

Blackburn The Redeemer Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133987
Local Authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	328794
Inspection dates	24–25 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Mark Williams 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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	327
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	Mr Richard Marshall
Headteacher	Mrs Alison Ashworth-Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Jack Walker Way Fernhurst Farm Blackburn BB2 4JJ
Telephone number	01254 296400

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	24–25 March 2009
Inspection number	328794

Fax number

01254 296401

Age group 4-11

Inspection dates 24-25 March 2009

Inspection number 328794

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector. A denominational inspection was carried out by the Church of England's National Society at the same time as this inspection. Its report is available separately.

Description of the school

The school was established in September 2004. Pupils and staff moved into a new purpose built building which it shares with the parish church in September 2006. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average as is the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds with those from Gypsy Roma traveller and Asian heritage backgrounds being the next largest groups. The school draws its pupils from a wide socio-economic area with some significant deprivation. Pupils' abilities and skills on entry are wide and vary from year-to-year. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision is comprised of 57 children in the Reception age group.

The school holds a number of awards including the BECTA information and communication technology (ICT) award for the Best National Whole School Primary, the Eco-Schools Bronze Award and the Football Association Chartermark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Blackburn The Redeemer is an outstanding school.

All major areas of the school's work are judged to be outstanding. This is because the school has been successful in ensuring that pupils make excellent progress in their learning and that they demonstrate outstanding attitudes and attributes in their personal development and well-being. They have secured these successes because there have been significant improvements to the quality of teaching, the curriculum and care, guidance and support since the previous inspection. The school's very strong Christian ethos underpins all that it does and makes for a highly inclusive environment which welcomes all regardless of background. All parents spoken to and the vast majority of those who responded to the inspection questionnaire were positive about and confident in the school. They are right to be so. Typical comments include 'My child is valued as an individual' and 'My child has grown into a decent, honest, kind and caring child'.

At the time of the previous inspection standards attained by pupils were below average and the progress they made in their learning was satisfactory at best. Now, less than three years on, standards are above average overall, and rates of progress are some of the best in England. Standards attained in 2008 were very high and the indications are that the current Year 6 may achieve just as well. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those from Gypsy Roma traveller backgrounds make exceptional progress. Teaching is outstanding, as is the curriculum which has particular strengths in information and communication technology (ICT). The care, guidance and support provided are of the highest quality. Staff are excellent role models for the pupils. They know what pupils can or cannot do. The feedback they offer to pupils is positive and usually makes clear the next steps in learning, although this is not always consistently the case. Very good use has been made of external agencies, including local authority support, to ensure pupils have the best possible conditions for learning and development. This is particularly evident in the success the school has had in engaging Gypsy Roma traveller children and their families.

The pupils are a credit to the school and to themselves. They display very mature attitudes, particularly in their spiritual development, and show great respect to adults and to one another. Their high levels of confidence coupled with excellent ICT, literacy, numeracy and social skills, prepare them very well for the future.

The school benefits from outstanding leadership, especially from the headteacher, senior leaders and the governors. Given the improvements made, the consistently outstanding rates of pupil progress and the high quality of provision, the school is demonstrating excellent capacity to build on its many strengths and improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities which are wide ranging and vary from year-to-year, but overall are below what is typical for their age. From these very different starting points they make outstanding progress in nearly all areas of learning and development. The exception to this has been progress in early writing skills. Nonetheless, highly effective actions have already secured very good improvements in this area in the current Reception class. Not only do the children show increased confidence in their writing, they are

also confident, enthusiastic, caring and increasingly independent in all areas of their learning. They work very well with adults, each other and play safely together.

The children's immediate learning environment comprises of a very well equipped classroom and a dedicated outdoor area. Both provide high levels of stimulation for the children. Leadership is excellent. All adults work very well together to ensure learning is meaningful and matches the needs of the children very well. Teaching and support are outstanding. Relationships with parents are strong and contribute to the way the children settle in quickly and thoroughly enjoy their time in Reception.

What the school should do to improve further

- Strengthen the existing good quality feedback adults give to pupils to ensure it consistently makes clear the next steps for learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils at The Redeemer make outstanding progress in their learning and achieve exceptionally well. They have done so for the last three years. In 2008, Year 6 pupils made some of the best progress rates nationally. Pupils make this progress because they are taught and supported exceptionally well and they are equipped with the skills for learning and later life. Their ICT skills are outstanding and this has been recognised through a national award. The result of outstanding progress is that pupils, overall since the previous inspection, attain above average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In 2008, standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 were very high. Work in pupils' books across the school confirms the school's data which show overall standards to be above average, with the potential of the current Year 6 matching their predecessors' success. It is not only the high standards reached in 2008 which are impressive. Equally so is the exceptional progress pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those from Gypsy Roma traveller backgrounds make in their learning. This, again, is because of outstanding levels of care, guidance and support provided. All in all, the school knows its pupils very well and use targets successfully to ensure pupils achieve as well as they can.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils demonstrate outstanding attributes in their personal development and well-being. Particularly strong is the pupils' spiritual development. They demonstrate their ability to reflect on serious issues maturely and sensitively. This was evident in a class act of worship in Year 5. The pupils, collected around a table in a classroom which made excellent use of dimmed lights and lit candles in the shape of a cross, responded to the teacher's reading from a passage from the Bible by considering the emotions of the onlookers at the crucifixion of Jesus. They reflected silently and in pairs and then compared these emotions to their own about family, friends and pets who have passed on or moved away. Then taking a pebble to represent the person or pet considered, they placed these in a bowl and, without any pressure to do so, a good number expressed their feelings confidently while the others listened attentively. Such maturity, reflection and consideration are typical of pupils throughout the school and also evident in high quality art work. Their respect for adults and one another is excellent, as is their behaviour.

In addition to these very strong personal qualities, pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of how to keep safe and be healthy. They enjoy the numerous activities on offer and could speak sensibly about the dangers of fire and substance misuse. They enjoy school very much and value the opportunities they have to show responsibility, for example, as librarians, members of the school council and as team leaders in lessons. Attendance has improved since the previous inspection and is now average. The attendance of Gypsy Roma traveller pupils is outstanding.

Pupils use their skills and very positive attitudes very well to make excellent contributions to the school community and further afield. Their excellent ICT, literacy, numeracy and social skills, coupled with their high levels of confidence and self-esteem skills ensure they are very well prepared for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching is outstanding and leads to pupils making excellent progress in their learning. Very strong relationships exist between adults and pupils. Pupils feel confident to contribute to lessons and 'have a go' even if it means getting an answer wrong. Adults such as teaching assistants are deployed very well and provide excellent support for pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Typical features of teaching include lessons that proceed at a brisk pace; well understood tasks and excellent delivery to ensure pupils are actively engaged in their learning; adults' skilful use of questioning and partner work; and activities that are matched very well to the different needs of pupils. In addition, adults use praise well and involve pupils in evaluating their own learning very effectively. There are also high quality opportunities for pupils to work both collaboratively and independently, for example in a Year 4 lesson where pupils worked and reflected together to produce an outstanding Viking dance.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is rich and varied and meets the needs of pupils very well. Links between subjects and areas of learning are planned carefully to ensure high levels of pupil engagement and interest. ICT is a real strength and pupils demonstrate excellent skills in this area. The curriculum fosters skills such as cooperation, speaking and listening, and independence exceptionally well. Themed days, around the Vikings or the Victorians for example, further enhance learning and enjoyment. Spanish is taught throughout the school and strengths in design technology are evident in the school providing regional winners in a national primary engineering competition. Pupils particularly enjoy music be it informally using the karaoke in the breakfast club, performing in a steel band or, as was the case for Year 4 during the inspection, demonstrating their growing violin skills to parents and friends. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer, including residential visits, athletics and dodge ball.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

All staff are committed to ensuring pupils enjoy school and achieve very well. The school is a calm, nurturing learning environment where pupils grow in confidence and in their self-esteem. Levels of care are exemplary. The breakfast club is appreciated by pupils and parents alike. For those pupils who attend, its excellent activities provide a great start to the day. The school has

made excellent use of outside agencies, including local authority support, to improve attendance to average levels and ensure those from Gypsy Roma traveller backgrounds attend and achieve exceptionally well. Academic guidance is supported very well by excellent systems for tracking what pupils can or cannot do. Pupils know their end of year targets well. There are examples of high quality feedback to pupils which highlight strengths and what needs to be done to improve. This latter aspect is not always a consistent feature throughout the school. Nonetheless, such is the confidence of the pupils they readily enjoy opportunities to support each other by marking each other's work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The leadership of the headteacher is outstanding. She sets a very clear direction for the school which is understood by all the committed and dedicated staff. She is supported very well by excellent senior leaders, subject leaders and governors. Together they have made sure the school has made very good progress since the previous inspection. This is particularly evident in the improvement of standards, the significantly strong progress pupils make in their learning and the way they demonstrate outstanding attitudes and attributes in their personal development. As a result, the school ensures equality of opportunity for all and deploys resources most effectively. The governing body is impressive and supports and challenges the school very well. They have been proactive in engaging the views of parents through various questionnaires, about homework for example, and by acting on their findings. In addition, they ensure the school meets its statutory duties including safeguarding. The school's work to promote community cohesion has been very successful. Not only have leaders brought together the two former schools, they previously established a link with a predominately Muslim primary school in the local authority and have ensured Gypsy Roma traveller pupils achieve exceptionally well. In addition, leaders and governors have ensured excellent relations exist with the parish church which shares its buildings.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
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	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
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?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

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?	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	3
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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

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?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

26 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Blackburn The Redeemer CE Primary, Blackburn with Darwen, BB2 4JJ

On behalf of the inspectors I am writing to you to thank you all for the wonderful welcome we received when we visited The Redeemer CE Primary school for its recent inspection. We were all very impressed by your politeness, helpfulness and good manners. I am delighted to tell you that we have judged your school to be outstanding. This is the highest grade we may award. Congratulations!

Your school is outstanding because you are taught exceptionally well and you are provided with exciting things to learn. We could really see how much you enjoyed your lessons, especially ICT, Viking dancing and writing instructions for how to make sledges and moonrock cakes. All the adults care for you very much and like to tell you how well you are doing. Often they tell you what to do to get even better and we have asked your school to make sure this happens more often. As a result of all the excellent work the school does you make outstanding progress in your learning and attain above average standards overall. However, in 2008 the standards attained by Year 2 and Year 6 pupils were even better than this! Well done!

Just as importantly for the school is how you grow into mature individuals. You do this outstandingly well and are confident young people. You show a very good awareness of and concern for others and enjoy responsibility. Particularly impressive is the way you think deeply about what is said and done in worship. While your attendance is average, it has improved since the last inspection. Those of you from Gypsy Roma traveller backgrounds have improved your attendance greatly and this has meant you are making great progress in your learning.

All this is possible because you have an outstanding headteacher who is supported very well by excellent senior leaders and governors. In fact, all the adults play their part fully and are excellent role models. We know you will all want to work together to build on the success of what is still a relatively new school and become even better in the future.

We wish you every success!

Mark Williams

Her Majesty's Inspector