

Grimsargh St Michael's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 119565 |
| Local Authority | Lancashire |
| Inspection number | 327071 |
| Inspection date | 1 May 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Sue Sharkey |

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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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 196 |
| 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 | Rev Geoffrey Loxham |
| Headteacher | Mrs Kathryn Ward |
| Date of previous school inspection | 1 February 2006 |
| Date of previous funded early education inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Date of previous childcare inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | Preston Road Grimsargh Preston Lancashire PR2 5SD |

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|--------------------------|------------|
| Age group | 3–11 |
| Inspection date | 1 May 2009 |
| Inspection number | 327071 |

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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:

- whether the strategies that have been put in place to raise standards and achievement in Key Stage 1 are sustainable
- what strategies the school has in place to ensure that pupils, including the more able, are suitably challenged
- how the curriculum is planned in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that continuous provision makes full use of both indoor and outdoor learning.

Evidence was collected from discussion with leaders, pupils and staff, visits to classes, scrutiny of pupils' work and documentation. Apart from checking safeguarding procedures, 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 the report.

Description of the school

This school is smaller than the average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is made for children in the Reception class. An independent provider runs a Nursery and before- and after-school care on the premises. These did not form part of this inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Grimsargh St Michael's Church of England School provides good quality education and good value for money. Some of its features are outstanding, especially pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the care, guidance and support given to pupils. Many parents returned the questionnaire. They have positive views and are full of praise for the school, a typical comment being, 'My children thoroughly enjoy attending St Michael's, it is a caring school where children feel they are important and are listened to'. Pupils' behaviour throughout the school is excellent; they have positive attitudes and enjoy learning, which is demonstrated by their good attendance.

Pupils make good progress as a result of good, and in some cases, outstanding teaching. Pupils' starting points in Reception are generally in-line with what is expected for their age. Overall, progress across the school ensures that pupils reach standards at Year 6 which are well above the national average, particularly in mathematics. Standards in Key Stage 1 have been well above average until 2008 when they dipped to broadly in line with the national average. Over this last year, the school has put actions in place to address this issue. Pupils' current work and the school's own data indicate that standards are now above average at Key Stage 1 and that pupils are on track this year to attain higher levels, particularly in writing in both Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do as well as others because they are well supported by skilled teaching assistants.

All safeguarding procedures are in place; pupils trust the adults around them and they say this helps them to feel safe. Pupils have a mature and confident understanding of the 'rights, respect and responsibility values' of the school. They understand how to keep themselves healthy and safe, including the safe use of the internet. They are prepared well for secondary school and future life.

The school is a major part of the local community and pupils play an active role in community activities where they say they enjoy dancing, including traditional and street dancing, as well as raising funds for local, national and international charities. Pupils regularly take on responsibilities; for example, older pupils help younger ones in the playground, which helps break-times run efficiently. Members of the school council take their role seriously, are involved in decisions about the school and respond maturely to opportunities to state their views.

Teaching is good and helps pupils to learn and achieve well. Strong features in teaching include the fast pace of lessons, excellent relationships and stimulating activities, which excite pupils. Pupils say that one of the many reasons they enjoy school is that lessons are fun, which helps them learn. Lessons are planned creatively to support pupils' different learning styles; however, work is not always challenging enough to meet the needs of all pupils, particularly in Key Stage 1. Teachers make good use of assessment information about pupils' knowledge and progress to ensure that targets are realistic. Pupils know their targets and are very clear about how to achieve them. Good use is made of both group and paired work so that pupils can learn together and develop their speaking and listening skills, which they use with confidence.

The curriculum is good and has many strengths including the excellent links the school has with other schools, agencies and organisations. These links help them to meet the diverse needs of all pupils, bringing benefits to their learning and personal development. For example, a local museum project has given pupils opportunities to explore the Romans, work with pupils from other schools and enjoy learning new skills from outside visitors. Pupils' knowledge and use of

information and communication technology (ICT) are good but as yet they do not have enough opportunities to use ICT across different subjects to further their learning. The curriculum is well supported by a wide range of extra-curricular activities and residential experiences.

The good leadership of the headteacher, coupled with her vision for the future, results in clear direction for the school. She has accurately identified the actions needed to take the school forward. The headteacher is well supported by her senior team, staff and governing body; together they set a good tone and atmosphere for learning. Governors give freely of their time and expertise to support the school well; they both challenge the school and are involved in some areas of monitoring. The school values diversity and shows a good commitment to promoting community cohesion. Careful planning has led to a project for Years 4 and 6 which involves working with children from different cultures. This initiative is being extended to include more contact with representatives of other communities. The school's success in making improvements since the last inspection and in tackling last year's dip in standards in Key Stage 1, demonstrates its good capacity to improve. Parents feel that the school is well led and welcome the helpful and friendly approach of staff.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children settle quickly into the Reception class because of the high quality care and support they receive. Induction arrangements, and partnerships with parents, including home visits, are excellent. Children enter the Reception class with skills and knowledge similar to those expected for their age; speaking and listening skills are not as high as in other areas, for example, physical development where skills are very well developed. When they enter Year 1, most children have made good progress and have reached above average standards. Children's personal, social and emotional development is excellent; they behave very well and are keen to learn. Good habits of behaviour and caring for others are encouraged from the outset. 'My son loves and enjoys school and the warm friendly atmosphere which the teachers and other pupils provide', was a typical parent comment. Children are well taught and good use is made of assessment information in helping identify what children need to do next. Although children can choose activities for themselves, the curriculum does not provide them with sufficient real choice and opportunities to make their own decisions in their work and play. The outside area has yet to be fully integrated with the curriculum to give children increased opportunities to explore, investigate and interact throughout the day. The provision is well led and managed and planning for development and further improvement is good. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because early assessment highlights their needs and good support is provided by teaching assistants.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure all pupils in Key Stage 1 are sufficiently challenged to raise achievement further.
- Develop the use of the Early Years Foundation Stage outdoor area so that it is fully integrated with children's exploration and independent learning.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
|---|----------------|

Overall effectiveness

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| 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

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|---|---|
| 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

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|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve? | 2 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 1 |
| 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

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|---|---|
| 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? | 1 |

Leadership and management

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| 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 | 1 |
| 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**

4 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Grimsargh St Michael's Church of England Primary School, Lancashire, PR2 5SD

We are writing to thank you for making us feel so welcome when we inspected your school. We were impressed with how tidy the school was and with work you had displayed on the walls in the corridors and your classrooms. We really enjoyed talking to you and have good memories of how friendly you are, not just towards us but also towards each other and all the adults in school. We were pleased with how keen you were to talk, telling us about your many activities. You told us how much you enjoyed school and this is partly because of the way all the adults care for you. We agree with you and feel that all the adults in school look after you, in many ways, extremely well.

We looked at other parts of school life, including how the school helps you to understand about being healthy. It was obvious from what you said, what we saw you doing at break times and how well you work, that your own personal development is excellent.

We enjoyed spending some time in each of your classrooms, not just watching you learning inside, although that was very good, but outside as well. Children in the Reception class have their own outdoor area and we have asked the school to look at how they use this and plan it in each day so that it can be used just as well as the classroom. We have asked your school to do something else; this is to challenge you even more during lessons to help you improve your learning, particularly those of you in Key Stage 1. The curriculum that teachers use to help you learn is good and we hope that when all your building work is finished you will be able to make even better use of computers.

We were delighted to see how well all the adults in your school, including the governors, work together. Thank you for all your help and for holding the doors open each time we walked through; I know how proud the school is of all you do. Well done and I hope you all continue to work hard and enjoy being part of a good school.

All the best

Sue Sharkey and Joe Clark

Additional Inspectors