

# Bilsborrow John Cross Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119519
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	327057
<b>Inspection date</b>	5 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Andrew Stafford

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 aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	35
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>	Mr Ian Brayshaw
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sandra Lane-Dixon
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 April 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>	Garstang Road Bilsborrow Preston Lancashire PR3 0RE

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date</b>	5 June 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This small rural school has a small number of minority ethnic pupils. There are no pupils eligible for free school meals and the low level of socio-economic deprivation indicates an area of some affluence. The numbers requiring support for some form of learning difficulty and/or disability are small but are proportionately higher than the numbers found nationally. Year groups vary in size but are frequently small. Early Years Foundation Stage is provided in the younger of the two mixed-age classes. The headteacher has been appointed since the last inspection.

## 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 that has improved substantially since the last inspection due to the strong leadership and vision of the recently appointed headteacher. The curriculum has been adapted to better meet the pupils' needs and interests and is extended well through practical activities, special events and after-class activities. Pupils enjoy school and are proud of it, seeing it as a strong centre for the whole community. Pupils are fully involved in many local events. They learn and understand a good deal about the global community often electing to share money raised for charity with a school in Kenya. They make good progress in their personal development, and their behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. Parents strongly support the school. As one parent commented, 'All the staff ooze happiness and commitment to their work and we feel very confident leaving our child in their care'.

Teaching is generally good. Teachers' higher expectations have had a strong impact on raising standards. Lessons are well planned, have a clear focus and cater appropriately for all ages in the mixed-age classes. Good teamwork between teachers and other adults usually ensures that pupils of all abilities are helped to do their best, although challenging work for the more able pupils is not consistently set across all subjects. The quality of care, guidance and support is good. High priority is given to pupils' well-being so they are encouraged to be fit and healthy and to feel safe. They are well cared for and thoroughly enjoy their learning. The classrooms have a pleasant 'buzz' as pupils actively explore ideas. The support given to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good as it is sensitively tailored to the needs of individuals.

From starting school with skills that are typical for their age children make steady progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and settle well into the life of the whole school. They start in Year 1 with average standards and make good progress leaving school with above average standards. Progress accelerates in Years 1 to 6 because, the school has effective ways of assessing pupils' needs, tracking their progress and setting challenging targets for their next steps in reading, writing and mathematics for most pupils. This detailed monitoring has had a good impact, notably for the pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who have made good progress, but less so for the more able.

The school is led and managed well. The school is currently looking forward to a period of stability after a long period of staff absences. The recent appointment of a permanent headteacher has brought fresh ideas and a strong sense of direction to improving the school. The school evaluates its performance carefully and accurately. As a result improvements are based on a good understanding of needs. The school's overall self-evaluation is largely accurate, and governors are fully involved in this process and meet all statutory requirements well. Increasingly, management is being devolved so that all staff play a full role in developing the school. Given the strong commitment of staff and governors and the good improvements already made in areas such as the assessment of pupils' work, the school has a good capacity to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Staff effectively promote children's welfare, providing well for their personal, social and emotional needs. Teaching is satisfactory. The needs of the Reception children within the mixed-age class are recognised.

Planning and record keeping, however, lack clarity which reduces the challenge provided for children. The purpose and context of some choice activities are not clear to the children. Best use is not made of the outdoor space available for learning across all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children experience an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. At times the role of the teaching assistant in encouraging and supporting children to be independent is not strong enough. Good links are encouraged with parents who are welcomed as being partners in their children's learning. Children start with levels of development that are securely in line with what is typical for their age. A good proportion, however, have good levels of personal, social and emotional development. They are articulate and have a good knowledge and understanding of the world. By the time they start Year 1 most children have progressed satisfactorily and their attainment is in line with expectations for children of this age.

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

- Raise the achievement of the more able pupils by consistently setting them work that is more challenging across all areas of the curriculum.
- Improve the progress of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by strengthening assessment in order to refine the quality of planning and record keeping to give a clearer direction to children's learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children make sound progress overall in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 to 6 and reach standards that are above average. This is because good teaching builds effectively on previous learning. The school's tracking system now quickly identifies the very few pupils who are underperforming. These pupils then receive the targeted support they need to catch up and make the same good progress as others. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because they receive a consistently good level of support within the school. In addition, the school receives good support for these pupils from the visiting special educational needs teacher. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make the same good progress as their peers.

Most pupils in Years 2 and 6 are predicted to meet the challenging targets set for them in the 2009 national tests. Initiatives to improve achievement in the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics have met with some success but have not yet had time to fully overcome the legacy of past lower achievement. The school retains a particular strength in art and sport.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Pupils develop into mature and caring individuals in their time in school. They are generally well behaved and respectful of others. Pupils say they feel safe and if disagreements do occur they are confident of them being resolved. Pupils willingly take responsibility in and around school. Serving healthy salad options at lunchtime, assisting younger ones during play and participating as school or eco councillors develops the pupils' sense of independence. Their enjoyment of school is reflected in their general enthusiasm for learning and their above average attendance. They are well prepared for future life by achieving well academically and developing a good knowledge and understanding of how to stay fit and

healthy. They have an advanced understanding of the difference between right and wrong and the importance of rules within the school community. The strong family feeling that pervades the school results in pupils developing good levels of spiritual development. Culturally, pupils know and understand their own local culture well. Their close links with a school in Mombasa, Kenya is successfully promoting the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider world.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teachers expect pupils to be actively involved in their learning. The quality of pupils' work shows application and effort. Lesson plans are generally well adapted to the various ages and ability groups in each class. Pupils' interest is caught and held well through practical activities and stimulating resources, as seen in a Year 6 literacy lesson on story telling; this had everyone suggesting several sentences to relate Reckless Ruby's adventurous exploits. Lessons are reasonably brisk and in the best examples, teachers use questioning skilfully to prompt thoughtful answers. Most of the work set for groups of differing abilities is challenging but not always sufficiently so for the more able. Teachers and teaching assistants work well as a team to help all pupils to do their best. Marking is used effectively to ensure work is completed but teachers do not always make it clear to pupils how to make their work better. Pupils' learning is extended by a visiting specialist who teaches French to Years 3, 4, 5 and 6.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum makes a positive impact on the standards across the school, both in terms of the pupils' academic and personal development. It successfully develops confidence amongst pupils to take decisions and to try out ideas without fear of failure. Some of these outcomes are relatively new, but are successfully embedded in many subjects including literacy and numeracy, and increasingly, information and communication technology (ICT). Teaching of the use of letters and sounds has been extended across year groups to help pupils improve their writing. Recent improvements to planning are developing pupils' creativity. Focus days, for example, the Victorian day and Africa day successfully link many subjects together to inspire and enrich pupils' learning across the curriculum. Strategies to promote social and emotional development help pupils to manage their own feelings to help them develop into mature individuals. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities successfully ensures that the pupils' needs are met and that good levels of inclusion are achieved.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

High levels of care pervade the school. Pupils are secure and safeguarding procedures are well established. The health and safety of pupils is paramount and child protection is well maintained. The support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good and ensures good inclusion. Effective links exist with support services from within the local authority and from health services to assist pupil where needed. Expectations and guidance for the most able have recently been improved although these are not always consistently applied. Better use of assessment is leading staff to identify those who need extra challenge. Parental links are

improving rapidly and initiatives from within the curriculum are establishing good support from within the local community.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The recently appointed headteacher, staff and governors have worked successfully to ensure the school has developed a more rigorous view of its strengths and weaknesses. This has helped the school to build successfully on its strengths and to address the issues raised in the last inspection report. The provision for ICT has been brought up to date and the adapted curriculum has consolidated above average standards. Governors play an active role in school life. They are increasingly aware of the need to challenge the school so that it continues to improve. There has been instability of teaching staff over a prolonged period but this has now been successfully resolved with the support of the governors. The school works closely with parents who wholeheartedly welcome the new initiatives that are improving the school. Good links with external agencies such as the local Children's Centre supports pupils' learning well.

Links with the wider community are well established and extended studies planned for other cultures and the wider world help promote pupils' sense of community differences and similarities beyond their own locality.



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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?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

### 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>	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	2
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	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?	2

## 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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
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**

6 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bilsborrow John Cross Church of England Primary School, Lancashire, PR3 0RE

Thank you for the friendly way you welcomed us to your school for the recent inspection. It was good to speak to you, and you gave us lots of helpful information about the school. This letter is to tell you what we found out.

Lots of you, your parents and the governors told us how much you enjoy school and that you go to a good school. We agree. Your headteacher and staff work hard to make your school an interesting place to be. We were pleased to see how hard you work in lessons and that you behave well and have good manners. Because of this, you are learning well and your work is of a better standard than when inspectors last visited the school.

You are pleased with your new headteacher because she has helped the staff to make lots of changes to keep the school up to date. Teachers give you work that is almost always at the right level of difficulty and they teach you well. They and the teaching assistants make sure that if you need extra help, you get it. We have asked your headteacher to make sure that those of you who at times find work rather easy are regularly given work that will really stretch you. We have also asked her to make sure that when the youngest children are learning they make better progress through devising better plans that challenge them.

You look after each other well and are growing up to be sensible and responsible young people. Thank you for the work you do to raise money for other people. We liked the way you participated in your lively assembly and the way you are all trying to eat healthy food and to have lots of exercise, especially on your lovely field. We hope that you continue to develop the nature areas around the building and that you all continue to work hard in all your lessons.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Stafford and David Byrne

Inspectors