

# Blackpool Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113389
<b>Local Authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	325807
<b>Inspection date</b>	11 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Martin Kerly

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	316
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Bob Alford
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Jones
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 February 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Liverton Newton Abbot TQ12 6JB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01626 821316
<b>Fax number</b>	01626 824618

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- The achievement and progress by pupils in all year groups, especially in mathematics.
- Evidence of outstanding features of personal development.
- The use of assessment procedures and computers to support teaching and learning across all subjects of the curriculum.
- How well the school checks its performance and the impact that joining a federation has had on the pace and sustainability of school improvement.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

The school is larger than average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two classes in a shared unit. Most of the older pupils are taught in classes which consist of two year groups. The very large majority of pupils are White British and almost all speak English as their first language. They come from a large rural area on the fringes of Dartmoor. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is increasing and is close to the national average. The school became part of a federation in September 2006, with one governing body and an executive headteacher. Each school in the federation has a head of teaching and learning. The head of teaching and learning at this school took up post in September 2008. New accommodation has been built to house the additional administrative elements of the federation. The governing body provides extended provision on site by means of breakfast and after-school clubs for children from across the federation.

## 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. It has a number of outstanding features. The care, guidance and support for all pupils by the whole staff team are outstanding and this contributes to the pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being. The federation executive head and the head of teaching and learning together provide an exceptionally clear vision and sense of direction for the school and its pupils. These are key elements to the school's success and continuing improvement. Pupils achieve well and attain above average standards as a result of good teaching throughout the school. Parents appreciate the school's many qualities and almost all of them who replied to the inspectors' survey endorsed the school's work. Comments such as, 'We are very lucky to have such an excellent school', 'a strong sense of purpose' and 'My child is happy and contented and I feel the school offers a great start to his education' are common threads in the comments received. The school has comprehensive and robust systems for checking its work, involving the leaders and others, and these provide it with an accurate view of its performance. It has made good progress in addressing previously identified weaknesses, especially during this school year, and is well placed to improve further.

The attainment of children on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage is above expectations for their age. They get off to a good start and make good progress during their first year in school. This good progress is maintained by pupils in Years 1 to 6. Standards are above average in reading, writing, science, and, to a lesser extent, in mathematics. Most pupils are very articulate. Standards this year are set to rise further following accelerated progress being made by pupils of all abilities, including those with learning difficulties. Nevertheless, a legacy of satisfactory rather than good progress, especially in mathematics, for a period during the middle years, means that some of the oldest pupils are in the process of catching up and are not yet reaching their full potential, given their original starting points on entry to the school. The school is aware that a few more pupils could significantly exceed age-related expectations in national assessments in Years 2 and 6. The leaders have re-affirmed a very strong commitment and focus on learning. This is an important aspect of the overall good leadership and management of the school. The school has developed very comprehensive systems for tracking pupils' progress and is using these very well to set challenging targets in order to help raise standards further. The recent strong acceleration in progress is seen in the way pupils in Years 2, 5 and 6 are on course to reach their revised and challenging targets in 2009 and 2010. Pupils acquire a good level of basic skills, including the use of computers and problem-solving skills needed for the next stage of education and adult life.

The pupils' behaviour is excellent in lessons and around the school. Pupils show an exceptionally mature approach towards taking on responsibilities for themselves and others, for example as school councillors, house captains, 'buddies' or leaders in assembly and during daily physical activity sessions. They fully understand the importance of adopting healthy lifestyles. The school has the Activemark Gold award and almost completed work towards gaining Healthy School status, in recognition of its good work in these aspects. The school robustly implements procedures designed to safeguard pupils and maintains a training programme for all staff. This is reflected in the way pupils say they feel safe in school, know how to look after themselves and are confident about approaching an adult in school if they have a problem. The school works particularly well with parents and external professionals to provide care and support for those pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. A parent of one such pupil wrote, 'We could not be happier with the way his problems have been dealt with practically and in terms

of social integration.' Pupils thoroughly enjoy their time in school, are very proud of all their achievements and speak very enthusiastically about all the facilities and activities on offer to them, such as the new computers, residential visits and the Body Language dance festival the night before the inspection. Despite their obvious enthusiasm for school and the school's active encouragement, their attendance is average rather than good, with significant numbers missing school, often because of family holidays and events. The extended provision before and after school is of high quality with a wide range of stimulating activities provided in a calm and secure environment, and is a good example of the school responding to the needs of the community.

The high quality accommodation, good resources and the pupils' very positive approach all contribute to the good teaching and learning across the school. Teachers use the new computers well during their lessons to help explain concepts and ideas and pupils are keen to use them, for example when explaining their own learning to the class. Teachers frequently assess pupils' learning during lessons before deciding on the next activities. They use this information well in most lessons to ensure work is matched to the different abilities, including the broad range of abilities in the mixed-age classes, but occasionally they keep the whole class together for too long at the beginning or end of lessons, reducing the opportunities for progress by the more able pupils. Innovative ways of providing academic guidance have been introduced, with many displays in classrooms explaining exactly what pupils have learnt, celebrating the progress between one piece of work and the next, particularly in English.

The broad curriculum is good, with clear links made between subjects and the effective use of innovative materials to promote pupils' personal development. Classrooms generally reflect the broad range of experiences and subjects studied. However, although the school has been focusing on improving teaching in mathematics, this subject is barely visible in many classroom displays. Pupils' cultural development is excellent, with many opportunities to become involved in performing arts locally and the school has the Artsmark award in recognition of this. The pupil passports scheme for 'visiting' seven countries during their time in the school is a feature of the well-planned international community awareness reflected in the International Schools award and helps promote the pupils good awareness of global cultural diversity beyond rural Devon. After careful reflection, the school is now planning stronger links with the national community to help boost cohesion at this level.

Governors are led well and fulfil their roles effectively, although a few parents say they are unclear of their identity or how to contact them. Governors play a significant role in strategic decision-making, for example the establishment of the federation and the dual leadership of the school. A clear framework enables all the leaders and teachers to work effectively within a shared philosophy. They are carefully interpreting the recently drafted and well structured federation improvement plan to ensure it fits, more precisely, the needs of this school where necessary, for example in strengthening provision in mathematics.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and improving, as a result of some significant recent changes in working practices. The careful and sensitive induction programme for children is appreciated by parents, and enables the children to settle quickly into what is a large shared unit. This high priority for the children's welfare is maintained throughout both the day and the year. The attainment of children on entry is mainly above national expectations for their age. Children make good progress and a much higher proportion than usual attain the set learning goals by the end of the year, especially in personal, social and emotional, creative

and physical development. Progress in reading and formal writing skills, whilst being sound, appears less rapid, but children leave this stage well prepared for the expectations of the Year 1 curriculum. Teaching and learning are good. The creation at the start of this year of a 'free-flow' principle between the two classrooms, the central shared indoor space and the outdoor area enables the teachers to provide jointly an excellent range of experiences. Their planning ensures a good balance between children learning through independent play and being directed by an adult, often when working in small groups. The unit is well led and all the adults play an important role in observing children, making careful assessments and planning the next set of experiences. The outdoor area, though well-equipped and secure, does not have adequate all-weather protection, restricting the times when children can make use of it.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Find additional ways of extending the more able pupils throughout lessons so that more of them attain standards significantly above age-related expectations.
- Work closely with parents to improve pupils' attendance rates.
- Ensure classroom displays support learning in mathematics as well as they do in all the other subjects.

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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?	1
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?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<sup>1</sup>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.



## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	1
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?	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**

16 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Blackpool Church of England Primary School, Newton Abbot TQ12 6JB

Thank you for your welcome when we visited your school. We thoroughly enjoyed talking with some of you and visiting your classrooms. Yours is a good school and your parents are pleased you go there. Here are some of the highlights we found:

- You behave very well in class, around the school and outside. We found you are very polite towards visitors and thoughtful towards one another.
- Many of you take on important jobs, such as school councillors, buddies, house captains or leaders during assembly or the daily physical activity sessions.
- All the adults take exceptionally good care of you and we were pleased to hear from you that you feel safe in school and know what to do to help look after yourselves. You are also experts on what to do to stay healthy.
- You work hard in lessons in all classes. Your teachers plan interesting activities for you and make good use of all the excellent facilities. This helps you to make good progress with your work.
- Your teachers are brilliant at helping you to see your progress, for example through the writing walls, the 'red badges' on displays and detailed feedback. They are very skilled at helping you to be clear about how you can improve.
- You are lucky to have many extra activities beyond lessons, some of which we could see on flat screens around school, such as the Body Language dance festival, performing Scrooge, the residential visits and many visitors to school.
- The school's leaders and governors work very well together and are always thinking of new ways to help everyone improve the school.
- We have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to work together on three things to improve the school:
  - Teachers could find ways to ensure that those of you who sometimes find parts of lessons a bit easy are challenged to reach even higher standards.
  - The staff should work closely with your parents so that fewer of you miss time at school to go on family holidays.
  - All the very good displays and ideas displayed in your classrooms should include the things you are learning about in mathematics.

We know you will have some ideas about how you can help with these.

Yours faithfully

Martin Kerly

Lead Inspector