

Tarleton Mere Brow Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119574
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	327075
Inspection date	7 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Shirley Herring

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	57
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 Nicholas Davies
Headteacher	Mr Ian Cookson
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	The Gravel Mere Brow Tarleton Preston Lancashire

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	7 November 2008
Inspection number	327075

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- progress in Key Stage 1
- achievement of pupils in Key Stage 2
- the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Evidence was gathered from performance data and other school documentation, observations of teaching and learning, the work produced by pupils, parents' questionnaires and discussions with pupils, staff and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail. The inspector found that a number of the judgements made in the school's self-evaluation form were justified and these have been included, where appropriate, in this report.

Description of the school

This is a small school serving a rural village and surrounding area. There is a considerable variation in the number of children who join the school each year. The school caters for children in the EYFS. All three classes contain more than one age group. The vast majority of pupils are from a White British background and there are a small number of pupils whose home language is not English. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly above average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. It has a number of good features in the personal development and care for its pupils. Parents and pupils appreciate the caring, supportive, family atmosphere the school provides. Pupils' personal development is good, they enjoy coming to school and attendance is good. They feel safe and are confident that any occasional problem is dealt with promptly by an adult. They have a good understanding of a healthy lifestyle, appreciate the healthy lunches on offer and participate in a good range of exercise and sport. They make a good contribution to the community through responsibilities in school and through participating in a good range of parish and community events, such as the Whit Walks, and by raising money for charities at home and abroad. Pupils work well together and this, together with their secure basic skills, prepares them well for the future. Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is firmly rooted in the school's Christian tradition and an emphasis on respect for others. There was a powerful sense of spirituality in pupils' excellent singing and in the sounding of The Last Post to commemorate Remembrance Day. Behaviour is good.

Achievement is satisfactory. Standards are broadly average overall, though there are variations in results from year to year related to the small number of pupils in each annual cohort. The majority of children enter the Reception class with skills that are broadly typical for their age. They make satisfactory progress during their time in school and standards are broadly average by the time they leave Year 6. In Key Stage 1, results in 2008 were not as good as the previous two years and no pupil reached the higher level in mathematics. However, the school's good systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress showed that this small group of pupils had made sound progress from a comparatively low starting point.

Pupils continue to make steady progress in Key Stage 2. In the 2007 national tests for Year 6, standards were broadly average and the results of the 2008 national tests showed a similar picture. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support and so they achieve well. As a result, in both 2007 and 2008 all pupils reached the expected level in mathematics and science though a small number did not reach the expected level in English. The school's assessment data show that pupils currently in Year 6 are on line to meet their targets and some are on course to exceed them.

Teaching is satisfactory and pupils make sound gains in their learning. Pupils respond well to the high expectations of behaviour and they have a good attitude to their work. Teachers give clear explanations so pupils understand what they have to do and work is suitably planned to take account of the different ages in each class. However, there is insufficient challenge for the more able pupils in each year group, so some do not achieve as well as they can. Work is marked regularly and recognises pupils' progress but teachers do not always give specific guidance to help pupils to improve.

The curriculum is good and meets all requirements. The good programme for personal, social and health education contributes well to pupils' good personal development. There is a suitable focus on developing literacy, numeracy and computing skills so pupils achieve the required standard and there are developing strengths in sports and music. There is a good range of additional activities to enhance learning for a small school. There is good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities though provision is less effective for more able pupils.

Care, guidance and support are good and this extends to the breakfast club before school. All the recommended procedures for safeguarding pupils are in place and rigorously applied. There is a good level of support in class for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for those pupils who are at an early stage of learning English and so they achieve well. The school has good links with other professionals to provide specialist support where needed. Clear rules and expectations guide pupils' behaviour well. There are good procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress and these are now being developed to guide the learning of higher attaining pupils.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher leads by example in setting a good level of care and support for pupils. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and school has a sound capacity to improve further. Improvements in the quality of support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have resulted in an improvement in the number of pupils reaching the expected level for their age. Governors are involved in the life of the school and provide welcome support for the headteacher. The school uses its limited budget well to provide a bright, safe and secure learning environment and good support for pupils. There is a good promotion of community cohesion through, for example, close links with the parish and the local community.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Provision for children in the EYFS is satisfactory overall and personal development and welfare are good. There are currently seven children in the Reception Year and they are taught in the same class as the pupils in Year 1 and Year 2.

Children enter the Reception year with skills that are similar to what is usual for their age. They make steady progress and the majority reach the recommended goals in all areas of learning by the time they start Year 1.

The school rightly places great emphasis on developing children's personal and social skills, consequently personal development is good. Children behave well, work and cooperate together agreeably and join in activities with enthusiasm. They learn how to keep healthy through exercise and healthy lunches and feel safe in the secure, caring environment.

Teaching is satisfactory overall, and so children learn and develop at a steady rate. A suitable variety of activities is planned across all areas of learning. Whilst the needs of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are generally well met tasks are not always tailored well enough to meet the needs of more able children. Children have ready access to a range of activities in a secure outdoor area, though learning is sometimes less rapid where activities do not have a clear focus.

Children's welfare is promoted positively and parents comment on the friendly, helpful staff. The close partnership with parents helps children to settle quickly and make a positive start to school life. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Systems are being developed and implemented so that more effective use can be made of assessments to meet children's needs.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more challenge and guidance for more able pupils so that they achieve as well as they can.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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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?	3
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?	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?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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	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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3
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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

10 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Tarleton Mere Brow Church of England Primary School, Lancashire, PR4 6JS

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and hearing your views. Mr Byrne particularly enjoyed listening to your excellent singing during assembly and hearing about your achievements. You say you enjoy school, particularly the sports and interesting visits.

We think that Mere Brow is a satisfactory school overall and some things about it are good. All the adults take good care of you and make sure you are safe. You play your part by coming to school regularly, behaving well and getting on with each other.

Teachers give you clear explanations in lessons so that you know what to do and there is always an adult on hand to give extra help to those who need it. You make sound progress during your time in school and most pupils reach the expected level for their age by the time they leave Year 6.

To make your school even better we have suggested that those of you, throughout the school, who can find some things easy are given more challenging work to help them to reach a higher level.

We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Shirley Herring Mr Byrne

Lead inspector Team inspector