

Great Harwood St John's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119421
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	339435
Inspection dates	25–26 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Garry Jones HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	143
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Dion Etheridge
Headteacher	Mr Darren Mussell
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and representatives of the local authority. They observed the school's work and looked at school assessment data, records of monitoring, policies including those related to safeguarding and 69 questionnaires completed by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the progress and the quality of learning of pupils in English and mathematics and particularly in writing
- the quality of teaching and assessment and its impact on pupils' progress
- the impact of leadership and management on bringing about improvement
- the school's capacity for improvement.

Information about the school

The school was last inspected in October 2008 at which time it was given a notice to improve because it was performing significantly less well than in the circumstances it could be expected to perform. It is smaller than the average primary school and serves the community of Great Harwood. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above the national average and the majority are of Pakistani heritage. The number of pupils with English as an additional language is also above the national average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above that found nationally. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below that found nationally. The school has been awarded the Healthy School award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvements.

The attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 is low. While there has been an improvement in the proportions of pupils gaining the expected levels in English and mathematics in the national tests in 2009, these remain below the national average and too few pupils attain the higher levels. The average points scored by pupils in the assessment tests have been significantly below the national average for the last five years and declined in 2009. The progress made by pupils across Key Stage 2 has been inadequate for the last three years; in part, this was related to instability of staffing. The progress of pupils currently on roll, as seen in lessons and through their work in books, is now broadly satisfactory although the rate of improvement is not sufficiently strong and secure to remedy the previous underachievement. This is because, although there is some good teaching, there is not enough of it to enable pupils to make the good progress required if they are to catch up.

Over the last year the school has, with the support of the local authority, introduced training to improve teaching and assessment in order to raise achievement. These initiatives have not had sufficient impact on standards and progress, and teaching overall remains satisfactory. Planned activities do not always fully meet the needs of all abilities within the class and, at times, the activities do not enable pupils to achieve the intended objectives. This results in pupils not engaging with the tasks with sufficient interest and enthusiasm and the pace of learning slows. The school is not yet widely sharing examples of good teaching with sufficient regularity.

The attendance of pupils is too low and this, together with the low levels of basic skills and the limited opportunities for using information and communication technology, limits their preparation for future life.

The provision for and outcomes of pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage are good and are a strength of the school.

Pupils and the majority of parents have generally positive views of the school. Pupils are well known by staff and they receive good care and guidance. Pupils feel safe in school and report that there is always someone to turn to if they face difficulties. They are clear that there is little bullying and no racism. They are able to make a good contribution to the school and the wider community. The caring ethos within the school

ensures that the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of pupils is good.

The headteacher has succeeded in gaining the commitment and hard work of the staff to bring about improvement. Together with his senior leadership team, he is monitoring the provision and the outcomes for pupils but this is not with sufficient regularity and rigour. He has the support of the governors who, under the strong leadership of the chair, are beginning to extend their involvement in evaluating and challenging the school's performance. However, the governing body has not had sufficient impact on bringing about improvement. The evaluation of the school is underdeveloped and judgements are not always accurate. The absence of sufficient progress since the last inspection and the weakness in monitoring and evaluation show that currently capacity for improvement is inadequate.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good teaching to ensure that pupils make good progress and attainment improves by:
 - ensuring that lessons are planned to include a range of activities that relate to the needs of all pupils
 - sharing the best practice in teaching more systematically.
- Establish a rigorous system for monitoring and evaluating provision and outcomes.
- Develop the role of the governing body in evaluation and in challenging the school to improve through additional training.
- Raise attendance by working with low attending pupils and their families.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Pupils' achievement is inadequate. There is too little evidence that attainment is rising rapidly. The progress of pupils, although now satisfactory, is not sufficient to remedy previous underachievement. Standards of attainment are low reflecting the inadequate progress made over previous years. The progress pupils made in Key Stage 2 has been too low for a number of years.

In the majority of lessons observed learning was satisfactory but there were lessons in which the pace of learning was brisk and pupils made good progress. When learning was no better than satisfactory, pupils showed little real enthusiasm for learning and completed the planned activities passively. Pupils were easily distracted from their work and showed little interest in producing work of good quality. At times, this was because the planned activity did not provide an appropriate level of challenge for all pupils. In the best lessons pupils engaged willingly with the work, showing interest and responding keenly to questions from teachers or other staff. There is no difference in the rate of progress made by different groups of pupils including those who speak English as an additional language or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The majority of pupils enjoy school and attend regularly; however, too many pupils do

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

not attend regularly enough. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory overall. Pupils report that bullying is rare and that racism is absent. Pupils feel safe in school knowing that there is someone to turn to if they face difficulties. They have a good awareness of healthy lifestyles and are keen to eat healthily and take regular exercise. Pupils are proud of their school and willingly take on positions of responsibility and contribute to the development of the school through the school council. Pupils are also keen to contribute to the wider community through fund-raising and, for example, through the links with the church and through the school choir.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory, but a small number of good and inadequate lessons were observed during the inspection. On occasion, learning objectives are not sufficiently precise and, at times, the planned tasks do not relate sufficiently to intended outcomes. There is a tendency for teachers to provide too much explanation and guidance at the start of lessons, restricting the time for the pupils to complete the work and slowing progress. In contrast, good lessons are characterised by a range of well-planned tasks

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

that capture the interest of pupils and good management of learning that ensures a brisk pace leading to good learning. There is skilful use of questions to challenge pupils' understanding and extend their learning. Teachers assign targets to groups of pupils, but these are not always in language that allows all pupils to fully understand what is expected of them. Marking is regular, but the use of comments to provide clear advice on how to improve is not consistent.

The curriculum is sound and meets statutory requirements. It is designed to meet the needs of different groups of pupils with additional support and intervention for those pupils who require it. A creative curriculum has been introduced and is being developed through consultation with the pupils to build on their interests. There is a good focus on personal and emotional development. The curriculum is enriched through a range of visits and visitors. Further enrichment is achieved by using links with the local high school to extend provision for sports and modern foreign languages.

There is good care, guidance and support for pupils. The support for transition on entry to the school and on transfer to high school is effective. Staff know pupils well and are eager to provide additional support when required. Pupils with additional needs are identified and targeted support provided including through the use of links with external agencies. A home/school liaison officer works effectively to support pupils and their families when facing difficulties. A bilingual assistant works successfully to support those families with difficulties in accessing English. In addition, there is a clear focus on improving attendance which is beginning to bring about improvement in reducing the number of persistent absentees.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has succeeded in gaining the commitment of the staff in bringing about improvement. All staff are working hard to achieve this. There is a real drive from staff and governors to ensure that all groups of pupils are treated equally and provided with opportunities to succeed and this is effective. There are systems in place for monitoring the achievements of pupils and the quality of teaching within the school. However, aspects of monitoring are not sufficiently regular and lack rigour. Plans for improvement are in place but these are too broad and there is a lack of precision in focusing all success criteria on pupils' outcomes. The planned strategies for improvement have not had a sufficiently rapid impact on teaching and pupils' outcomes.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Self-evaluation is in place but the interpretation of some evidence is too positive. The governors fulfil their statutory requirements and have a clear focus on ensuring the well-being and safety of pupils. The governing body, under the leadership of an effective chair, has started to become involved in school evaluation and is beginning to challenge the school to improve. However, these efforts have not had sufficient impact on bringing about improvement. There is a clear emphasis on ensuring the health and safety of pupils. Procedures for safeguarding pupils, including those ensuring that suitable adults work with pupils, are good. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to developing community cohesion. In particular, it celebrates the Muslim culture as well as Christianity and establishes links with schools of other faiths to improve understanding. It also supports those families facing particular difficulties and encourages their involvement in the education of their children. However, evaluation of the impact of these developments is at an early stage. Currently, given the outcomes, although financial management is secure, the school provides poor value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle in to the class quickly. This is helped by a well-planned transition programme, including home visits, that actively involves parents in the education of their children. Children make good progress in relation to their starting points. Children enter the class with skills that are often well below those expected for their age, but develop well to reach levels that are broadly in line with expectations on entry to Key Stage 1. Children behave well and relate positively to adults and to each other. The

progress of children who are learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with their peers. Children clearly enjoy their learning and approach independent and guided activities with enthusiasm. Provision is good with careful planning of a good range of activities to support learning. There is good quality teaching and teaching assistants are deployed well to support learning and assess progress. The provision is led and managed well. There is a clear focus on ensuring the well-being and safety of all children and creating a stimulating learning environment.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The very large majority of parents that responded to the inspection questionnaire were happy with the provision for their children. All parents believed that their child enjoys school and is kept safe. The large majority felt that their child was making sufficient progress and that teaching was good; the inspectors cannot agree that this is the case. A very small minority expressed concerns that the school was not meeting their child's needs and, given the history of poor progress, inspectors agree. A similar very small minority had concerns about the management of behaviour, but inspectors found no evidence to substantiate this concern.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Great Harwood St John's Church of England Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 69 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 143 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	38	54	33	46	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	38	54	33	46	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	34	48	30	42	7	10	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	44	34	48	5	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	33	46	33	46	3	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	33	46	30	42	7	10	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	46	33	46	2	3	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	26	37	32	45	5	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	39	30	42	10	14	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	44	26	37	4	6	5	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	35	33	46	4	6	4	6
The school is led and managed effectively	31	44	31	44	4	6	4	6
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	54	30	42	3	4	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



27 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Great Harwood St John's Church of England Primary School, Blackburn, BB6 7ES

Thank you for the warm welcome that you gave to my colleagues and me when we inspected your school. We enjoyed talking to you about your work and hearing your views on the school. I am writing to tell you what we found about your school.

The majority of you enjoy coming to school and behave well. However, too many of you do not come to school regularly enough. You are given good care and support and, as a result, you feel safe, are keen to contribute to school life and the local community and are trying to adopt a healthy lifestyle.

Your teachers plan satisfactory lessons for you and some lessons are good. The result is that you are now making satisfactory progress. However, the standards that you achieve are low because you have not made enough progress in the past. You are not making enough progress now to catch up on what you have missed in earlier years. Your school needs additional help to ensure that you have an adequate education and are well prepared for your future life and work. This help is called special measures.

The headteacher and his colleagues are working hard to improve the school, but they are not making these improvements fast enough. You can help them by telling them how you like to learn and by working harder in lessons. We have asked the school to make all the teaching at least good by making certain that the activities teachers plan for you are at the right level for each of you and by sharing the best ideas on good lessons. We have also asked the school to work with those of you who do not attend regularly and with your families to make sure your attendance improves. Finally, we have asked the school leaders and the governors to look more carefully at how well you are doing and which things help you to learn best so that they can make your school better.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Garry Jones

Her Majesty's Inspector

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