

Carters Charity Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Preesall

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119392
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	327016
Inspection dates	11–12 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Andrew Clark

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)	185
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	Miss Vivien Taylor
Headteacher	Mr Steve Hyde
Date of previous school inspection	12 July 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Pilling Lane Preesall Poulton-le-Fylde Lancashire FY6 0HH
Telephone number	01253 810236

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This school is smaller than average. It serves a large, mainly rural area and a third of pupils travel to school by bus. Most pupils are from White British families with a small percentage from Eastern Europe who speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils eligible for a free school meal is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision consists of a Reception class. The number on roll has fallen significantly since the last inspection but is now rising again with more pupils than is usual starting and leaving in classes other than Reception and Year 6.

The school has achieved a Healthy School award and 'Go4It' award for challenge in the curriculum.

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 with outstanding features. Staff are successfully committed to promoting all aspects of pupils' outstanding personal development. 'My children have learnt to accept and understand people who are different from themselves and to be part of a supportive and caring community,' is a view typical of those expressed by many parents. Pupils' achievement is good because the school has significantly improved its systems to track pupils' progress, and it has used this information effectively to help raise achievement since the last inspection. Leadership and management at all levels are now good and increasingly sharply focused on raising standards.

Children start Reception with skills which are below those typical for their age, and often well below in early communication and language skills. They leave Year 6 with standards which are above average. Achievement is good in each stage. More able pupils are now making more consistent progress than at the last inspection because they have good opportunities to use and apply their knowledge. Occasionally, they lack the clear direction to work independently towards the highest levels of attainment. The achievement of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is outstanding. They often make more progress than anticipated towards challenging targets because of the high expectations and good levels of training of all who work with them within the school's inclusive ethos. The small percentage of pupils with English as an additional language achieve well.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Their behaviour is exceptional and there have been no exclusions. Pupils feel safe, respected and free from bullying. They thoroughly enjoy school and attendance levels are above average. Pupils keep physically fit through physical education lessons and after school clubs, such as gymnastics, dance and fitness sessions, are exceptionally well attended. Their understanding of healthy living is outstanding. Pupils make a very positive contribution to the local community through the school choir, orchestra, sports teams and entry in quizzes and intelligence competitions. They develop a strong knowledge of other cultures through links with Kabare in Kenya and a wide range of fundraising activities. Pupils are well prepared for moving on to their next school.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. It ranges from satisfactory to outstanding. Relationships and the management of behaviour are excellent. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology (ICT), games and quizzes to engage and inform pupils. Occasionally, the pace of teaching is too slow to fully engage all pupils. The curriculum is good with outstanding features. Increasingly good links are made between subjects to make learning relevant, and high quality work in art and music is evident throughout school. The quality and range of extra curricular activities is excellent. Care, guidance and support are good. The procedures to identify and support the most vulnerable pupils are very effective and underpin their outstanding progress. High standards of pastoral care and the strong family ethos contribute very effectively to pupils' personal development. The quality of marking is good and pupils are becoming increasingly involved in assessing and improving their own work. However, this does not always sharply identify the criteria for attaining the highest levels.

Leadership and management are good. The school acted promptly to address the issues from the last inspection. Middle managers now have a good impact on development and school improvements are well planned. The governing body provides critical support and has taken strong action to improve resources despite falling rolls. Community cohesion is good. There is

a strong family ethos with mutual respect being a major aspect of the school community. There are suitable plans to further develop wider aspects. The promotion of equal opportunities is good and it supports the most vulnerable pupils very well and combats any gender stereotyping. The school has a good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision is good and helps children to achieve well. Children's skills on entry to the Reception vary from year to year but are generally below and often well below typical levels for their age, especially in communication, language and literacy. By time they enter Year 1, a significantly increasing proportion are working at the expected levels although still slightly below average and literacy skills are especially weak. Their personal and social development is very good. There is a good trend of improving standards. Children's skills are improving well because of more focused systems to track progress and set targets, and to teach letters and sounds and problem solving. Good teaching enables children to make progress in most areas of learning. Children settle happily and get off to a good start because of the wide range of interesting activities and the warm welcome provided by staff. All staff have high expectations, provide well planned and purposeful activities and promote good social skills. As a result, children gain positive attitudes to learning and rapidly develop confidence. The stimulating indoor areas encourage children to make choices and learn to share. However, the use of the outdoors to help children learn through practical experiences is limited because the available space is largely grass and there is currently no covered area. Funds have been secured to improve this situation. Leadership is good. Assessments are accurate and used well to plan future learning. Children's welfare is promoted very well and there are excellent links with parents.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make certain that more able pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve their own learning and reach the highest levels of attainment.
- Improve the opportunities for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to learn from a wide range of outdoor activities.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils enter Year 1 with below average skills overall with particular weaknesses in literacy. By Year 2, standards are broadly average and by Year 6 they are above average. The vast majority of pupils achieve well. In national assessments in 2008 there was a decline in standards of writing at Year 2. This was partly a reflection of a significant number of pupils who started or left the class during the year and also because of identified weaknesses in the curriculum which are now beginning to be addressed. The school's detailed tracking processes show that during their time in school the vast majority of pupils make good progress in English and mathematics. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make outstanding gains towards challenging targets because of high quality support and the very inclusive ethos of the school. The achievement of more able pupils has improved since the last inspection through careful tracking and teachers' high expectations. Occasionally, however, more able pupils are not given enough information on how to reach the highest standards, limiting their opportunity to improve their own learning.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Through many artistic, musical and technological experiences, pupils develop high levels of self-awareness and are excited and interested in the world around them. They thoroughly enjoy school and show this in above average levels of attendance and punctuality. Pupils' understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles and the part that a balanced diet and regular exercise plays in their growth and development is excellent. A high percentage of pupils take advantage of the many extra-curricular physical activities the school offers. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is first rate. Pupils readily take on responsibilities from regular lunch and register duties, to taking care of younger children, organising charitable fundraising and managing a budget through the school council.

Relationships are outstanding with pupils showing great respect for each other regardless of gender or ability. 'Everyone fits here, just like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle and that's what's good about it,' is typical of the views expressed by many pupils.

Older pupils demonstrate maturity, very good self-discipline and a strong work ethic, providing role models for younger pupils. Literacy and numeracy skills are good, but the school recognises there is still room for further improvement. The skills, confidence and increasing independence that pupils develop ensure that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education and for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. A key strength running through the school is the high expectation of hard work, productivity and accuracy. This results in good levels of basic skills such as handwriting and spelling in English and calculation skills in mathematics. An improvement since the last inspection is the increase in opportunities for pupils to apply their skills and work independently. This is leading to better achievement for more able pupils, although there are occasions when it is not made clear what they need to do to reach the highest levels. Work is usually matched closely to the needs of all abilities. This is particularly so for pupils with a learning difficulty and/or a disability where detailed individual learning plans provide the basis for well trained and skilled teaching assistants to support their learning. Teachers effectively share the purpose of lessons with pupils and increasingly involve them in assessing and managing their own progress. In most lessons, teachers set a fast pace with challenging, yet fun tasks. They make very effective use of ICT as an integral part of learning. This is not always consistent, however, as occasionally the pace of learning is too slow and not enough opportunities are created for pupils to bounce ideas off each other and so secure their learning and involvement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

There is a good balance of creative, physical and academic work which promotes pupils' enjoyment and achievement. A new literacy scheme is being introduced in Reception and Key Stage 1 and is beginning to address previous weakness in writing. However, this has yet to be

established throughout the school. Links for numeracy and literacy across the curriculum are being developed well and are making learning more relevant and exciting. Pupils have the opportunity to learn Spanish which helps develop their cultural and international awareness. Very well planned design technology and art activities result in the production of high quality pupils' work celebrated in displays throughout the school. The outstanding range of extra-curricular activities demonstrates the culture of aiming high in all areas, for which the school received the 'Go4it' award. Pupils' participation in music tuition and the standard of the brass ensemble are exceptionally high. Residential and other visits promote initiative and team building, and further build on the confidence and personal development of the pupils. The pupils' learning is enriched by opportunities for parents to become involved through homework links and regular visits to school such as the parents' Friday lunches.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school has a comprehensive approach to providing care, guidance and support which effectively promotes outstanding personal development. Everyone in school is fully committed to ensuring pupils are safe, happy and ready to learn. Systems for ensuring the health, safety and well-being of pupils meet statutory safeguarding requirements. There is exceptional pastoral care, especially for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and other vulnerable pupils because of the very good knowledge all staff have of their needs and the quick responses to pupils' concerns.

Teaching assistants, volunteers and input from the Lancashire Education Inclusion Service are effectively deployed and provide pupils with skilled support and guidance.

The tracking of pupils' progress has improved well since the last inspection and provides the basis for good guidance for most pupils on how to improve their work. Parents are very pleased with communication between school and home on many levels and value the close relationship and open nature of the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Since the last inspection the headteacher and deputy headteacher have strengthened the roles of all staff in leadership and management. This has had a good impact in pupils' good achievement and has further strengthened the commitment to developing all aspects of pupils' personal development. The school has made good use of national and local projects to improve leadership and this is reinforced by good links with neighbouring schools and colleges. School improvement planning is now good and based on increasingly secure processes to monitor and evaluate provision. A new literacy scheme is currently being implemented; however, procedures to evaluate its effectiveness have yet to be fully established. The governing body has a system of classroom observations to gain first-hand information on the quality of learning through the school. Community cohesion is good with a clear action plan for further improvement. The school's commitment to equality of opportunity is evident in the access pupils of all abilities have to the full range of learning opportunities. Parents are wholly supportive of the school. They are especially impressed by the way the school raises their children's aspirations and prepares them for the future whatever their ability.

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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 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?	2
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	1

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	2
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?	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

16 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Carter’s Charity Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Preesall, Lancashire, FY6 OHH

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your school recently. I would like to tell you about the things we found out about your school.

This is a good school with outstanding features. You make good progress in your lessons and meet your targets. You reach above average standards. Pupils with learning difficulties make exceptionally good progress because of the way they are helped to learn. Your personal development is outstanding because you are very happy at school and eager to learn. Your behaviour is excellent, and you play and work together very happily. You have an outstanding understanding of how to keep fit and healthy and you take full advantage of the healthy school lunches, fruit snacks and regular strenuous physical activity in the many sporting clubs the school runs. Children in the Reception quickly become independent and confident. You take many responsibilities and contribute well to the running of the school through the school council and buddies. You enjoy school and are proud of it. You know how to be tolerant and care for others who are different from you. You develop good learning skills so you are well prepared for secondary school.

The headteacher, staff and governing body run the school well. You are well taught and are given many fun things to do in your lessons. There are exciting visits and good sporting activities, in which most of you take part. The staff look after you very well and measure your progress carefully. Your teachers provide good support to help you to improve your work. Some of you could do even better if you had more information on how to reach the highest levels. Therefore, we have asked the school to give clear guidance on how you can reach the highest levels in your work. We have also asked that children in Reception have regular chances to work on different activities outside. You can help by trying hard in all your work and continuing to enjoy school.

Best wishes to you all

Andrew Clark

Lead inspector