

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

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119561
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	313339
<b>Inspection date</b>	25 September 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kathleen McArthur

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	36
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Hanny Woods
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sandra Bolsher
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 January 2004
<b>School address</b>	Church Road Weeton Preston Lancashire PR4 3WD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01253 836280
<b>Fax number</b>	01253 836280

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a very small school that serves the nearby village. A number of pupils travel from further afield. The school's good reputation for helping pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities means the proportion of these pupils is higher than average, and a more than average number have a statement of special educational need. Many children join the school other than at the usual starting age. Almost all the children are of White British heritage. The number of pupils eligible for a free school meal is low.

## 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 that gives good value for money. The inspection confirmed the school's view of how effective it is and found pupils' personal development, the care, guidance and support they receive and the curriculum are all outstanding. Good leadership has established a warm, family atmosphere underpinned by strong Christian values. Children of all ages work and play together happily in this environment. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive. They are pleased that their children enjoy school and are making good progress. They value the small class sizes and one said, 'The school enables all the children to achieve their goals and work at their own pace'.

Achievement is good and standards are average. All the pupils make good progress because they are taught well and enjoy the range of enriching curriculum activities. Excellent assessment systems give teachers a very clear picture of exactly how well each pupil is progressing. These systems enable teachers to set challenging targets for each pupil and direct help where it is needed. By the time they leave the school, the great majority of pupils reach the expected standards in English, mathematics and science. Standards in writing have improved over time. However, few pupils attain the higher levels in writing and writing activities do not always fully challenge the higher attaining pupils.

Pupils are clearly very happy in school, saying, 'It's small so we get more attention from the teachers'. Excellent pastoral care makes them feel very safe, secure and valued as members of the school, supported by very strong links with the Church. They behave very well and demonstrate an excellent understanding of how to stay healthy. The school ensures that pupils mature into sensible and responsible members of the community. They show outstanding levels of care and consideration for others and are eager to undertake responsibilities to help their school. Suitable academic standards and outstanding personal skills prepare them well for their future.

Governors and staff form a strong committed team that leads the school well. The issue from the previous inspection has been tackled well. Comprehensive plans for future development demonstrate a shared vision for improving the school and enhancing provision. However, these plans do not focus sufficiently on how actions to be taken will bring about improvements in teaching and learning and raise standards.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Good provision ensures children make good progress. High levels of care give them a happy start in school. They settle in to the welcoming atmosphere quickly and feel secure. Children soon follow the routines and learn to share and take turns. Exciting activities capture their natural curiosity so they want to investigate and find things out. They particularly enjoy learning outdoors, eagerly exploring the environment. Children are taught well. When they move to Year 1 the great majority have reached the levels typical for their age.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Provide greater challenge in writing so more pupils reach the higher levels.
- Ensure development planning identifies how actions taken will benefit teaching and learning and raise standards.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school. They make good progress because they are taught well and enjoy their lessons. Standards are broadly average. Standards at the end of Year 6 have risen and, in 2007, almost all pupils reached the expected level in all three subjects, meeting the school's challenging targets. A significant proportion exceeded the expected level in reading, mathematics and science but not in writing. The school's test results reflect the different compositions of each year group and are particularly affected by the high proportion of pupils who join or leave the school during the year and by the number of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. When they start school, levels of development are typical of those usually seen at their age. Children in the Foundation Stage, Year 1 and Year 2 are taught in one class so learning builds step by step and children progress at a rate that is best for them. At the end of Year 2 the great majority of pupils attain average standards but few reach the higher levels, most particularly in writing. Well planned support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities enables them to progress well in relation to their individual capabilities.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils are very proud of their school and feel really valued as individuals in a family atmosphere which is underpinned by Christian values. They show a good sense of right and wrong and are not aware of any bullying. They say they can seek help from any member of staff if they have worries. They willingly help and care for each other; older pupils happily look after the younger children without prompting. Pupils participate enthusiastically in the very good range of physical and sporting activities and understand how these and a good diet help them to be healthy. Pupils' behaviour is very good. The school ensures they mature into polite and responsible individuals, equipped with the academic and personal skills vital to their future. Every pupil is keen to contribute to the school community; older ones act as playground 'PALS', 'buddies' or 'servers'. They make excellent efforts to support the wider community through charity work and church events. Links with an urban school from a different faith background, and the opportunities to learn new languages, are excellent preparation for life in a multi-cultural society. The school works hard to encourage and reward good attendance and discourage term-time holidays. Despite the school's best efforts, attendance fluctuates and is broadly average.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. Staff are skilled in providing learning activities that meet the needs of the different age groups found in each class. Bright, stimulating classrooms are enhanced by good use of the outdoor learning facilities of the garden and the Church building. Lessons are well planned, using information from the school's excellent assessment systems to provide work that challenges and stretches each pupil in most activities. Occasionally, writing activities do not always fully challenge higher attaining pupils and some work is too directed by staff. This limits pupils' opportunities to find things out for themselves and work

independently. The teaching assistants are well deployed and offer skilled support, particularly to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

An outstanding curriculum supports pupils' excellent personal development and good achievement. The school has successfully developed a rich, broad curriculum that links subjects together very effectively. For example, the story 'Handa's Surprise' in literacy was woven through activities in mathematics, physical education, design technology, science, geography and religious education for the younger pupils. Suitable literacy and numeracy skills equip pupils for the future and they use these well in all subjects, as well as their good information and communication technology skills. A very good programme for personal and social development enables pupils to reflect on feelings and emotions. Appropriately adapted programmes of work give pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities full access to the curriculum. All the pupils appreciate the excellent range of enrichment activities and clubs. These include visits, visitors, a bi-annual residential trip and specialist teachers for languages, sports, gymnastics and music.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Very high quality pastoral care ensures every pupil feels he or she is a valued member of the school community. Safeguarding procedures are in place and meet government requirements. Very good relationships between staff and pupils form a secure basis for learning and social development. Parents feel very much part of school and the learning process and excellent relationships between home and school strongly benefit every pupil. The school responds quickly to individual learning or social needs, ensuring each pupil receives the care and support they need. Good use of all available external agencies is particularly helpful to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Good transition arrangements ensure children start school happily, move between year groups and transfer confidently to secondary education. Very thorough assessment systems check and track progress rigorously. Staff know exactly how well every pupil is doing and extra help can quickly be provided where needed.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership's vision for school improvement is shared by all staff, governors and parents. All are very committed to the school and to enhancing the facilities. The headteacher leads the school well, whilst carrying out a heavy teaching commitment. Governance is good. Governors are very involved, particularly through the Church, and their good knowledge enables them to challenge the school and ask questions. Excellent attention to equality of opportunity ensures all pupils are treated as individuals so they learn well and can participate fully in all activities.

The school's accurate evaluation of its performance informs future development plans. Plans are supported by careful budget management, particularly in regard to improving the building and grounds and ensuring pupils' safety. However, plans are not clear enough about how the actions to be taken will benefit teaching and learning and raise standards. Challenging targets for improvement have resulted in a gradual rise in standards, outstanding personal development,

a very good curriculum and excellent care. There is a strong commitment to ensure all staff constantly increase their professional expertise. Consequently, the school has good capacity for further improvement.

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**Annex A**

## Inspection judgements

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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 the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<sup>1</sup> Grade 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.

**Annex A**

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	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

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**Annex B**

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

26 September 2007

Dear children

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

I would like to thank you all for making me very welcome when I visited your school.

Everybody was so friendly and polite and helped me complete all my work. You told me how much you like St Michael's School and your parents are very happy with the school too. Thank you for inviting me to the assembly in Church. I enjoyed the action song about Father Abraham. It was good to see so many of you doing jobs around school, being buddies, PALs and servers. I know the staff find this really helpful.

Here are some of the things I found.

- You have a good school and it is well led and managed.
- Your teachers are good. They make sure you progress well to reach the right standards for your age.
- All the staff take very good care of you.
- You behave very well, know how to be healthy and feel safe in school.
- You look after each other really well, work very hard indeed to help the school and the community and do your jobs very sensibly.
- The school provides lots of exciting things for you in class and outside lessons, and is always looking for ways to make your school even better.

I have asked the school to:

- help you reach higher standards in your writing
- make sure development plans identify how they will help you to do even better at school.

You can help them by always working as hard as you can, not missing school and enjoying everything you do!

I send my best wishes to you all.

Kathleen McArthur

Lead inspector