

Newburgh Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119482
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	313312
Inspection date	29 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Shirley Herring

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	100
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Tony Richardson
Headteacher	Mrs Janice Reynolds
Date of previous school inspection	1 April 2004
School address	Back Lane Newburgh Wigan Lancashire WN8 7XB
Telephone number	01257 462916
Fax number	01257 462916

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- The achievement of more able pupils in writing in Key Stage 2.
- The achievement of pupils in mathematics.
- The effectiveness of management's actions in raising standards, improving teaching and improving procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress.

Evidence was gathered from performance data and other school documentation, observations of teaching and learning, the work produced by pupils, parents' questionnaires and discussions with pupils, staff and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail. The inspector found that almost all of the judgements made in the school's self-evaluation form were justified and these have been included, where appropriate, in this report.

Description of the school

This is a small village school in a rural area which is comparatively socially advantaged. Most classes have more than one age group. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is low. Almost all pupils are from White British families with a small proportion of Asian heritage. Fewer pupils than average have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and no pupil is at an early stage of learning English. The school has close links with the church, the parish and with other local schools. The after school club in school is being 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 where pupils achieve well and develop into mature, well mannered citizens who clearly really enjoy learning and are exceptionally well prepared for the future. The outstanding care, guidance and support the school provides enable all pupils to be fully included in all activities and make good progress. Parents relate how much their children enjoy school and this is confirmed by their excellent attendance. Pupils themselves say they are very happy coming to school because of the friendly staff, interesting activities and the opportunities to work and play with children from different classes. They also appreciate the recent and ongoing refurbishment of their school.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Good behaviour is evident in class and about the school. Their spiritual, moral and cultural development is good. Their social development is outstanding because of the relationships pupils forge with one another. Pupils have a very good understanding of Christianity and other world faiths. They thoroughly understand the need for living a healthy lifestyle and are pleased that the fruit basket and healthy snacks have replaced the tuck shop. Initiatives such as Cycling Proficiency and Road Safety help pupils to keep safe and they are confident that they can talk to any member of staff should they have a problem. Pupils make a very good contribution to the school community, for example as members of the school council, and are also involved in village activities such as the Summer Fete and the Christingle Service. Their levels of literacy, numeracy and social skills, and extremely effective visits to the local high school ensure they have an excellent basis for the next stage of their education.

Children enter the school with a range of skills that are above those typical for their age. They make good progress in the Reception class and in Key Stage 1 because of consistently good teaching. In the national assessments at the end of Year 2, standards have been well above average for several years. Standards are above and sometimes well above average in Key Stage 2. The school has taken prompt action to address the slight fall in standards in the 2007 national tests, particularly in the number of pupils achieving the higher level in writing. Though it is too soon to judge the long term effect on pupils' progress, recent assessments show promising improvements. Renewed emphasis on giving pupils opportunities for solving problems is helping pupils to achieve well in mathematics. Examination of the pupils' work and recent assessment information indicate that the majority of pupils now in Year 6 are working at a standard that is well above average and are on line to meet their challenging targets in English and mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because of the excellent support they receive.

Teaching is good throughout the school and pupils learn well. Lessons are interesting and so pupils enjoy learning. Work is well planned and teachers make good use of available information to plan tasks which challenge and support different groups. Learning support staff are well deployed and make a good contribution in class lessons and in small groups. Teachers mark work thoroughly and give pupils good guidance to help them to improve. Explanations are clear so children understand what they have to do. As most teachers have changed the age group that they teach, they are seeking to extend their knowledge of available software to further enhance pupils' learning in ICT.

The curriculum is good overall and meets the needs of different pupils well. The strong emphasis on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills has helped them to consistently achieve

above average and often well above average standards. A good programme for personal, social and health education contributes well to pupils' personal development. The school has introduced a weekly creative session for the whole school, with a variety of practical and creative tasks on offer. The school intends to link subjects together more closely so that pupils can develop these creative skills systematically across the curriculum, though discussions on this development are at an early stage. The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of additional activities including a residential trip.

The school provides excellent care, guidance and support for all its pupils. All the required systems for safeguarding pupils are firmly in place and rigorously applied, and the school and governors place a high priority on staff training in this area. Many parents told of their appreciation of the exceptional care their children receive on a day to day basis and in times of particular difficulty. New systems are in place to assess and track pupils' work and are being used well to identify and address any slowdown in progress. Pupils are very aware of their own targets for improvement in literacy and numeracy, and strive to achieve them. This is helping to raise standards.

The school is led and managed well. The headteacher took swift action to address identified inconsistencies in teaching and this is now good throughout the school. In the Christian tradition of mutual respect, staff say that they are listened to and feel valued; there is a strong sense of teamwork. One parent wrote about the 'positive enthusiasm injected by the new headteacher which has been passed on to children and staff alike'. The leadership team, with good support from the governors, has evaluated the school's work accurately and thoroughly. It has used the information well to address any shortcomings. For example, the school has extended opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills and this is to be reinforced shortly by further staff training. However, it is too soon to judge the full impact of the initiatives on standards. There have been good improvements in teaching and in procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress since the last inspection. The school has a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good so children achieve well. Children enter the school with a range of skills which are generally above those typical for their age. They make good progress in the Reception class and most children achieve, and many exceed, the recommended goals by the time they enter Year 1. Teaching is good. Staff make regular observations of children working and use the information well to assess individual progress and to plan the next stage of learning. The curriculum is good and activities are firmly based on suitable, practical activities that show a good understanding of how young children learn. The class base is a little cramped, though well used, and plans to provide additional space are well in hand. Good use is made of the attractive outdoor area to extend learning. Good induction procedures and a strong emphasis on developing children's social skills help them settle quickly and develop good attitudes to school from an early age.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend opportunities for pupils to work creatively across the curriculum.

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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	1
The attendance of learners	1
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	1

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?	1

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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

30 January 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Newburgh Church of England Primary School, Wigan, Lancashire, WN8 7XB

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed talking to you all in class and to the school council.

I agree with you and your parents that Newburgh is a good school; indeed some things about it are outstanding. The school takes excellent care of you all and gives you very good help and support when you need it. You play your part very well by coming to school so regularly, working hard and behaving well. You clearly enjoy school and all it has to offer.

Teaching is good and in lessons teachers explain things clearly so you know what to do. They mark your work thoroughly and make good suggestions to help you to improve. This helps you to make good progress in school so that you reach standards that are better than average in English, mathematics and science by the time you leave Year 6.

To make your school even better, I have asked the school to include the sort of activities you enjoy in the creative hour in other lessons.

Good luck with the building work and I hope you always remain so keen to learn.

Yours sincerely,

Shirley Herring

Lead inspector