

Oswaldtwistle St Paul's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119451
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	358556
Inspection dates	24–25 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Stephen Wall

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	135
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev John Holland
Headteacher	Mrs Gwynneth Bennett
Date of previous school inspection	6 May 2008
School address	Union Road Oswaldtwistle, Accrington Lancashire BB5 3DD
Telephone number	01254 231026
Fax number	01254 395717
Email address	bursar@st-pauls.lancs.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed seven lessons taught by seven teachers. The inspectors held meetings with staff, the Chair of the Governing Body, pupils and a representative from the local authority. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at the monitoring of pupils' progress, the school's self-evaluation and its planning for improvement, as well as documentation relating to safeguarding. Questionnaires from 20 parents and carers were scrutinised together with those returned by staff and pupils.

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

- How well pupils attain and whether attainment is rising fast enough.
- How effectively pupils learn and whether their progress is accelerating at a fast enough pace.
- How effective teaching and the curriculum are in improving pupils' achievement and enjoyment.
- How accurately leaders and managers evaluate the work of the school and use the outcomes to bring about improvement, especially in pupils' achievement.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than the average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. Most pupils are White British. About twenty per cent of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, chiefly Pakistani; of these about half speak English as an additional language. There are also a few pupils from White Romany or Gypsy families. The proportion of pupils who join and/or leave the school during the school year is well above average. During the absence of the headteacher from September to November 2010 the school was led and managed by an associate headteacher. From November 2010, the leadership and management of the school have been shared by another associate headteacher and an associate deputy headteacher. The school 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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

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 significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils' progress and achievement as well as the school's promotion of community cohesion.

Since joining the school in November 2010, the associate headteacher and deputy headteacher have taken decisive action to tackle weaknesses. For example, behaviour has improved significantly and is now good and attendance has risen rapidly to levels close to the national average. Factors such as these are enabling pupils to learn more effectively. Attainment has been consistently low for the last three years with little indication of improving. There are now signs that attainment is starting to rise. As a result of the leadership's drive for improvement, teaching is now satisfactory overall and some better teaching is beginning to redress the legacy of underachievement. However, it is not yet consistently good enough to bring about rapid progress and raise attainment substantially. Hence, while progress observed in lessons was satisfactory, over time all pupils including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities still make inadequate progress. In lessons there is still inconsistency in how closely tasks are matched to pupils' needs, abilities and ages; this also acts as a brake on promoting faster progress. The satisfactory curriculum meets statutory requirements but does not provide pupils with enough exciting opportunities to accelerate their skills in writing, speaking and mathematics.

Satisfactory care, guidance and support ensure pupils feel safe in school. Pupils' adoption of healthy lifestyles is good. They enjoy the increased opportunities they are given to take on responsibilities; these help develop their positive attitudes to school and raise their levels of self-confidence. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning, their satisfactory progress and much improved attendance indicate that their preparation for future success is satisfactory.

The associate leaders have evaluated accurately the effectiveness of the school. They have used the outcomes astutely to tackle priorities essential to making the school more effective. They recognise the need to improve the inadequate achievement made by pupils and the school's inadequate promotion of community cohesion. New leadership is giving the school a much needed boost and a sharp focus on improvement. Staff morale is high. The significant impact on behaviour and attendance, and the secure improvements in the quality of teaching demonstrate the school's satisfactory capacity for improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate pupils' progress securely and rapidly by:
 - improving teaching so that it is consistently good
 - ensuring that lessons are lively and dynamic with levels of challenge matched closely to the needs of all groups of pupils
 - making sure that the curriculum provides pupils with a wider range of exciting opportunities to stimulate their learning and accelerate the development of their skills in writing, speaking and mathematics.
- Promote community cohesion more effectively by:
 - planning a wider range of coordinated activities to develop pupils' understanding and appreciation of local, national and global diversity
 - developing procedures to evaluate the school's effectiveness in promoting community cohesion.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Attainment on entry to the school is generally well below average. For the last three years attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has been well below average with very few signs of any upturn. Pupils' progress has been too slow and is inadequate overall. Recent improvements to attendance, behaviour teaching and pupils' attitudes are enabling all groups of pupils to learn more effectively and with greater confidence. This is the case for all pupils, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are now being given some effective in-class support.

Pupils behave well in lessons. They have positive attitudes to learning. Most pupils are keen to contribute. They work effectively in groups and pairs. In lessons where activities are practical and stimulating, pupils make good progress and show good enjoyment. However, the provision of such stimulating activities is inconsistent.

Pupils' satisfactory spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is reflected in their sensible behaviour and the respect with which they treat each other and adults. Pupils say how much better behaviour now is. 'We used to have fights nearly every day. Some pupils were rude and swore a lot, even at the teachers. That's all stopped,' is a typical pupil opinion. Pupils enjoy being given lots of new responsibilities. They display their badges and sashes with pride. The school council is becoming much more active in giving voice to pupils' opinions. It has brought about significant improvement to playground facilities that have also helped to improve behaviour. Although pupils' levels of attainment in English and mathematics are low, their functional literacy, numeracy, oracy and information and communication technology skills are better developed. Pupils' levels of self-belief, positive attitudes and attendance have all improved significantly. Consequently,

pupils are better prepared for the future. They enjoy playing their part in making the school community harmonious.

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Children are active in supporting local charities but opportunities to take a stronger part in the local community through supporting activities of the local church, for example, are not routinely exploited.

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

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?

Teaching is now securely satisfactory. It is most effective when it is conducted with vitality and at a fast pace but lessons are not consistently of this quality. When teaching provides pupils with practical, 'hands-on' activities, they respond enthusiastically and make rapid progress. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils used items of camping equipment as a stimulus to develop skills in writing instructions. They delivered their instructions to classmates and gave simultaneous demonstrations with confidence and clarity. The pupils' enjoyment and achievement was clear to see. In some other classes, however, pupils spend too long listening to the teacher. The school has improved significantly its use of assessment to track pupils' progress. However, the use of assessment to support learning and set challenging, appropriate tasks in lessons is inconsistent. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly. Comments are generally helpful in showing pupils what they need to do to improve. Pupils are taking on-board teachers' comments and this is having a positive impact on their learning and progress.

The broad curriculum is generally well balanced. It offers a wide range of experiences that contribute significantly to pupils' personal development such as health and anti-bullying

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weeks. A satisfactory range of enrichment activities is provided that also adds to pupils' adoption of healthy lifestyles. Topic-based work is developing and this approach is very popular with pupils. Topics such as space travel in Year 3 are accelerating progress in writing and speaking at a fast pace. Overall, however, the curriculum does not consistently provide pupils with such stimulating activities.

Pastoral care for potentially vulnerable pupils is firmly embedded and effective. Transition arrangements for children joining the Early Years Foundation Stage help them settle quickly into school. Older pupils feel confident about their move to secondary education because there are solid links with high schools in the locality. Pupils are confident about approaching adults with any concerns. Pupils say that instances of bullying have dried up because adults 'won't stand for it and deal with it there and then'.

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	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The associate leaders are providing the school with a strong focus on improvement. Staff morale is high. Teamwork is strong in pursuit of raising achievement. Leaders and managers evaluate the school's effectiveness accurately and are setting about tackling priorities tenaciously. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored regularly. The outcomes are forming the basis of improvement planning to make teaching more effective and bring about the necessary rapid rise in achievement.

In the past, the governing body have had too little impact upon improving the pupils' achievement and low levels of attainment. However, it is becoming increasingly effective at holding the school to account because the governing body is seeking and receiving more and better information about the school's performance. Consequently pupils' attainment is rising. The progress made so far shows that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

The promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory. The school tracks the progress of different groups of pupils accurately. This evidence shows that the progress of all groups of pupils is showing some early signs of improvement.

Safeguarding is satisfactory. Appropriate checks on adults working with children are carried out and recorded meticulously. Staff are trained regularly in safeguarding procedures. Members of the governing body now keep a close eye on policies relating to safeguarding which are reviewed and updated regularly. Risk assessments are in place although they are not yet recorded with sufficient care.

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Pupils of different ethnic backgrounds play and work together harmoniously. As a direct result of the leadership, including the governing body taking positive steps to improve community cohesion, pupils say that racist name calling and abuse has stopped. An audit has been undertaken and a brief action plan is in place. The school itself is a harmonious and happy community. However, despite the leaders understanding of its duty to promote community cohesion the impact of its promotion overall is inadequate. This is because actions to promote pupils' understanding and appreciation of different religions and cultures locally, nationally and globally are at an early stage of development. The school accepts the need to evaluate its impact on promoting community cohesion with much greater rigour.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	4
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of attainment that are generally well below age-related expectations. Their communication and language skills as well as their social skills are generally exceptionally low. They make satisfactory progress overall and transfer to Key Stage 1 with well below average attainment. Children work and play in a safe environment. They enjoy the activities planned for them. Outdoor provision is very limited in size. This restricts the range of activities that can be carried out to promote children's physical development and exploration of the world around them. The indoor teaching area is welcoming and stimulating. Teaching and the curriculum provide children with a satisfactory range of activities to promote their interest and progress. There is a satisfactory balance between teacher-led activities and those children chose for themselves.

Parents are welcomed into the Early Years Foundation Stage. They receive regular written and verbal reports on their children's progress. Children's progress is tracked accurately.

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The outcomes are used effectively to tailor teaching to children's needs and to identify any developmental problems that may require specialist support from outside agencies. The new leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage is growing in confidence and expertise. Good teamwork between the class teacher and the teaching assistant is obvious in the pursuit of improvement. The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is evaluated accurately. These outcomes form the backbone of good quality development planning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

There was a below average proportion of returned questionnaires from parents and carers. The returned questionnaires indicate that most parents and carers are happy with the education the school provides for their children.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Oswaldtwistle St Paul'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 inspection team received 20 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 135 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	6	30	13	65	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	6	30	14	70	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	7	35	9	45	2	10	2	10
My child is making enough progress at this school	8	40	10	50	1	5	1	5
The teaching is good at this school	7	35	11	55	0	0	1	5
The school helps me to support my child's learning	7	35	9	45	3	15	1	5
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	6	30	13	65	1	5	0	0
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)	8	40	9	45	2	10	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	10	50	7	35	1	5	1	5
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	7	35	8	40	4	20	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	6	30	10	50	3	15	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	5	25	12	60	1	5	1	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	7	35	11	55	2	10	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.



28 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Oswaldtwistle St Paul's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Accrington, BB5 3DD

Thank you for making us welcome during the recent inspection of your school.

Although many aspects of your school are satisfactory, it is not good enough overall. This is because for several years the school has not helped you to reach high enough standards. Whilst you are now making better progress in lessons because of the better teaching, you still have to catch up on too much lost learning and progress. The pace at which you are catching up is not yet fast enough to make sure you attain as well as you could. Therefore, your school has been given a 'notice to improve'. This means the school will be monitored by an inspector before its next inspection takes place. The monitoring visit will concentrate on the school's progress and check on how effectively the school promotes community cohesion because this has been judged inadequate.

In order to help you make rapid progress, I have asked the staff to:

- improve teaching so that it is consistently good
- ensure that lessons are lively and dynamic with levels of challenge matched closely to the needs of all groups of pupils
- make sure that the curriculum provides you with a wider range of exciting opportunities to stimulate your learning and accelerate development of your skills in writing, speaking and mathematics.

The school also needs to promote community cohesion more effectively by developing your understanding and appreciation of local, national and global diversity.

We know you will all help your school to improve because you showed us you were keen to involve yourselves in different roles and responsibilities to make your school a better place. I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Wall

Lead Inspector

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