

Walton-le-Dale, St Leonard's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 119575 |
| Local Authority | Lancashire |
| Inspection number | 327076 |
| Inspection date | 11 November 2008 |
| Reporting inspector | Angela Milner HMI |

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 | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 252 |
| Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS | 4 |
| Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years | 0 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr Mike Simmons |
| Headteacher | Mr Mike Phillipson |
| Date of previous school inspection | 1 November 2005 |
| Date of previous funded early education inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Date of previous childcare inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | Walton Green Walton-le-Dale Preston Lancashire PR5 4JL |
| Telephone number | 01772 556021 |

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| Age group | 4–11 |
| Inspection date | 11 November 2008 |
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Fax number

01772 258194

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and inspected the following issues: pupils' achievement and standards, developments since the last inspection, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the effectiveness of both teaching and learning and leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from the school's own self-evaluation; national published assessment data and the school's own assessment records; planning and monitoring documents; direct observation of the school's work; meetings with staff, pupils, governors and parents and from parents' questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector 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

Walton-le-Dale, St Leonard's Church of England Primary School is slightly larger than average in size. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Two thirds of the current pupils are boys. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also lower than the national average although the number of pupils with statements of special educational need is higher than the national average. The school has achieved Healthy Schools, Basic Skills and Investors in People awards. The school has an after school and breakfast club for children aged 3 to 11 managed by the governing body.

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

This is a good school with many outstanding features. It provides outstanding pastoral and academic care, guidance and support within a safe and attractive learning environment. Pupils are extremely well cared for. It is a school where every child matters and pupils' emotional and personal development is given a high priority. Pupils say they feel safe and secure and procedures to safeguard them are in place. Pupils thrive in this happy, welcoming atmosphere based on mutual respect and excellent relationships. Staff are committed to giving the pupils the best possible education and care. The high quality of care in the school's breakfast and after school club supplements provision well. Pupils enjoy, appreciate and benefit from what the school has to offer. Parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive in their views of all aspects of the school. They particularly value the good education it provides and the approachability and sensitivity of the staff. 'High standards', 'supportive, caring and professional' staff and way the school 'educates its pupils for life' were typical of parents' positive comments. Inspection evidence confirms these views and matches those expressed by the school in its extremely accurate self-evaluation.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are also outstanding. Pupils' behaviour in class and around the school is exemplary, attitudes and relationships are excellent and older pupils willingly help younger pupils. Pupils show a good understanding of how to be healthy and enjoy a healthy diet and take regular exercise. They know how to keep themselves safe and know who to approach if they are worried. They make a positive contribution to the life of the school through their work as play leaders, their contribution to the school council and their involvement in charitable activities for the wider community. Pupils say they really enjoy school and their attendance is excellent. However, there are currently too few opportunities for students to develop an understanding of cultural diversity, to prepare them for life in multicultural Britain. As a result, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is judged to be good rather than outstanding.

Achievement is good and standards are above average. There has been a steady improvement in standards since the last inspection. The level of skills on entry to the EYFS is typical of the age group. By the end of Reception the majority of pupils are working beyond the level expected for their age. Key Stage 1 assessment results are above the national average. Provisional results for 2008 indicate that standards in reading are well above the national average, standards in writing are above the national average and standards in mathematics dipped to broadly average. This represents good progress overall. By the end of Year 6 pupils reach standards that are well above the national average in all three core subjects. Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 2, with the majority of pupils making two levels progress in literacy and numeracy. This prepares them well for the next phase of their education. In the drive to continue to improve standards further, the school sets challenging targets linked to high expectations. Provisional data for 2008 indicates that all of these were met at Level 4, but not at Level 5 in English and science. The school has already taken action to ensure that more high achieving pupils reach the highest levels in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 and in English and science at the end of Key Stage 2. Rigorous data analysis takes place to identify any underachievement and a number of effective intervention strategies are used to boost achievement. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified and well supported to ensure they also make good progress.

A significant factor in the good achievement is the good quality of teaching and learning and the excellent relationships between pupils, teachers and teaching assistants. The majority of lessons observed during the inspection were judged to be good and some were outstanding. Learning is particularly effective where it is planned in detail and pupils are well motivated and actively participate in lessons. Special focused groups are used well to support pupils who are not meeting the teacher's expectations, for example, in the development of motor skills. Teachers challenge pupils and use assessments effectively to ensure work is well suited to different ability groups. As a result, most groups of children make good progress. The school has recognised that there is scope for greater progress to be made by high achieving pupils at both key stages. Teaching assistants take an active role in supporting learning in lessons. Pupils understand their learning targets and teachers provide detailed guidance on how to improve their work.

The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced and designed to ensure pupils extend their skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) and enjoy a range of foundation subjects. Pupils are well prepared for their future economic well-being and introduced to a range of useful teamwork and enterprise skills. At Key Stage 1 the curriculum has been reviewed to ensure topics are more focused on the development of pupils' skills. The needs of the significant proportion of boys in the school are being met through the careful selection of topics, children's literature and the types of role play areas provided. At Key Stage 2, all pupils gain from the opportunity to learn French. A range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities involving visits out of school are welcomed by parents and pupils, who express their appreciation through their high take-up of activities.

A key factor in the success of the school is its outstanding leadership and management. The school runs very effectively on a day-to-day basis and a safe, secure and caring learning atmosphere, in line with the school's Anglican ethos, has been created. The school is very well led by a headteacher and leadership team who provide a very clear vision for the school. This is focused on enabling pupils to achieve their potential, improving the quality of teaching and learning, raising standards and a continuous drive for self improvement. School improvement planning is excellent because it draws on rigorous self-evaluation, the monitoring of teaching and learning, the detailed analysis of data and the views of pupils, parents, governors and the local authority. Leaders at all levels carry out their roles very well. They play an important part in monitoring the effectiveness of the school and, as a result, all know what has been achieved and what can be done to improve even further. Good partnerships are forged with a number of other organisations to benefit the pupils. These include links with local high schools, employers and museums. The governing body provides good support and ensures that the school is held to account for its performance. Governors are very well informed and provide good levels of support and challenge. Financial management is good. The school has clear policies and procedures in relation to equality and discrimination. Arrangements to promote community cohesion are good. All of these factors and the improvements made since the last inspection mean that the capacity to improve the school further is judged to be outstanding.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The effectiveness of the EYFS is good. Children enter Reception and a mixed Reception/Year 1 class with skills that are typical for their age. Thorough induction arrangements, effective liaison with parents and the happy, welcoming atmosphere ensure that children settle quickly into school. Welfare provision is outstanding. Parents appreciate the detailed information they

receive and the 'extra special little touches' such as sending a photograph home of their first day in school. Well structured activities, caring relationships and good quality provision ensure that children make good progress in all areas of their learning and development. All children reach or exceed the standards expected at the end of the Foundation Stage. Children's personal, social and emotional development is a particular strength. Children respond well to high expectations and routines, work and play well together and become increasingly confident and independent. They develop a good understanding of how to keep healthy and safe. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed. Assessment is detailed and is used to monitor children's development and achievement and to identify specific learning and development needs. Teaching is good and the learning activities provided are practical, purposeful and enjoyed by the children. Children have access to an attractive and secure outdoor area on a timetabled basis but greater use could be made of this outdoor environment to enhance learning during the school day.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching to maximise the progress pupils make in their learning.
- Raise pupils' awareness of British cultural diversity.

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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 |
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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? | 2 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 1 |

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 | 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 |

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 | 2 |
| 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 | 1 |
| 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 | 1 |

The quality of provision

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| 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? | 1 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 1 |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 1 |
| 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**

12 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Walton-le-Dale, St Leonard's Church of England Primary School, Lancashire, PR5 4JL

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and visiting you at work, at play and at the breakfast and after school club. We saw happy children who enjoy school and get along extremely well with all of the adults in school and with each other. We were particularly impressed by your behaviour, your extremely positive attitudes to learning and the way you carry out your responsibilities in school. It was clear to us that you all, as your school mission statement tells us, benefit from a school which is 'G.R.E.A.T.' Many of your parents completed questionnaires. This meant we were able to consider their views during the inspection. We agreed with them that in this school every child really does matter.

You reach high standards. You make good progress in your learning and leave the school well prepared for your secondary education. This is because of the good teaching you receive, the range of activities the school provides and the excellent care, support and guidance that teachers and teaching assistants give you. Mr Phillipson, the staff and governors work hard to ensure this is a continually improving school.

We have asked your school to look at two things to make it even better.

- To make sure that all lessons help everyone to make the best possible progress in their learning.
- To make sure you understand the influence of other faiths and peoples on the way we live in Britain.

You can all of course help to improve your school by continuing to attend regularly, working as hard as you can to achieve your best and by playing your part in continuing to improve the school further through the work of the school council.

Yours sincerely

Angela Milner

Her Majesty's Inspector