

Grindleton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119686
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	327108
Inspection dates	11 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Mr Andrew Scott

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 on roll	40
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev David Mewis
Headteacher	Mr David Lloyd
Date of previous school inspection	January 2006
School address	Sawley Road Grindleton Clitheroe Lancashire BB7 4QS
Telephone number	01200 441257
Fax number	01200 441257

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

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

- the achievement of different groups of pupils
- pupils' multi-cultural development and sense of community in the wider world
- the impact of shared headship on the leadership and management of the school.

Evidence was gathered from observations of lessons, analyses of pupils' work, performance data, parents' questionnaires and the school's documentation, and from discussions with pupils, staff and governors. 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 this report.

Description of the school

This is a small rural school in a comparatively affluent area. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds; all have English as their first language. The movement within the pupil population is typical of the national picture; unusually, boys tend to predominate. Very few pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Since January 2008, there has been a partnership with Bolton-by-Bowland Primary School with a shared headship.

Key for inspection grades

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 some outstanding aspects. Excellent pastoral care and a strong focus on standards produce a supportive and positive ethos in which pupils flourish. As a result, pupils feel very secure and valued. The school is very well led by the headteacher and governing body. They have maintained the strengths seen at the last inspection and made key improvements, such as appointing an additional teacher and creating a new classroom. Parents are very happy with the quality of education and care. 'I couldn't wish for a better start for my children,' was a typical comment.

Standards are consistently high throughout the school. Children enter Year 1 with skills and knowledge above those normally expected of five-year-olds, although this varies because of the very small year groups. By the end of Years 2 and 6 standards in English, mathematics and science are high because of consistently good teaching. Nearly all pupils reach the expected level and many reach the higher level for their age. In 2008, results in writing and mathematics dipped a little in Year 2 but were still above expected levels. In Year 6, results were high in all subjects. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do not always reach the same standards as other pupils but nonetheless achieve well in relation to their needs. Indeed, all pupils achieve well; boys' achievement is currently slightly higher than that of girls, following concerted action to raise it.

Teaching is good. Classrooms are busy and productive places. The excellent rapport between staff and pupils produces a very good work ethic. High expectations by teachers mean that pupils know exactly what they have to do and so learn well. Pupils said that they are given work that is challenging but not too difficult. In Key Stage 1, for example, they are stretched by the quality and range of vocabulary used by the teacher. Pupils appreciate the help and guidance teachers give to move them forward. Good individual learning targets are set in English and mathematics but the system is too new to evaluate its effectiveness. It is obvious, though, that teachers know their pupils' individual needs very well and adapt work accordingly. However, teachers do not consistently enliven their lessons by linking subjects or putting learning in context. There is good enrichment outside lessons but these still rely too much on routine activities. Lessons are at times led too much by the teachers with insufficient scope for pupils to contribute. The curriculum is good overall, especially with its focus on the core subjects and support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school is beginning to develop the grounds as an outdoor classroom, but has some way to go before completion.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They develop into mature, thoughtful and considerate individuals. Their spiritual dimension is boosted by close links with the parish. Behaviour is exemplary; pupils feel very safe because staff are caring and supportive. During lunchtime, for instance, several were taught how to skip properly by supervisory staff. Pupils are emphatic that there is no bad behaviour or bullying. Just as importantly, they take great care of one another so that they also ensure each other's safety. The few incidents recorded in the school's accident book are testament to this. The school's systems for safeguarding pupils follow the local

authority's guidelines; visits out of school, for example, are properly assessed for risk.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy their school; their outstanding attendance record speaks volumes. Their enjoyment of sport is successfully promoted by the energy and commitment of the headteacher. Pupils appreciate the need for a healthy diet but, understandably, sometimes find it hard to have the necessary self-discipline to eat wisely. There is a strong sense of community within school and the school council functions well. Good links with the village, especially with the church and through such activities as tree planting, are enhanced by awareness of the wider world. An Asia week, for example, introduced them to Buddhist philosophy. However, the school knows that this is an area which could be better and already has plans to improve it. Overall, pupils' preparation for life ahead is excellent.

The strong and effective leadership of the headteacher underpins the school's success. The shared headship has caused a little concern among some parents, but there is no evidence to suggest any adverse impact. In fact, standards at Year 6 have improved this year and the staffing to pupil ratio is much better. Links between the two schools, such as shared training, are already being appreciated by staff. The governors have played a decisive role in the process. They are very knowledgeable about the school, fully supportive and act very astutely as a critical friend.

Self-evaluation is accurate and the school's priorities for improvement are the right ones. However, action plans for improvement are not sharply focused enough and contain too much routine activity. All staff are involved in the process but their role in driving through improvements in their areas of responsibility is underdeveloped. They attend all relevant training but, as yet, do not have the scope to develop their roles fully. Nevertheless, the school is in good shape. Morale is high among staff and the partnership with Bolton-by-Bowland augurs well for the future. Currently, the school offers good value for money and is well placed to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The provision for children in the Reception class is good. Effective teaching enables children to achieve well from starting points above those typical for their age. They exceed the expectations for five-year-olds by the end of the year. The very small numbers of children each year mean that they learn separately when appropriate but also work alongside older pupils part of the time. As a result, their language and social skills in particular increase appreciably and this higher level of challenge is very fruitful. Children are encouraged to think for themselves and readily acquire independence in making choices. Their self-control, creativeness and patience served them well, for example when they experimented with gymnastic movement with older pupils.

Children's welfare is carefully managed. Consequently, their personal development is outstanding and they are relaxed and positive when learning with a good blend of activities in the classroom. In addition, the school aims to improve the children's outside learning areas through the implementation of well-conceived plans. Provision is well led and managed. The assessment of children's progress has been praised as

exemplary by the local authority. The recording of data, though, is not refined enough to produce an analytical overview of progress in all areas of learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Maximise opportunities to enrich and diversify the curriculum.
- Strengthen the management roles of all staff.

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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?	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 effectiveness of boarding provision	NA
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?	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?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
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

Personal development and well-being

How good is 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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well 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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	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.

The quality of provision

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?	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
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



12 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Grindleton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Lancashire, BB7 4QS

I am writing to thank you for the part you played in the recent inspection of your school. I thoroughly enjoyed my visit to your school and appreciated all that you told me. You clearly love your school. Your attendance is impressive and you were stumped when trying to think of ways to make school even better!

I understand this because you have a good school where some aspects are excellent. You achieve well in your work because you are well taught by caring teachers who have high expectations of you. Standards are high throughout the school in all the main subjects. Teachers certainly motivate you to develop a positive approach to work and they are providing some exciting extra opportunities such as the Asia week to broaden your knowledge. However, lessons are not always quite so interesting. I have asked the school to try to make them more exciting so that you learn by applying your learning to real-life situations, for example.

Your own personal development is outstanding. You are undoubtedly helped by the high level of care shown by all staff so that you feel secure and valued at all times. In turn, you take great care of one another and are kind and thoughtful. Your behaviour is excellent. You know about healthy living and I appreciate how hard it can be always to make the right choices when eating. You are well involved in the school's development, especially through the school council, but you would benefit from more links with the wider world.

Your headteacher, helped by the governors, has kept up the standards of the school and improved what it offers. The new classroom is a great help. It is important, especially with the new partnership with another school, that all staff play a full part in improving their areas of responsibility so that the school, and you, can continue to thrive.

I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Scott
Lead inspector