

Weeton St Michael's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119561
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	358582
Inspection dates	3–4 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Melvyn Hemmings

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	46
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Matthews
Headteacher	Mrs Pamela Weedon
Date of previous school inspection	25 September 2007
School address	Church Road Weeton, Preston Lancashire PR4 3WD
Telephone number	01253 836280
Fax number	01253 836280
Email address	head@weeton-st-michaels.lancs.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
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Manchester
M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector who visited nine lessons or parts of lessons. The inspector observed three teachers and held discussions with members of the governing body, staff, groups of pupils and the School Improvement Partner. He observed the school's work, and looked at school policies, records of meetings of the governing body, assessment information and curriculum planning. In addition, 28 responses to parents' and carers' questionnaires were received and analysed.

The inspection reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The impact of action taken to raise attainment in reading and writing.
- Whether boys and pupils who are more able are challenged sufficiently.
- How consistently teachers inform pupils of the specific next steps in their learning.
- The extent to which development planning is focused on improving teaching and learning and raising attainment.

Information about the school

Weeton is a much smaller than average size primary school whose pupils are taught in two mixed-age classes. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Following the last inspection, there was significant disruption to leadership and staffing until the appointment of the current headteacher in January 2009. The school has gained the Activemark and has Healthy School status.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Weeton is a good school. It has several outstanding features and is a stimulating setting in which to learn. The astute leadership of the headteacher and strong teamwork of staff and the governing body have brought stability to the school and successfully moved it forward. Attainment has been raised, progress accelerated and attendance improved. Leaders and the governing body know the school's strengths and areas for development because self-evaluation is accurate. Planning for improvement is detailed and effectively linked to outcomes in teaching, learning and attainment. Leaders are not complacent and know there is more to do. This includes extending the good practice evident in the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in English and mathematics to other subjects. The school's recent track record indicates that the capacity for further improvement is good.

National comparative data indicates that attainment at the end of Year 6 is broadly average in English and mathematics. This data must be treated with caution because of the exceptionally small cohorts, sometimes involving only one pupil. Importantly, the school's own data show clearly that pupils make good progress throughout the school. A variety of strategies introduced to raise attainment in reading and writing have proved successful. Consequently, pupils read confidently and with expression. They can use a variety of writing styles, including narrative and instructional, to express their ideas. Nevertheless, their writing lacks precision in using accurate grammar and punctuation. In mathematics, pupils' number skills, such as in place value and decimal notation, are not as developed as other aspects of the subject.

Pupils' behaviour and the extent to which they are adopting a healthy lifestyle are outstanding. They are very polite, considerate and respectful of the views and ideas of others. Pupils' thoughtful behaviour makes a strong contribution to their learning and creates a very positive atmosphere in school. Teaching has many strengths, such as thorough planning to meet the needs of different groups, including pupils who are more-able. Marking and discussion is used positively to celebrate pupils' achievement. Nevertheless, the information given to pupils about the next steps in their learning is not always precise enough. The imaginative curriculum is extended by a variety of good quality enrichment activities. Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good overall but the outdoor area is not used effectively to promote children's physical development. Excellent attention is given to all aspects of care, guidance and support. Staff ensure pupils are treated as unique individuals and are committed to their safety and well-being.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in writing and mathematics by:

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- improving pupils' skills in using grammar and punctuation accurately
- developing pupils' ability to use number skills precisely
- ensuring teachers consistently provide pupils with specific information on how to improve their learning.
- Extend the good procedures for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning in English and mathematics to other subjects.
- Use the outdoor area in the Early Years Foundation Stage effectively to promote children's physical development.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils are enthusiastic and have positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy taking part in class and group discussions and, in so doing, express their thoughts clearly. This was evident when pupils in the Key Stage 2 class were talking about how to frame their own questions in response to a story. Pupils say they enjoy books and read for pleasure. Their writing is imaginative and presented with care but lacks accurate grammar and punctuation. They collaborate well on practical problem-solving activities in mathematics. Pupils' achievement is good from starting points that are generally below those typical for their age, although skill levels on entering the school vary widely from year to year. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the well-targeted extra support they are given. There is no significant difference between the achievement or the learning of different groups. The engagement of boys in lessons has improved and their learning and progress now matches that of girls.

Pupils enjoy being on one of the five school councils, such as the Eco Council or Healthy School Council. They carry out their responsibilities diligently and, in so doing, make a positive contribution to the life of the school. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and are confident that staff will help them if they have any worries. They have an excellent understanding of the need to eat a balanced diet and to take regular exercise in order to stay healthy. Pupils talked with enthusiasm about how the vegetables they grow in the school garden are used by the cook to make nourishing lunches. The take up of extra-curricular sports is high. Pupils' above average attendance, the good progress they are making in gaining basic skills and the effective way they work together to solve problems show that they are well-prepared for their future lives.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

How effective is the provision?

Pupils say they enjoy lessons because teachers make learning fun. Teachers provide activities that are motivating and effective in promoting pupils' independent learning skills. They use a variety of teaching styles to engage all pupils. The objectives of the lesson are shared with pupils so they are clear about what they are to learn and how to complete the activity successfully. Pupils are not always as clear about the next steps in their learning, particularly in developing their number skills, because teachers' guidance for improvement is not always sufficiently specific. Adults promote good relationships, which leads to classrooms being friendly and calm places in which to learn. Teaching assistants provide effective support for all pupils and especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Extra-curricular activities are well attended and enrich the curriculum, and include sports, gardening and information and communication technology clubs. Opportunities to take part in educational visits, such as to the Grand Theatre in Blackpool, extend pupils' experiences. The well-planned curriculum is being further modified to better develop pupils' creative skills. A notable feature of this is the 'Community Carousel' in which members of the community work with pupils each week on activities, such as cross stitch and the design and making of fashion garments. The curriculum places strong emphasis on encouraging pupils to make informed choices to adopt healthy lifestyles. This has been recognised by the school gaining the Activemark and achieving Healthy School status.

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The school is an extremely welcoming, safe and caring setting in which to learn. Extremely well targeted support for potentially vulnerable pupils plays an important role in fostering their learning and development and helping them to overcome any difficulties they maybe experiencing. Links with outside agencies, including the school's educational psychologist and healthcare professionals, are exemplary and ensure extra support for individual pupils is available when required. Pupils who have medical needs are supported effectively to ensure their well-being. Leaders have worked successfully to raise attendance and it continues to improve.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders successfully inspire those involved in school life to share a common sense of purpose in meeting ambitious targets for all pupils. As a result, morale is high amongst all staff. The governing body is active in its support of the school and is influential in shaping its direction. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in English and mathematics is comprehensive. It is not as well-developed in other subjects. The promotion of equal opportunity and tackling of discrimination is good. Improved procedures for tracking the progress of different groups highlighted that girls were doing better than boys. Action was taken that increased the level of engagement and challenge for boys and successfully narrowed the gap in their learning with that of girls. All safeguarding requirements are met, with the school having comprehensive policies and procedures to ensure the safety and welfare of pupils and staff. The training of all staff is of high quality, especially in child protection.

Partnership activity effectively develops learning opportunities that the school could not provide on its own, such as in sport. Leaders successfully promote community cohesion by encouraging pupils to view their role as not only members of the school but to consider their role in the local, national and international community. Good engagement with parents and carers, such as through regular parent and carer forums, ensures they are effectively involved in their children's learning and the work of the school.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress because of consistently good teaching. Adults are aware of the needs of children of this age and provide them with activities that match their individual abilities and maintain their engagement. Children's behaviour is outstanding and contributes positively to their progress and the setting's friendly atmosphere. They confidently use information and communication technology to support their learning, such as when taking photographs of flowers with a digital camera. Children enjoy working together in pairs and small groups but can also work independently and make decisions for themselves.

The curriculum is enlivened by the opportunity to go on a variety of visits, such as to a centre for sea life in Blackpool. It successfully promotes children's personal and social development through such activities as buddy reading, in which they read a book with a pupil of a different age. Good leadership ensures that children's progress is checked carefully and that welfare arrangements are comprehensive. Children have access to the outdoor area throughout the day and thoroughly enjoy their activities. Nevertheless, its use does not promote their physical development as effectively as it does the other areas of learning. Parents and carers say that staff are approachable and keep them informed of their child's progress and how they can support learning at home.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

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

An above average proportion of parents and carers returned completed questionnaires. Most were positive about the school's work and the efforts of all staff. Two comments are typical, 'Weeton gives the pupils a sense of family and community.' and, 'We are extremely happy that our daughter is attending this school.' There was no significant trend of negative responses.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Weeton St Michael's Church of England Voluntary Aided 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 inspector received 28 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 46 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	68	9	32	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	20	71	7	25	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	17	61	7	25	2	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	19	68	7	25	1	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	19	68	7	25	1	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	64	8	29	1	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	61	8	29	2	7	1	4
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)	17	61	8	29	1	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	18	64	8	29	1	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	64	7	25	1	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	61	7	25	1	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	19	68	6	21	0	0	1	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	19	68	7	25	1	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 all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



5 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Weeton St Michael's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Preston, PR4 3WD

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave me when I inspected your school. I enjoyed meeting you and seeing the many interesting things you do.

The inspection judges that your school is good and that:

- by the end of Year 6 you attain average standards in English and mathematics
- your behaviour is exemplary and contributes to the school's friendly atmosphere
- the way you are adopting a healthy lifestyle is outstanding
- the curriculum is enlivened by the Community Carousel and visits to places such as the Grand Theatre in Blackpool
- you enjoy school and adults are interested in your views, as you indicated in your questionnaires
- the headteacher, staff and the governing body are working hard to help you do better.

What we have asked your school to do now is to:

- improve your writing and mathematical number skills by consistently giving you information about the specific next steps in learning
- extend the good procedures for checking the quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics to other subjects
- make better use of the outdoor area for children in reception to support their physical development.

All of you are a credit to your school and can help it improve further by continuing to try your best in your activities.

Yours sincerely,

Melvyn Hemmings

Lead Inspector

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