

Westminster Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	128081
Local Authority	Bradford
Inspection number	318387
Inspection dates	5–6 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Angela Headon HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	341
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Ray Gibson
Headteacher	Mr Bob Freeth
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Westminster Road Bradford West Yorkshire BD3 0HW
Telephone number	01274 648490
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Westminster Church of England Primary School is a larger than average primary school, situated close to the centre of Bradford. The school opened as a Fresh Start school in 2005. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is almost twice the national average figure. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is similar to the national average. Three quarters of the pupils come from minority ethnic groups and nearly all of these speak English as an additional language.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Westminster Church of England Primary School is a good school with an inclusive ethos. It is a welcoming place where all children are valued and expectations of staff and pupils are high. The school enjoys the support of the vast majority of parents.

Children start school with skills and capabilities that are well below expectations with few children able to speak English. Through well-planned learning activities and high quality teaching, they make effective progress in the Foundation Stage. Pupils continue to make good progress during Key Stages 1 and 2, as reflected in the rise in standards at the end of both key stages and the improvement in standards between key stages.

The school is successful in meeting the needs of different groups of pupils and providing them with support from an early stage. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language achieve as well as their peers. There is frequent and secure tracking of pupils' progress. However, pupils are not yet fully involved in understanding their targets and how to reach them.

Teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers challenge pupils to do their best and use praise and encouragement skilfully to acknowledge good work and behaviour. Pupils enjoy lessons and their personal development is good, as demonstrated by their positive approach to learning and their respect and care for each other. Effective teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants and their good relationships with pupils enhance learning.

The school offers a satisfactory curriculum. Good features include the strong focus on English and mathematics, taught in single age groups, and the varied range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities. The school is aware that the developing 'creative curriculum' does not yet enable pupils to achieve consistently well in all other subject areas.

Strong pastoral support ensures all pupils are well cared for. The work of the learning mentors is particularly well focused. Throughout the school pupils are provided with many opportunities to develop personal and social skills. This is reflected in their good attitudes and behaviour, which ensures they achieve well.

The headteacher effectively demonstrates clear leadership, with a determination to improve the school further. Senior leaders give excellent support and make a considerable contribution to driving the school forward. Together, they have an accurate picture of the school's current performance and a sound understanding of what needs to be done to keep up the momentum of improvement.

Capable subject leaders are also fully committed to securing further improvement across the school. A number are actively involved in lesson observations and analysis of assessment data. At present, however, they do not play a full part in monitoring progress across all key stages.

Governors and senior leaders have all acted readily on advice. As a result, self-evaluation is good and the school is now very well placed to sustain the gains made and to build further on its success. The school provides good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage is very well organised and provides the children with an attractive and stimulating environment in which to learn. Children enjoy school, behave well and respond enthusiastically to the good provision and exciting activities available. Attainment on entry to the school is well below expectations in all areas, especially in communication, language and literacy skills and personal and social development. The vast majority of children do not speak English. Through high quality teaching, children make good progress in the Foundation Stage. Although by the end, they have still not achieved the Early Learning Goals expected for their age. The accommodation for Reception age children is yet to be fully developed. It does not provide children with full access to the outdoor curriculum, limiting the development of their independent learning skills.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make sure pupils clearly understand their targets and know what they need to do to achieve them.
- Further develop the role of subject leaders to increase their impact on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress.
- Ensure the 'creative curriculum' maximises pupils' progress in all subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

When children start school, the majority have very weak basic skills, especially in language, literacy, and social development. Due to the good level of provision in the Foundation Stage, they thrive and make good progress. Pupils' effective progress continues in Key Stage 1 and given their starting points they achieve well in Year 2. In 2007, attainment in the Year 2 tests improved in all areas, with an overall rise in standards.

At Key Stage 2, test results in English, mathematics and science at expected levels also showed a marked improvement, although attainment at the higher levels in mathematics and science was significantly below average. Standards, overall, for Year 6 pupils were significantly higher than in 2006. The school's challenging targets for expected levels were exceeded. The school recognises that the rate of progress in the earlier years in both key stages requires close monitoring. Nonetheless, evidence from lesson observations and the school's own assessments, indicates pupils achieve well in Key Stage 2 and make good progress overall.

The school monitors the performance of each group of pupils closely. It has put in place strategies to improve reading and writing across the school, whilst continuing to support target groups. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress in their academic and personal development.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. From the moment children enter the Nursery the school does its utmost to develop their social skills. Pupils respond very positively to the school's high expectations of behaviour. Pupils are considerate, polite and very friendly. The reward system for good behaviour and attendance is well understood by all pupils.

Pupils enjoy school; they feel safe and not at risk of bullying. They understand the importance of healthy eating and the benefits of exercise. For example, they hurry into classes each morning to participate in the fitness workout. As a result they are alert and ready to learn. Pupils' contribution to the school and wider community is improving through the work of the school council. The improved playground facilities are a direct result of their suggestions and they are now pursuing the idea of more after-school clubs as 'all learning is great.'

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils have a better understanding of different faiths in multicultural Britain and links to the local Christian church are now strengthening. Attendance is satisfactory and fewer families now take their children away on extended holidays in term time.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, with some outstanding practice. With good subject knowledge, clear planning and high expectations, teachers ensure lessons are engaging for pupils, with a variety of learning opportunities. In the best lessons, teachers ensure that pupils fully understand what they are learning, check progress and fully involve pupils in the assessment of their work. Pupils make good gains in these lessons, both in their academic achievement and their personal development.

A particular strength of teaching throughout the school is the high quality relationships evident between staff and pupils. These impact positively on pupils' good personal development and their enthusiasm for learning. Highly skilled teaching assistants provide very good support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for those who speak English as an additional language, ensuring they achieve as well as their peers. Pupils appreciate this support and the encouragement that they receive. In the Foundation Stage, good and some outstanding teaching promotes children's improving achievement and enjoyment of learning.

The quality of teachers' assessments is good and marking of pupils' work is both regular and constructive. However, pupils' knowledge of their individual targets and how to reach them is not yet secure.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum provided is satisfactory with good features. All statutory requirements are met and it is regularly reviewed. There is good provision for literacy and numeracy, together with opportunities to use information and communication technology in a range of subjects. Effective provision is also made for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The 'creative curriculum' continues to develop and includes a full range of subjects, taught to mixed age groups. It successfully promotes enjoyment and engagement with learning. However, it is yet to link work effectively across all subjects and therefore does not fully meet individual and year group needs well enough to ensure good levels of achievement.

The curriculum is enriched through a wide range of educational visits, including a residential experience for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils, together with a good number of extra-curricular activities. Themed provision and the use of external specialists, enrich the learning opportunities on offer. All these experiences nurture pupils' talents and interests effectively.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school offers pupils satisfactory academic guidance and good pastoral care and support. The school takes care of pupils and gives due attention to procedures for their safety and protection. Child protection procedures are understood by all staff and arrangements for risk assessments and first-aid are in place.

Support for vulnerable pupils, those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with linguistic needs is particularly strong. The school also ensures a secure start for those pupils who come into the school part way through their education.

The effective learning mentors offer pupils a secure haven when they need extra support with their behaviour and run a successful breakfast club, which promotes punctuality and regular attendance. They work closely with the school's community liaison worker to create good links with pupils' families and the local community.

The school tracks the progress of pupils carefully, identifying those who need extra help to achieve well. However, individual education plans to measure the effectiveness of this support to pupils are not yet consistently applied across the school. Similarly, pupils' understanding of targets and how to achieve them is variable.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The effective headteacher provides a strong lead in raising standards and enables everyone to play their part. He is very well supported by an able and committed senior leadership team. Teamwork is strong and new staff are rigorously inducted into the school's ethos and high expectations.

Subject leaders are well advised and are enthusiastic about leading developments in their areas. They understand the process of self-evaluation and how their contribution fits into the wider picture. However, their role in monitoring subject performance and raising standards across the school is yet to be fully developed.

Arrangements to check the progress of pupils and the quality of teaching and learning are rigorous and thorough. The analysis of data collected on pupils' attainment throughout the year ensures that individual pupils at risk of underachieving are quickly targeted and supported. The school has accurately identified target groups, including higher ability pupils, and intervention to date is showing signs of success. Staffing and resources for learning across the school are effectively deployed.

Overall self-evaluation is accurate. The school is fully aware of its strengths and areas where improvement is needed. As a result, the school improvement plan is comprehensive, with measurable success criteria, and is used increasingly to move the school forward. The school makes good use of the effective guidance offered by Education Bradford.

Governors are well informed, supportive and are ambitious for the future of the school. They are increasingly confident to hold the school to account for areas requiring development. The school continues to develop wider community partnerships with a range of organisations, including local business and schools.

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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	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
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	3
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	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?	2
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

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**

Following our visit to your school, we would like to thank you for the warm welcome you gave us. We were very impressed by your good behaviour and how polite and helpful you were. We enjoyed being with you in your assembly and also talking with you at lunchtime.

Your school is a good school and there are many good things to be proud of. We spent a lot of time finding out how well you are learning. In lessons, you listened carefully to your teachers and worked hard; we could see that you have learnt a great deal this year. Your test results are also getting better, so - well done! Keep trying your best!

You told us that you enjoyed coming to school and that the adults take good care of you. You also said how much you enjoyed receiving reward certificates, going on interesting visits and trips and taking part in activities at lunchtime and after school.

Your school is a friendly place which shows you how to care for each other and helps you gain confidence. We think your teachers care for you well and your teaching assistants also do lots to help you in the lessons.

Although we know you are doing well, we think that it would be a good idea for you to have a better understanding of your targets and how you can reach them. Then maybe you could get even better results in your tests!

We have also asked Mr Freeth and the governors to make sure that you not only continue to do well in English and mathematics, but in all your other subjects too. To help with this we think that teachers responsible for your subjects should now play a bigger part in making sure you achieve as well as you can.

But, most important of all, we agree with you that your school is a good school.

Congratulations on helping to make your school so successful.