

Wellfield Methodist and Anglican Church School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119492
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	313315
Inspection dates	4–5 March 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	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Father Keith Harrison
Headteacher	Mrs Dawn Forshaw
Date of previous school inspection	1 January 2004
School address	Wellfield Drive Burnley Lancashire BB12 0JD
Telephone number	01282 436935
Fax number	01282 838644

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Wellfield Methodist and Anglican Church Primary School is of average size. The great majority of pupils are of White British background; very few are eligible for free meals and most live in comfortable circumstances. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is less than half that found nationally. Very few pupils join or leave the school at other than the normal times. The present headteacher took up her appointment in January 2007; during 2006 the school was led by two acting headteachers.

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 with some good features. Pupils leave with above average standards in English, mathematics and science. They make sound progress during their time at the school and achieve satisfactorily. Progress could sometimes be better and reflects variations in the quality of teaching the pupils receive. The recently appointed headteacher and new senior team have a secure grasp of where the school's strengths lie, and the developments needed. The school is well placed for improvement.

Pupils enjoy school and attendance is excellent. They behave well and have a keen awareness of social and moral responsibilities. They engage with sincerity in worship. They know how to stay safe and feel that there are staff who will always help them. They are enthusiastic about healthy living, and welcome opportunities to contribute to school life, for instance through the school council. Pupils are mature and confident in talking to visitors; this, together with their above average academic skills, prepares them well for secondary schooling. The curriculum is good and it is enriched by many high quality sporting and cultural ventures. However, pupils have limited experience of living with cultures that differ from their own way of life. Pupils are well looked after and there is good provision for those who find it hard to learn.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Most pupils learn effectively most of the time, but progress in some classes is better than in others. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do well because of their good support. However, the most able are not always challenged enough and sometimes teachers' strategies do not ensure that all pupils are fully engaged in productive learning. Sometimes lessons are a little slow or dull. Senior staff check lesson planning and observe some lessons, but quality assurance of teaching is not firm enough. There is now emphasis on what each lesson is for, with checks at the end on what has been learnt. The tracking of progress from year to year has been greatly improved. However, assessment is not as frequent or as detailed as it should be to identify pupils who have not learnt things well enough, so that timely intervention can sort things out.

The new senior team has a clear agenda for improvement. Already, improvements have been made in science, with stronger results in 2007. Management of teaching and learning are not yet as refined as they need to be. Leadership and management are satisfactory, with capacity for greater effectiveness as new strategies come into play. There have been disruptions to the school's leadership since the last inspection. This has resulted in the school's effectiveness falling back from the very good levels four years ago. The disruptions have been resolved and the school is now strongly placed to build on its strengths and attend to its weaknesses.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Most children starting at the school have skills and abilities that are at least as strong as those typical for their age. A few have weak communication skills and lack maturity in settling to schooling. Children develop all their skills satisfactorily in Reception. A suitable range of structured activities is offered, alongside opportunities to learn through play. There is a sensible balance of direction by the staff and free choice. The quality of planning is good and appropriate for children's capabilities and readiness for learning. However, sometimes it takes too long to get organised or to get things done. A significant omission is opportunity for secure outdoor play, and the school has plans for this. Children are well looked after and they enjoy school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve teaching by firmer quality assurance of planning and lesson presentation so that all pupils, in particular the more able, are sufficiently challenged.
- Rectify weaknesses in learning by checking more frequently and in more detail on what has been learnt so that pupils' progress is consistent.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils leave the school with standards that are above average. Usually, the majority of pupils starting at the school have capabilities at least as strong as those typical for their age. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have been well above average overall in the last five years although in 2007 they were average. Progress in Key Stage 1 is variable; it is good in Year 2 but satisfactory overall. In Key Stage 2, progress in some years is stronger than in others. Overall it is satisfactory. In 2007, results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 were well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do well because of the support and encouragement they receive. The most able, however, do not always reach their full potential. With outstanding teaching, some physical education is of excellent quality.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development is good. Pupils behave well; they are polite, warm and welcoming to each other and visitors. They enjoy school and attendance is excellent. They feel safe and secure; they show consideration for safety, especially when playing outdoors. They say bullying is rare and that any issues are dealt with promptly by staff. The school council makes a positive contribution to school life.

The spiritual, moral and social development of pupils is good; it reflects the caring ethos of the school. There are plans to extend cultural maturity through links with other local schools. Pupils enjoy greatly a wide range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities, which support and encourage healthy living. Development of pupils' life skills is good and well supported through the curriculum, school visits, links with the community and charitable giving. A Year 2 pupil voiced that, 'Wellfield is a right good school'. Those around him echoed and endorsed his opinion.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teaching is good and often outstanding in Year 2. Some good teaching was seen in most classrooms and most pupils make reasonable progress most of the time; there was no inadequate teaching seen.

Pupils are generally attentive and keen to learn; they take a pride in their work. Too often all pupils do much the same work. There is effective support for those who struggle but sometimes the more able are simply occupied doing such work, and learn little new. Occasionally, pupils could do more, or better, if teachers insisted. In some lessons, pace slackens, or teachers talk for too long, so pupils do not make much headway. There is improving practice with increasing

clarity about what pupils are to learn in a lesson and checks on whether they have learnt it. However, on occasion, teachers do not concentrate on the fundamental objective behind tasks – for instance, mastering a sorting task on the computer can be linked to securing confidence in number bonds to 10. Some lessons are dull, missing opportunities for interesting learning. In one classroom, children can be slow to settle and routines are not established firmly. Strategies to build understanding are not always planned carefully enough – for example, young children are expected to come up with sophisticated ideas with few detailed prompts. There are checks on teachers' planning and lessons are monitored. However, this quality assurance is not tight enough. Marking is satisfactory but could do more to point the way for improvement. Learning is now tracked with increasing rigour, and the coordination of assessment is good. However, more should be done to diagnose weaknesses in learning sooner, and deal with emerging problems.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It meets all requirements, caters well for most pupils, and boosts personal development. Provision for mathematics is being strengthened and the school aims to develop assessment systems further. Staff curriculum responsibilities have been reviewed and are being enhanced. Teachers are developing activity-based methods, where assessment provides a key to monitoring progress.

Extra-curricular activities are good in range and quality, and sporting opportunities promote healthy lifestyles. Music tuition, school productions, visits and visitors provide good additional elements. An innovative approach to the start of the day, with 'energise' sessions, intervention support for certain groups and a concentration on basic skills, is successful and enjoyed by pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care is good. Statutory requirements to safeguard pupils are in place, including those necessary for school visits. Pupils feel safe and well looked after and are willing to turn to adults in school for support and advice. Vulnerable pupils are well cared for and are given good support. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties is good, enabling them to make good progress. Relationships with parents and carers are very positive: most parents feel that the school responds promptly to any concerns they may have. They speak highly of the care and support provided by the school.

Assessment procedures have improved considerably but have not yet been fully developed, so staff have been unable to pinpoint exactly where or why pupils are making insufficient progress. Currently, assessment information is not gathered and analysed well enough to enable teachers to sort out pupils' difficulties and accelerate progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. As the new senior team establishes itself, leadership and management are rapidly becoming more effective. The school was considered to be very good at the last inspection in 2004. Since the last inspection the school has not made

sufficient progress. A contributory factor has been the period of unsettled leadership. The new team is determined to improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning and raise standards. Emphasis on improvement in science for last summer's national tests at age eleven was well judged and successful. Leaders recognise that sharper assessment lesson by lesson, and tracking pupils' progress are keys to strengthening learning.

The headteacher's leadership is of high quality. It provides a resolute vision for development and brings to the school strong capacity for improvement. Self-evaluation is candid and accurate. The head and senior team have the support of the staff: teachers and teaching assistants join with them in the quest for improvement. The consolidation of subject leadership across the curriculum remains an area for development and quality assurance of teaching needs to be firmer. The school gives satisfactory value for money. The large single age classes, with effective teaching assistants, are a good deployment of resources. The governing body now has a clear picture of how things stand, and minutes of meetings attest to thorough consideration of issues that need to be dealt with. Governors give every encouragement to the senior team in the drive for improvement. Having taken stock of the school's strengths and areas for development, leaders are now well braced to surge ahead with the improvement of quality.

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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?	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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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	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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
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	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

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	2
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	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

6 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wellfield Methodist and Anglican Church School, Lancashire, BB12 0JD

Thank you for all the help you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you and seeing how well you are getting on in lessons and as you go about the school. We think your school gives you a satisfactory education. By the time you leave you have reached standards that are a good deal higher than usual for eleven year olds.

Progress in lessons is satisfactory, sometimes good and occasionally excellent, though some of you could sometimes do things that are harder, and sometimes things could go faster. Your attendance is excellent; you behave well and usually give good attention in lessons. Now and again some younger ones are slow at settling down, and a few of you can get a bit sleepy if teachers do not keep you on your toes. You enjoy lessons and all the extra things the school arranges. You are well looked after. You are keen to keep healthy; we saw some excellent PE and, when it is going well, the 'energise' session each morning is fantastic.

Your headteacher is quite new to the school and there have been a few changes to how things are done. She has already made significant improvements and there are very sensible plans to build further on the school's strengths. The other teachers are keen to support these developments. The school is being run effectively and governors and senior staff are ambitious for you to do even better. They will be checking on things to make sure that teaching is always as good as it can be, and they will be making more checks on exactly how well you have learnt things. You can help by letting teachers know if you are muddled about anything – like how to take away 37 from 83 or what a stick with an, " 'orses 'ead 'andle" might be in that poem some of you were reading about Albert and the Lion.

There are a lot of good things about your school. Keep doing your best to make it even better.

Jim Bennetts

Lead inspector