

Knuzden St Oswald's C of E Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119450
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	331268
Inspection dates	15–16 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Joe Clark

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)	202
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	Mrs Christine Hughes
Headteacher	Mrs Andrea Gray
Date of previous school inspection	11 March 2008
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Mount St James Stanhill Road Knuzden Blackburn Lancashire

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	15–16 June 2009
Inspection number	331268

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized school with more boys than girls. Most pupils come from areas of high socio-economic deprivation. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is average, as is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and all speak English as their first language. The Early Years Foundation Stage of learning consists of one Reception class. The school has been receiving extra support from the local authority's Monitoring and Improving Schools programme. Before school provision in the form of a breakfast club is managed by the governing body.

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 which has made good progress in key areas in the last 15 months and now provides a satisfactory standard of education. Consequently, in accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

The school has made significant improvement because the headteacher, with good support from the local authority, has tackled the weaknesses identified in the previous report with energy and determination. Overall leadership and management are satisfactory. Strong leadership from the headteacher, coupled with the effective support of her senior colleagues, has transformed the school. Progress is accelerating, standards are rising after a period of steady decline and the quality of teaching and learning is improving. New and more effective assessment and tracking systems are helping identify underachievement at an earlier stage. Partnerships with other providers, for example, local family centres and community beat managers, are good. Parents have confidence in the school. One Year 6 parent commented, 'My child has thoroughly enjoyed his schooling and has made fantastic progress.'

Children enter the Reception class with skills that are below what is usually expected of children of their age. When they come to leave school at the end of Year 6, results in national tests have been significantly below average and pupils' achievement has been inadequate. This was the case in 2008. Children's current progress, while not yet having had time to translate into good achievement in national tests at the end of Year 6, is now satisfactory. Current standards in Years 5 and 6 are broadly average which, for most children, represents satisfactory achievement. There is an increasing focus on developing basic skills but writing remains weaker especially for the more able and too little is done to ensure these pupils achieve their full potential. The support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive is carefully managed and they make satisfactory progress.

The inadequate teaching identified at the time of the previous inspection has been eradicated, partly through changes in staffing, but also because leadership and management have improved the quality of lessons through more effective monitoring, intervention and support. Teaching is now satisfactory and much of it is good. However, the challenge and curriculum opportunities for the more able to work at a level to extend their learning is inconsistent. Overall the curriculum is satisfactory with a strong focus on personal and social education. As a result, pupils' personal development is good. Their spiritual development is outstanding. In lessons and around the school, their behaviour is good. In class, they show a willingness to work hard and cooperate with their teachers. They are polite and friendly and mix well with each other. Pupils enjoy coming to school where they feel safe and are well cared for, receiving good pastoral and academic support and guidance. 'The teachers are really friendly and help you a lot' was typical of several positive pupil comments. Pupils understand the importance of staying safe and trying to live a healthy lifestyle. Their average basic skills and good social and personal skills are a sound preparation for their future economic prosperity.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children enter the school with a range of skills that are below what is typical for their age; their knowledge of letter

sounds is particularly weak. They make good progress and most children reach average standards by the time they enter Year 1. Children respond well to high expectations and their personal development is good. They enjoy school because activities are varied and interesting. Visits to Year 1 help to prepare them well for the next stage of learning. Teachers plan a good range of purposeful, practical activities across all areas of learning so children learn well. Teachers work hard to overcome the curriculum restrictions imposed by the lack of a designated outdoor play area which limits the extent to which children can plan and develop their own activities.

Currently, there is a good balance between those activities led by an adult, for example, in learning letter sounds, and those that children choose for themselves. This is helping children develop skills, independence and an enjoyment of learning. Provision for children's welfare is good. There are good procedures for introducing children to school routines and so they settle quickly. Relationships between adults and children are good. Consequently, children feel safe and develop in confidence. Parents are kept well informed and contribute well to their children's learning. Leadership and management are good. Improvements in assessment procedures and in the curriculum have helped to raise standards. The extension of outdoor provision is imminent.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards across the school, especially in writing for more able pupils.
- Provide greater challenge in lessons and improve the curriculum to enable more able pupils to attain higher standards and achieve their full potential.

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

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory. Current standards are broadly average at the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils' progress, which is accelerating, is satisfactory. Pupils enter Year 1 with average standards. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 have been broadly average but dipped to well below average in 2008. This cohort included a higher than usual number of lower ability groups and the proportion of pupils achieving the higher level grades was below average. In recent years, including 2008, results of national tests at the end of Year 6 have been well below average and pupils' achievement has been inadequate. In 2008, as in earlier years, more able pupils did not attain the higher Level 5 grades they were capable of, particularly in science. Current Year 6 pupils are on track to achieve the challenging targets set for them in this summer's national tests and standards are broadly average. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are making satisfactory progress. The school has accurately identified that more able pupils need greater challenge to reach higher standards. Throughout the school, standards in writing continue to improve but remain weaker than in other aspects of English especially for the more able. Nearly all pupils now have the school's 'Licence to Quill' award, a reflection of pupils' high standards of presentation.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their moral, social and cultural development, is good. Their spiritual development, nurtured in assemblies and through the excellent relationships that exist throughout the school, is excellent. In learning about various world faiths, and talking

to visitors from Tanzania, they gain valuable insights into other cultures and customs. Visits to a local homeless centre promote understanding and compassion for vulnerable groups. Pupils enjoy school where their attendance is good. Pupils say there is very little, if any, bullying. Attitudes to work are good. Behaviour in class and around the school is good. Reward systems such as 'Catch Me' encourage good behaviour. Pupils make a good contribution to the smooth running of the school and enjoy exercising responsibility, for example, as school councillors, prefects, or door monitors. They understand the advantages of a healthy lifestyle through sensible diet and the value of keeping fit through regular exercise. They learn how to stay safe and say they enjoy the visits from the Life Education Centre. They develop average basic skills, which, allied to good social skills, is a sound preparation for the next stage of learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, which is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when they were inadequate. There is some good teaching in the school but it is not yet consistent enough to ensure pupils' achievement is better than satisfactory. In nearly all lessons, relationships are very positive and provide pupils with good encouragement and support. In the better lessons, the pace of learning is marked by timed activities, well matched to pupils' capability, and work challenges and extends all groups of learners, particularly the more able pupils. This is not yet a feature of all lessons and, too often, the more able pupils are not fully stretched. Marking has improved significantly and much of it is now good, giving pupils enough guidance to help them effectively make the next steps in learning. This is not yet consistent in all classes. Teaching assistants provide good support.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. The good focus on developing basic literacy and numeracy skills is beginning to impact positively on standards. Information and communication technology skills are taught systematically in specific lessons but the use of these skills in other subjects is at an early stage. There is good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities but the school recognises that provision for more able pupils is not so well advanced. A good programme for personal, social and health education contributes well to pupils' good personal development. A high proportion of pupils take part in a satisfactory range of after-school clubs to enhance their learning and enjoyment. Visitors to school enrich the curriculum, though the number of outside visits undertaken is limited.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils are well cared for and most now receive good academic guidance. The school knows its pupils well and the pastoral care of pupils is very strong. Relationships throughout the school are warm and encouraging. Good links with outside agencies provide effective support to vulnerable pupils and pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Safeguarding procedures conform with recent legislation. Governors ensure that health and safety issues, including risk assessments, are regularly reviewed and updated. The new system to track pupils' progress is setting more challenging targets and identifying which pupils need support through targeted

intervention. Pupils are clear about what targets they are aiming for in their work and in most classes they know what they have to do to improve. Support for more able pupils is not as strong, and they do not do as well as other groups of pupils in national assessments at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher is giving a good lead on what the school needs to do to improve. Some difficult staffing issues have been successfully tackled and her strong and determined leadership has effectively reversed the school's decline. Subject leadership, some of which is new, is beginning to develop good monitoring systems to inform judgements on how well pupils are progressing. Regular meetings of the summative evaluation group, consisting of senior leaders and governors, are ensuring a continuing focus on the urgent need to raise standards. Self-evaluation is satisfactorily identifying areas for improvement and planning to bring about improvement is good. Good systems have been established for tracking pupils' progress and identifying and intervening where underachievement is identified. Governors provide good support and increasing challenge but their monitoring visits are not scheduled far enough ahead to ensure the time they spend in school is as productive as possible. Early years provision is well managed. The school failed to meet its statutory targets at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2008. Community cohesion is satisfactory. There are good links with the local community but national and local links are not well developed. The school gives satisfactory value for money. Pupils' accelerating progress, rising standards, and improvements in teaching and learning are testament to the school's good capacity for further improvement.

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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	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

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?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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	3

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	3

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?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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	2
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?	3
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**

17 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Knuzden St Oswald's C of E Voluntary Aided Primary School, Lancashire. BB1 2DR

Thank you so much for welcoming us into your school and showing us your work. We enjoyed our inspection, especially your assemblies - when that balloon burst you could see we nearly had a heart attack!

This is what we found during our inspection.

Yours is a satisfactory but improving school. These are its main strengths:

- you get off to a good start in the Reception class where you make good progress and are well cared for
- your behaviour in lessons and around the school is good
- everyone in the school, both pupils and adults, get on really well together
- you enjoy school and attend regularly
- your attitudes to learning are very positive; we were struck by how much you said you enjoyed your lessons
- your school no longer gives cause for concern, because your headteacher is doing a very good job in making lots of improvements.

These are the two things we think the school can work on to make improvements:

- help you all to achieve higher standards in your work, especially in writing
- make sure those of you who find learning easier are given harder work to do in lessons and greater personal and curriculum support to help you achieve the best possible results in national tests and assessments.

You can help the school by continuing to work hard and attending regularly.

Thank you once again for all your help and good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Joe Clark

Lead inspector