

Summerseat Methodist Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105327
Local Authority	Bury
Inspection number	324203
Inspection dates	12–13 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Lynne Read

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	91
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Tim Butcher
Headteacher	Mr David Griffith
Date of previous school inspection	13 March 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Rowlands Road Summerseat Bury Lancashire BL9 5NF

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	12–13 May 2009
Inspection number	324203

Telephone number

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Age group 4–11

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

Description of the school

This smaller than average size school serves the village parish and surrounding areas. Most pupils are of White British heritage and a much lower proportion than usual take a free school meal. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. There is a Reception class in school. The quality of provision for these children is reported in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school holds the Activemark and Healthy Schools Awards. Extended services include before- and after-school care facilities, both organised by an independent provider.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Summerseat Methodist Primary is a good school and pupils' personal development is outstanding. Value for money is good. Parents commend the staff and provision highly. Comments include 'the school provides a very positive and caring atmosphere and fosters good behaviour and spirit'. Good links with the church, other schools and agencies provide many benefits for pupils' personal and learning needs. For example, pupils take services in church and links with secondary schools provide added opportunities for physical activities and work in science.

By the end of Year 6 standards are above average. From an average starting point, achievement is good overall. However, for the more able pupils, progress in writing across the school and in mathematics at Key Stage 2, is sometimes slower. The school is checking on pupils' progress more closely and teachers have increased their expectations of what pupils should achieve. As a result, progress is accelerating, but there is still more to do in extending the range of writing for the more able and developing problem solving and investigative skills for them in mathematics. Science and reading are strengths across the school with a good number of pupils working at the higher levels in both subjects.

Teaching is good overall, but there are some inconsistencies in practice that lead to variations in the quality of learning. Across the school, lessons challenge pupils' thinking skills, providing good opportunities for them to be active learners. Work is generally well planned to promote success for all pupils. However, there are occasions when expectations are not high enough for the more able pupils, especially in writing across the school and in mathematics at Key Stage 2. The guidance given to pupils, either through teachers' marking or in the form of individual learning goals, generally helps them to improve. This is not consistent practice, however, across all classes and sometimes marking provides little help. The good curriculum is enhanced by a varied selection of visits, visiting experts and extra-curricular activities, which inspire pupils and extend their experiences. Learning includes a strong emphasis on personal, social and health education. Pupils are proud of their Healthy Schools Award that recognises their good achievements that help them to live safe and healthy lives.

Pupils' personal development, including their behaviour, is outstanding. The school provides a friendly, harmonious environment and pupils say they enjoy learning. They make an effective contribution to the school community. For example, the school council is involved in decision making and the Eco council are busy with environmental issues as they work towards their first award. Pupils leave the school as confident and mature individuals, with excellent personal and good academic skills that prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

The headteacher provides good leadership and generates good team work among staff. All are fully committed to high standards and providing the best possible provision for all pupils within a cohesive community. Managers have a thorough overview of achievement and action plans are in place to address identified issues in teaching and learning. The good range of skills and expertise within the senior leadership team, together with the overall pattern of improved progress, mean that there is good capacity for the school to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in the Reception class benefit from good teaching and they learn well. They experience a smooth introduction to school life because of good quality care and support for children's

well-being. All welfare requirements are fully met. The children benefit from good adult support in this small class and learn much from working alongside the older Year 1 pupils. They enjoy their work and their behaviour and personal skills are excellent.

Children's skills on entry to the Reception class varies widely, but is broadly at the level expected for their age. Progress is assessed constantly and tasks are planned effectively to build on their developing knowledge and skills. Children make good progress and the majority are working just above expected levels by the time they enter Year 1. A new programme for learning about sounds and letters is helping to promote early reading and writing skills very effectively.

Staff are well led by the coordinator and work effectively as a team to provide a bright, colourful environment. The interesting learning opportunities have a good element of child-chosen activities to develop independence. Currently, staff make good use of the main playground for learning in the fresh air and for physical activity. The provision of a dedicated outside classroom is a major priority for improvement and building work is scheduled to start soon.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teaching consistently stretches the more able pupils to improve their achievement in writing across school and in mathematics at Key Stage 2.
- Ensure that teachers' marking and guidance in all classes provides useful advice for pupils about how they can improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good overall, but there is some variation in the rate of progress. Standards are higher than average by the end of Year 6. The results of the teacher assessments for Year 2 in 2008 were average and these pupils made satisfactory progress from their starting points. However, measures have been introduced to help boost pupils' progress. New assessments and tracking records show mainly good progress for the present Years 1 and 2, but fewer than average numbers attain the higher level in writing.

Reading and science are strengths at the school with a good proportion of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils attaining the higher levels. Learning is often good in early Key Stage 2, but not consistently so for the more able in writing and mathematics. Progress accelerates in Years 5 and 6, but in 2008 some of the more able pupils did not meet expectations in writing and mathematics and the school's targets were missed at the higher level. Current assessments and completed work show improvements in progress but there has not yet been time for an impact on standards. Managers keep a close eye on boys' learning and they are currently making equal progress to girls. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support so they make equal progress to their peers. The small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Their understanding of spiritual, moral, social issues is also outstanding and supported by good links with the church. Cultural development is good, although not as strong because pupils do not have a secure understanding of the diversity of society. Pupils enjoy school and are extremely keen to learn. This is

demonstrated by their positive attitudes and exemplary behaviour, both in lessons and around the school. Attendance is above the national average.

Pupils say they feel safe and that adults are always on hand to help with any worries. They have an outstanding awareness of healthy lifestyles and enjoy exercise through the good allocation of time for physical education, as well as many extra-curricular sports clubs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, having achieved good skills in basic subjects together with their very good collaborative skills. Through their school council, pupils make an excellent contribution to decision making. For example, they have been fully involved in designing the new playground. Pupils also take on roles of responsibility, for example, older ones help to support younger children. The new Eco council is developing very well and is active in raising awareness of environmental issues. Pupils make a good contribution to the wider community through their support for a variety of charities and active involvement in village events.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Lessons have a fast pace which helps to maintain pupils' interest and to motivate them. Teachers use a range of strategies and include a good amount of practical work so that lessons appeal to pupils of different dispositions. Useful prompts in the classroom and reference material supports learning effectively. The quality of teachers' marking is often good, but it is too variable. Sometimes it does not provide enough help for pupils, especially the more able, to extend their learning. Working relationships in lessons are good. Experienced teaching assistants provide good, targeted support, both in class and through leading a range of special support groups.

Because of new, improved methods of tracking pupils' progress and the setting of challenging targets, teachers now have increased expectations of what pupils should achieve. Work is assessed regularly and, in most lessons, tasks are well planned to build on previous learning and promote good progress. Work in some pupils' mathematics books, however, shows that there are occasions when the more able are doing much the same work as the majority and so are not fully challenged. Across the curriculum, worksheets are often used to record work. Some of these require only a basic response and do not provide opportunities for the more able pupils to practise their writing skills fully.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

A good balance between physical, creative, personal development and academic work ensures pupils have a rounded education. They learn French and have good opportunities to consolidate their computer skills when studying other subjects. Special teaching groups support pupils who need extra help or to boost learning where pupils are not meeting the expected level of work. The school has introduced a topic approach to planning to consolidate and extend learning across subjects. This is at an early stage of development and staff recognise there is more to do. Themed days are very popular with pupils. For example, they recently enjoyed a day exploring music from different cultures and an anti-bullying day provided a good input into their personal development.

Enrichment for learning is good. Extra-curricular clubs are very popular with pupils and parents. They effectively promote pupils' talents and extend their interests. Pupils have extensive opportunities to demonstrate their good skills in sport and music through school performances and local competitions. A residential visit supports personal development very well by promoting their team skills and independence.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

School routines are well established and good arrangements at lunchtimes and breaks ensure that pupils are well supervised. Staff know pupils very well and provide a safe, nurturing environment. Anti-bullying and anti-racism policies work very well so incidents of either are exceptionally rare and dealt with swiftly. Procedures for safeguarding pupils, including child protection, meet current government requirements. Good transition arrangements are in place and older pupils say they are confident about their move to secondary school.

Pupils receive praise for their efforts and good oral feedback on how they can improve during lessons. Teachers sometimes include written advice in their marking, but this good practice is not consistent across school. Guidance on how to improve, together with learning goals, is sometimes recorded in pupils' books for easy reference. Again, this is not consistent practice, so that some pupils are better informed than others.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good and clearly focused on achieving high standards. Equality of opportunity is promoted well. The school is a welcoming place where all pupils have equal access to everything on offer. The headteacher is responsible for maintaining the excellent caring ethos in school. New assessment and tracking records are used to keep a close eye on achievement and standards, as well as the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, the school has an accurate overview of its strengths and where it needs to improve. The information is also used well to pinpoint where achievement is not meeting expectations so that action can be taken swiftly. This new system is working well in ensuring that pupils remain on track to achieve their challenging targets.

Community cohesion is satisfactory and the Friends Association ensures that the school has a high profile within the village. Learners regularly engage with their community, but have relatively few opportunities to work with people from different ethnic or religious backgrounds. The governors are supportive and have a wide range of expertise between them. They are well informed through links with senior and subject managers and the headteacher's reports. Governors are now keen to extend their role, especially in monitoring standards and achievement more closely.

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
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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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 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

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	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**

Inspection of Summerseat Methodist Primary School, Bury, BL9 5NF

Thank you very much for the warm, cheerful welcome and for all the help you gave me when I came to visit your school. I had an interesting time in your company and would like to tell you what I found out.

Summerseat Methodist Primary is a friendly school and it provides you with a good education. Your behaviour is excellent and you take really good care of each other. You are a credit to your families and the school. You told me that the school is a safe and happy place and you have no worries about bullying. This is good to know. The fundraising you do shows that you are extremely kind and considerate people and that you are mindful of others who are less fortunate.

Please thank your parents for sending me lots of replies to the questionnaire. They are very happy with what the school provides and especially praise the 'family atmosphere' and the good selection of after-school clubs.

You enjoy your learning and are making good progress. Those of you in the Reception class learn well and have a lot of fun. In Key Stages 1 and 2 there are some pleasing improvements in your work this year. However, I think that those of you who are faster learners could do even better in your writing across school and in mathematics at Key Stage 2. I have asked your teachers to give you some extra challenges which I'm sure you will enjoy. I have also asked them to make sure you always have good advice in your books so that you know how to improve your work. You can help by continuing to work hard and trying your best.

Thank you once again for the interesting conversations I had and for letting me know your views so clearly.

Best wishes for the future and I'm sure you will continue to enjoy your happy school.