

Chorley All Saints Church of England Primary School and Nursery Unit

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119464
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	327041
Inspection dates	11–12 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Peter McKay

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 aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	168
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	Father Edmund Straszack
Headteacher	Mrs Sarah Partington
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Moor Road Chorley Lancashire PR7 2LR
Telephone number	01257 262489
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than average and serves an urban area of some social and economic disadvantage. Over 50% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. High mobility means that typically less than two thirds of pupils complete a full seven years education in the school. Nearly all pupils are of White British origin. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average, ranging from a quarter to a third in a most classes. The school holds Activemark and Sportsmark awards and Healthy Schools Flagship status. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage receive part-time provision in the Nursery and full-time provision in the Reception class. The school has been led by an acting headteacher and two acting assistant headteachers since March 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

All Saints is a good school. It promotes good academic achievement and personal development and provides good value for money. The school has worked hard and successfully to secure the confidence and support of parents. 'I think this school is brilliant and can't think of anything bad to say' is a view shared by many. Every effort is made to encourage and enable parents to support learning, to the extent that the school offers them weekly training in personal skills and phonics. Pupils can find little to improve. 'I'm proud to wear the uniform and be part of the school' was typical of pupils' comments. The resolute leadership of the acting headteacher has brought stability and purpose after a period of frequent changes in senior leadership. There are clear trends of improvement in standards and attendance, and the number on roll is rising.

Children enter the school with skills well below those expected for their age, particularly in speech and language. They build well on a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and their rate of progress increases as they improve their literacy and learning skills. By the end of Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are broadly average. Although the school meets its targets for pupils reaching the expected Level 4, the more able pupils are not consistently challenged sufficiently and the higher Level 5 targets are not always met.

This good achievement and progress is a result of consistently good teaching across the school. Teachers plan lessons carefully to provide varied and stimulating activities, so pupils find lessons interesting and learning fun. Tasks are pitched at the right level for most pupils, but the most able are not always given work of sufficient challenge to take them to the highest levels. A good curriculum provides opportunities to develop basic skills across all subjects. Day and residential visits to theatres, museums, wildlife and outdoor activity centres provide enjoyment and widen horizons. Role-play areas throughout the school allow pupils of all ages to imagine life in a Second World War Anderson shelter or to travel through time in Dr Who's 'TARDIS'. School assemblies play a strong part in promoting the school's Christian values and celebrating achievement. In the very successful 'Enterprise Week', pupils showed ingenuity and imagination in designing a small product, such as a mobile phone case, for eventual production and marketing. The development of a more creative curriculum based around broad topics and themes is, however, at an early stage.

Good personal development is a key factor in pupils' achievement. They enjoy all the school offers, have an enthusiasm for learning, work hard and behave well. They flourish because the school offers a safe, supportive and caring environment. They are confident that adults will meet their needs and address their concerns in a sensitive way. The majority attend regularly and the number of persistent absentees is falling. Pupils know how to behave safely and practise what they know about healthy lifestyles in school by eating sensibly and taking plenty of physical activity. They contribute well to the school and wider communities and are excellent ambassadors for the school. Pupils' enthusiasm, ability to work cooperatively with others and their competence in basic skills give them a sound preparation for the next stage of education.

Despite having no permanent headteacher, the school is well led and managed and there are clear improvements made under the current leadership team. However, the lack of a permanent senior leadership team has restricted the pace of change. Nevertheless, working relationships are good and there is a strong sense of teamwork. Realistic self-evaluation gives a clear picture of where improvements are needed. The improvements in provision for literacy, identified at

the previous inspection, have been made. Governors provide challenge and support but not all are actively involved in monitoring the school's performance.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

This provision is well led and managed. Recent changes have resulted in a good balance between teacher-led and child-initiated activities. Staff in the Nursery and the Reception class work well together. They set a positive example of how to behave and communicate, so children receive consistent messages about what is expected of them and this helps them to settle quickly. Adults make an effective contribution to children's learning by stimulating questioning and constant use of praise and encouragement. Great care is taken to ensure that children feel safe and secure.

Most children enter the Nursery and Reception classes with skills and abilities well below those typically found. Levels of speech and language are very low. Good planning ensures they experience all the areas of learning within most themes and topics. Creative role-play areas, such as the travel agents' shop and their pirate ship, provide valuable opportunities for children to use their imagination and help them learn more about the world around them. Staff respond positively to children's interests as they arise. There is a good focus on early literacy and numeracy skills and expectations are well pitched to provide challenging but achievable tasks. Children have fun and show a readiness to learn. They behave well and work cooperatively with adults and each other, but also show they can concentrate when working independently. During the inspection, children from the Nursery and the Reception class joined forces to present their recent work on Little Red Riding Hood as their contribution to 'Enterprise Week'.

There are plenty of opportunities for children to make choices and learn through practical experimentation and cooperation. This helps them to concentrate well, whether working independently or in a small group. Staff maintain detailed records of what children are doing. Steps have been taken to improve the accuracy of assessment and each child has a key worker trained in making observation of progress. The school is working towards establishing a more rigorous baseline assessment. The reorganisation of classrooms according to different areas of learning is at an early stage of development. The provision for outdoor learning is rather basic and lacks, for example, adequate soft surface areas.

Most children make good progress in most areas of learning to enter Year 1 with skills that are below average, though in communication, language and literacy they remain well below.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure there is sufficient challenge in teaching for more able pupils.
- Establish a more stable leadership team to enable the school to accelerate the pace of improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils enter Year 1 with standards which are typically below average and well below in communication, language and literacy. Good intervention strategies to support pupils with speech and language difficulties are in place but take time to take effect so that results in Year 2 teacher assessments, while improving, are below average. Very few pupils reach the higher Level 3. The rate at which pupils make progress increases as they move through the school. A

strong focus in lessons on speaking and listening skills and more opportunities for reading and writing in subjects across the curriculum gradually overcome the legacy of low levels of literacy and help improve learning skills. Results in the Key Stage 2 national tests show a trend of improvement. Those for 2008 indicate that by the time they leave Year 6, most pupils have reached the expected level in all subjects. However, too few of the more able reach the higher Level 5. This represents good achievement for most pupils in relation to their starting points, particularly for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, who often form a high proportion of each year group. Good assessment and tracking systems indicate that current Year 6 pupils are making good progress and are on course to achieve similar results.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Strong Christian principles underpin all aspects of school life. Good relationships create a harmonious and friendly atmosphere in which pupils are happy and achieve well. They feel safe and secure because they know the school has a high regard for their care and welfare. Behaviour in class and around the school is good. Serious incidents are very rare because a well established behaviour policy is understood and accepted by most pupils. Attendance rates are average and improving, and persistent absence has been reduced significantly. Pupils enjoy coming to school because they find lessons are interesting and fun. They take full advantage of the many after-school sports and clubs. Many pupils are willing to take on responsibility and exercise leadership skills, for example as school councillors and playground leaders, and are generous in devoting time and effort in charity fundraising. Pupils are knowledgeable about the importance of sensible eating and regular exercise. They are well informed about road safety and the dangers of cyber bullying. Their competence in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) and good social skills provide a sound preparation for the next stage of learning and beyond.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good across the school and enable most groups of pupils to achieve well. Pupils' enthusiasm and good relationships create a positive and purposeful atmosphere for learning. Teachers' explanations are clear, if at times a little too long. Questioning is used well in prompting pupils to develop and explain their ideas. Interactive whiteboards provide a good visual stimulus to learning, but are rarely used to their full potential. Pupils are equally happy to work in groups or independently. Increasingly, they are given opportunities to evaluate their own work to give them a clearer understanding of how well they are doing. Marking makes good use of praise, encouragement and reward. Comments indicate what has been done well and the next steps to improve, but do not refer to the standards achieved. A particular strength is the use of carefully pitched tasks and resources and targeted support by teaching assistants to help pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The most able pupils, however, do not always receive the challenge to develop higher level thinking skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets the needs of most pupils well. It has been carefully designed to help pupils develop basic skills and to improve their understanding of the world around them. Frequent visits and visitors provide great enjoyment and stimulate further research and writing across different subjects. Pupils also thoroughly enjoy participating in a very good range of after-school clubs and activities, including sports, singing, gardening, cookery and chess. A daily homework club provides excellent opportunities for children to extend learning and practise basic skills. The school's first 'Enterprise Week' has been very successful in helping pupils to learn about enterprise and innovation as they work through the process of designing, making and marketing a product. The school is keen to provide more challenge and enrichment for its most able pupils. Plans are in place to develop a more creative curriculum based around a series of themes and topics and to introduce French teaching. Opportunities for children to learn about cultures other than their own are increasing.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Outstanding pastoral care and support ensure pupils feel happy, safe and secure. They are confident in approaching adults with worries or concerns because they can rely on sympathetic and sensitive support. The required procedures for child protection and health and safety are fully in place. The school works hard and with increasing success to encourage parents to support learning. Tried and tested procedures to improve attendance are having some success. Praise and celebration of achievement in the context of strong Christian values are used to good effect. Careful monitoring of academic progress ensures that pupils at risk of underachieving are identified early and effective arrangements put in place to support them. Those who need additional help with learning or behavioural difficulties are given support tailored to their needs. Good links with external agencies allow access to more specialist support. Pupils enjoy and value the use of class and individual targets. However, they are not given enough information about the progress they are making over time and the standards they are reaching.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The very strong and purposeful leadership of the acting headteacher, ably supported by her senior team, has restored confidence in the school after a period of considerable instability. High staff morale and good working relationships enable a strong commitment to teamwork. Secure monitoring and self-evaluation by senior and middle managers provide a clear idea of the school's strengths and a shared vision of where improvement is needed. Raising standards and improving attendance and behaviour have been prioritised with some success, so that most targets are met.

Promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. The school has strong and productive links with parents and the local community. Links are now developing with more diverse communities, both locally and further afield. Governors discharge their responsibilities effectively and their sound financial management ensures the school provides good value for money. However, their

role in monitoring the school's performance is underdeveloped because it is ad hoc and largely informal.

The lack of a permanent headteacher has restricted the pace of improvement, for example the development of a creative curriculum. Uncertainty over future leadership is delaying the key decisions and major initiatives required for the school to improve further. Capacity to improve is satisfactory.

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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	3

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	3
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?	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
The extent to which 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	2
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 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

15 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Chorley All Saints Church of England Primary School and Nursery Unit, Lancashire,
PR7 2LR

Thank you for being so friendly, polite and helpful when we inspected your school. We really enjoyed our visit and hearing about how much you enjoy school. Thank you too for the way in which you took time to tell us about what you think of the school.

Yours is a good school. The teachers and other adults take very good care of you and make sure you know how to stay healthy and safe. Your behaviour is good and most of you attend well. Your great enthusiasm and positive attitudes, together with good teaching, are very important in helping you to learn. You told us how much you enjoy lessons and the wide range of extra activities on offer. We were very impressed by the imaginative designs you were producing during Enterprise Week. We also enjoyed the celebrations in assembly of your many achievements and we were so pleased to see you being happy for each other's success. A great strength of the school is the support given to those of you who need extra help. We are pleased that you take part so enthusiastically in everything you do in school.

Most of you make good progress and achieve well in lessons. However, not enough of you reach the higher levels in national curriculum tests, so we have asked your teachers to give more demanding work to those of you capable of reaching those levels.

The acting headteacher, governors and other staff have made many improvements to your school. However, there are important decisions to be made about the future direction of the school which can only be taken when the school has appointed a permanent headteacher. We have asked the school to do this as soon as possible.

We really enjoyed our visit to your school and wish you the very best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Peter McKay

Lead inspector