in English, mathematics and science. Current standards are above the national expectations, although relatively fewer pupils are writing at the higher level.

Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy a wide range of activities which make learning interesting. They display very positive attitudes and good behaviour in lessons and around the school. Good attention is given to keeping pupils safe and healthy; pupils are keen to keep fit and enjoy the WOW (let's walk to school on Wednesday) sessions. Pupils take their responsibilities in school seriously and are keen to share their skills in the wider community, raising funds for worthy causes such as the North West Air Ambulance appeal. Pupils grow in confidence and independence and are well prepared for the future.

Teaching and learning are good because staff spend much time considering how best to interest and motivate pupils to learn effectively. Teaching strengths include an emphasis on developing pupils' self-confidence, very good relationships all round, and planning work that captures pupils' interests. Assessment and marking of work are increasingly effective with the information collected used well to set challenging learning targets. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work and to be involved in planning the next steps in their learning. Support assistants make a good contribution to the success of lessons and are well briefed about their roles.

Pupils benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum that has been adapted well to meet their needs. Pupils develop an exceptionally good understanding of modern day communication, especially how information and communication technology (ICT) can aid their learning. They are eager to take part in the opportunities provided for sports. Year 5 pupils have benefitted greatly by learning to play woodwind instruments. There is a strong curriculum focus on developing basic skills, although higher attaining pupils are not given enough opportunities to use and develop their writing skills across the curriculum. There are strong links with a number of community partners that help pupils to appreciate their wider social responsibilities.

Leadership and management are good. The work of senior managers and subject leaders in monitoring the work of the school is effective and provides a firm basis for self-evaluation. However, strategies to improve writing skills are not clearly highlighted in the school improvement plan. Governors take their roles very seriously and successfully hold the school to account. The school demonstrates it has a good capacity for improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage is well led and managed. Children start school with skills typical for their age. They get off to a good start in a stimulating environment where teaching is good and all children are well cared for and supported. Children settle quickly and enjoy what they do because they feel safe and secure. Children are provided with a wide range of interesting activities. For example, they develop their investigative skills well by testing kaleidoscopes in the darkened Bear Den. These exciting opportunities fire the children's imaginations and they make good progress in their social and language skills. Opportunities for outdoor activities are limited because the children do not have a well resourced, designated area where learning can take place. Good induction and assessment arrangements ensure that each child's attributes are quickly and carefully assessed, enabling staff to organise activities to meet their different needs effectively. As a result, children make good progress in all aspects of their work during their time in the Foundation Stage, and by the time they leave almost all have reached or exceeded expectations, especially in mathematics and reading.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure higher attaining pupils are challenged to use their writing skills well in other subjects.
- Involve pupils more in understanding what they need to do to improve further.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Results in national tests at the end of Year 6 have been consistently above average for a number of years. After a good start in the Foundation Stage, pupils continue to make good progress and achieve well throughout Key Stage 1. Progress and standards have improved this year in Year 2, following a slight decline in the previous year, and pupils are achieving above the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics. This reflects good teaching with no stone unturned to ensure that pupils' needs are met. The school's assessment data show current standards of attainment are again above the expected levels in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6: inspection findings fully support the school's judgements. A large proportion of pupils are working at above average levels in mathematics, reading and science but not in writing. Pupils are given insufficient opportunities to use and develop their writing skills in other subjects. Effective support enables pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to take a full part in class activities and make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils flourish in the secure and supportive environment and enjoy all that the school has to offer. They are self-assured, display positive attitudes to learning and work hard. Behaviour is good throughout the school in response to good teaching and clear expectations. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, although cultural development is satisfactory. Although the pupils know about different world faiths, their knowledge of cultures different from their own is limited. Pupils are very friendly, show great enjoyment and respond positively to the opportunities offered to them. As a result, attendance is well above the national average. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles and know the importance of regular exercise and a healthy diet. They make a strong contribution to their

school and the wider community. The children's council represents the interests of the pupils very well. They raise much-needed funds for charities. Older pupils take on their responsibilities with enthusiasm, for example, being Play Pals to support the younger pupils. They also make good use of what the school has to offer both during and after school. The learning of basic skills is given great importance within the curriculum, including ICT skills, which are developed very well. Pupils have good academic skills, grow in self-confidence, and have excellent attitudes towards school, preparing them very well for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Strengths in teaching include the skilful use of questioning and ensuring pupils of different attainment levels make good progress. Teachers establish very good relationships with their pupils, which they build on effectively to create good working atmospheres in lessons. Interesting activities engage pupils so that they work hard and enjoy their learning. For example, every opportunity is taken to use ICT in lessons and pupils are given many opportunities to use and apply their numeracy skills to solve problems. Teachers encourage and praise their pupils, which motivates them to try really hard. Teaching assistants are well-briefed and make a very positive contribution to learning. However, in some lessons the over-use of worksheets limits pupils' progress. While assessment information is used well by teachers to plan the next steps in learning, pupils are not sufficiently involved in setting their own targets. As such, pupils do not always have a clear view of how they might improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is broad, well balanced and has been skilfully adapted to meet pupils' needs. Attention is paid to developing basic skills, although opportunities for the higher attaining pupils to use their writing skills across the curriculum are limited. ICT is a particular strength; for example, older pupils used digital blue cameras to very good effect to create videos of their residential visit. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn foreign languages, including French and Mandarin. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of extra activities, for example, Year 5 pupils have access to free woodwind tuition through the Wider Opportunities Fund. This is having a significant impact on the pupils' ability to perform, appreciate and enjoy music. Visitors to the school and visits to local places of historical and geographical interest, including residential outdoor centres, all significantly support and enrich pupils' learning and enjoyment of school. For example, the pupils speak with great enthusiasm about their visit to a local indoor ski centre.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support for pupils are good. Child protection and safeguarding arrangements are well established and very well managed. The school takes good care of pupils and has effective systems in place to ensure their safety, especially important during the current major building project. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported in class and, as a result, they make good progress. The school's clear guidance to pupils as to how they should behave and live healthy lifestyles makes a very good contribution to their personal

development. The school provides good information to help parents support their children, although some continue to feel that communication could be improved. The improved assessment procedures enable teachers to plan the curriculum well and secure systems to track the progress of individual pupils have been developed. However, the school has yet to maximise their use. Pupils are sometimes unclear about their targets and are insufficiently involved in identifying what they need to do to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher ensures that the school's Christian ethos is one in which pupils feel valued, cared for, respected and included in all that the school does. The school's own evaluation of its effectiveness is accurate. The headteacher has built up an effective leadership and management team, and subject leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in their areas. Satisfactory improvements have been made since the previous inspection and the high academic standards have been maintained. The improvements made to the school's assessment procedures and the tracking of pupils' achievements have ensured that the school has a better view of pupils' progress. Governors are committed to the school and focused on bringing about improvement.

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

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?	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	2
The behaviour of learners	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?	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	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

15 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Great Harwood St Bartholomew's Parish Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary, Lancashire, BB6 7QA

Thank you very much for welcoming me into your school and answering all my questions so politely. The Year 6 pupils who kindly gave up their play time to talk to me were marvellous ambassadors for your school. It was wonderful to hear the Year 5 woodwind ensemble play one of Robbie Williams's songs so very well!

I was really impressed with how well you all work and play together. You are like one big happy family. You look after each other, with the older pupils taking responsibility for the younger pupils. You thoroughly enjoy your learning and your behaviour is good. You really appreciate being part of the school. You look forward to the interesting things that you do on your visits out of school. Your headteacher, staff and governors all work well together and make sure that your school keeps improving. They take good care of you and help you to learn about keeping safe and healthy. I am sorry that the Year 6 pupils will not see the full results of the school building programme.

I have asked your school to help you do better in writing. You write interesting stories but you need to work more on using your writing skills in subjects such as history and geography. I have also asked your school to involve you more in understanding what you need to do every half term in reading, writing and mathematics to improve your work.

I really enjoyed my visit to your school and I hope that you all do your best to make it an even better place to learn.

Best wishes,

Yours sincerely

Geoffrey Yates

Lead inspector