

Westleigh St Paul's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 106481 |
| Local Authority | Wigan |
| Inspection number | 324411 |
| Inspection dates | 29–30 January 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Peter Jones |

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 150 |
| Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS | 0 |
| Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years | 0 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr Peter Taylor |
| Headteacher | Mrs Jill Hankinson |
| Date of previous school inspection | 21 June 2006 |
| Date of previous funded early education inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Date of previous childcare inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | School Street Leigh Lancashire WN7 5JN |
| Telephone number | 01942 672611 |

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Fax number

01942 608481

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This small primary school serves a residential area with significant disadvantage. The school offers Early Years Foundation Stage provision in its mixed Reception and Year 1 class. The majority of pupils are White British with very few pupils from minority ethnic groups. A small proportion speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is much higher than in most schools. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average.

The school holds the Activemark, Investors in People and the Excellence in Work Related Learning awards. It has also gained the Wigan Quality Standard for Early Years and has Healthy School's status.

Key for inspection grades

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| 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 features. The headteacher, ably supported by her deputy headteacher, leads with vision and energy and she is well supported by dedicated staff and a skilled and resourceful governing body. The school has made good improvements since the last inspection and provides good value for money. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils reach standards in line with national averages by the end of Year 6 and make good progress in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language also make good progress in this inclusive school. This is as a result of the well planned and focused support they receive. New and more effective systems for assessment, target setting and tracking pupils' progress have been introduced. However, currently subject leaders are not involved enough in setting challenging targets or in checking on pupils' progress towards these targets. Nor are the systems sufficiently developed to show the fine detail of trends in pupils' progress across the school. The quality of leadership and management is good, but some of the recent measures taken to improve the school's performance have not had sufficient time to take full effect. However, the school's strategies are beginning to make some headway in improving pupils' writing and in the performance of boys. This demonstrates the school's good capacity for future improvement.

Pupils' personal development, a strength at the last inspection, is now outstanding.

Visitors are met with beaming smiles, welcoming words and offers of assistance. Attendance is good and pupils' excellent enjoyment is enhanced by their enthusiastic participation in an increased range of exciting clubs and activities. Their behaviour is exemplary at all times and their outstanding relationship with staff and other pupils makes an important contribution to their effective learning. Praise and rewards are used well to celebrate success and further motivate all pupils. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly appreciative of all aspects of the school's work. They say, 'Staff are ready, willing and able to help and are very friendly and approachable'. Pupils have an excellent awareness of the need to lead a healthy lifestyle and many opportunities to eat healthily and take exercise. They are encouraged to take responsibility and make decisions from an early age, as illustrated by the school council's leading role in forging links with the local community by organising events such as 'litter picks'. Pupils say they feel very safe and that bullying and disagreements are very rare and quickly sorted out, often by themselves. The varied and exciting partnerships with local businesses and organisations add an extra dimension to the successful way the school ensures that pupils develop the skills and abilities they will need in their later life and education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good and enhanced by pupils' outstanding behaviour and attitudes and the contribution of an interesting and varied curriculum. This has resulted in improvements in pupils' achievement and in their personal development. Work is generally well matched to ability, but sometimes opportunities are missed to allow the most able pupils to make even more progress by working together or individually rather than as part of the whole class.

The school provides excellent pastoral care for its pupils. Extremely good use is made of the expertise available from outside agencies to provide pupils with the specialised help and support they require. The academic guidance that pupils receive from staff has improved considerably since the last inspection. Pupils also benefit from involvement in assessing their own and their

classmates work, as this provides them with more insight into their progress and how to further improve their own work.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They enter Reception with skills that are below those expected for their age. Close links and relationships are quickly established with parents, carers and local Nursery providers, and as a result, children settle quickly and make good progress to reach skills broadly in line with those expected for their age at the end of Reception. The Reception children and the small number of Year 1 pupils who contribute to the class benefit from the opportunities they have to socialise and share experiences. At the same time, staff ensure that all individuals receive the teaching and learning experiences that are appropriate to their age and ability. Children's overall personal development is excellent. This is the result of the highly effective use made of the well resourced and exciting indoor and outdoor learning areas. These are regularly adapted to meet children's individual needs and interests and they soon develop positive attitudes to their learning, behave responsibly and show a thoughtful consideration for others. Children make choices about their activities, but staff make sure that there is always an appropriate balance with adult-led activities to provide effective learning and development for all children. The welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is promoted outstandingly well. Their safety and happiness is given the highest priority and they become confident learners. Leadership and management are good. There is strong teamwork and children's progress is carefully assessed and recorded.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the most able pupils are given more opportunities to work together and individually on tasks that will further extend their skills, knowledge and progress.
- Refine assessment systems and increase the involvement of subject leaders in setting challenging targets and on checking pupils' progress towards those targets.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils build well on their good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and make good overall progress in national tests and assessments at the end of both Key Stages thanks to the good teaching and support they receive. In Key Stage 1, pupils make the best progress in mathematics and reading and by the end of Year 2 standards are broadly in line with national average. Standards in writing have been less consistent across the school and the school is currently addressing this issue. At the end of Key Stage 2, current standards compare well with the national average in English, mathematics and science. Given pupils' low starting points this represents good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral and social development, is outstanding. This is reflected in their excellent work and behaviour. Lessons and assemblies and their involvement in the local church linked to the school give them a very good knowledge and respect for other religions and cultures. Pupils thoroughly enjoy of all aspects of school life. The school tries to meet their requests for new extra-curricular activities,

as it has done by introducing cheerleading and martial arts clubs. Pupils are very proud of their school and its achievements. Their good attendance is the result of the strenuous efforts the school has made to improve this aspect since the last inspection. Pupils' contribution to the school and wider community is impressive. The school council gives pupils a strong voice and there are many opportunities to serve the school, for example, as monitors or to work with the youngest children. Pupils successfully raise funds for the school and for charity and their musical and dramatic performances bring much pleasure to the local community. The mini-enterprise scheme, the well-established liaison with local businesses and the Aim Higher week build further on pupils' secure literacy and numeracy skills to prepare them outstandingly well for the next stages in their learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy the well planned and interesting lessons their teachers provide. Good use is made of a variety of resources, including computers and electronic whiteboards, to engage and motivate all pupils. Pupils, particularly boys, show more confidence and enthusiasm in their writing as a result of the well selected materials and lively teaching. The successful development of pupils' speaking and listening skills across the school means that pupils of all abilities are prepared to engage in discussion and respond to questions. They develop exceptionally good understanding of the conventions of conversation and debate, typified by their sensitive and thoughtful discussions about a story in a Year 5 philosophy lesson. While the work set by staff generally matches the abilities of most pupils, this is sometimes not the case for those who are more able. These pupils work diligently, but opportunities are missed to challenge them and stretch their capabilities. These pupils sometimes spend too much time involved in whole class teaching when they could be working together or individually to learn new skills. As a result, they do not always make the best possible progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The quality of the school's curriculum is good. It makes a significant contribution to pupils' good achievement and to their excellent personal development. Links between different subjects continue to develop and pupils enjoy this thematic approach. It has been particularly successful in giving literacy a stronger focus in many lessons. The school is now working to raise the place of numeracy to further boost achievement in this area. Work has also begun on developing a more skills- based curriculum tailored to meet the very specific needs of all pupils. The school strives to further enrich its curriculum, as shown by the introduction of modern foreign language lessons and an increasing range of interesting visits and visitors.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils and parents value the warm and friendly family atmosphere within the school. Pupils have great trust and confidence in all the staff, particularly in the learning mentor, to help them with any problems or concerns. The school has improved its systems for identifying and supporting pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities with a resultant rise in their confidence and achievement. Arrangements to safeguard pupils meet current government

requirements. Pupils' academic guidance is now better than at the time of the previous inspection. Older pupils in particular are aware of their targets and are given opportunities to discuss their progress. Pupils' work is regularly marked and they receive appropriate praise. However, in some classes pupils do not always receive enough advice about how to improve their work and this impedes their progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership team have begun to focus more on strategies to raise achievement and standards in order to match their success in improving pupils' personal development. Staff training has extended the range of teachers' skills and thus improved the quality of teaching and learning. The use of the skilled teaching assistants, an area for improvement identified by the previous inspection, has been addressed particularly well. The school's work is monitored carefully, especially teaching and learning. Assessment systems have undergone modification in the last two years and now provide better information about target setting and pupils' progress than before. However, they do not yet enable the school to reliably identify the fine trends in pupils' progress. Also, subject leaders are not sufficiently involved in the target setting process. As a result, opportunities for pupils to achieve even more are missed. The school's promotion of equality of opportunity for its pupils is good. Pupils' needs are identified quickly and are generally well provided for, as is seen in its current efforts to improve the performance of boys across the school. The school's work to promote community cohesion is also good. There are excellent local links and pupils have a good knowledge and awareness of global issues. The school knows it has even more to do in developing contacts within the wider United Kingdom community. Governors provide good support and use their wealth of experience and knowledge to improve the school's effectiveness and resources. They carry out their role as a critical friend particularly well.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

| | |
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| 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? | 1 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 2 |

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

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|---|---|
| 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? | 1 |
| How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed? | 2 |

Achievement and standards

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|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve? | 2 |
| The standards ¹ 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/or disabilities make progress | 2 |

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.

Personal development and well-being

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|---|---|
| How good are 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 | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 1 |
| The extent to which learners enjoy their education | 1 |
| The attendance of learners | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners | 1 |
| 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 | 1 |

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 | 3 |
| 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**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

I am writing to thank you for being friendly and helpful when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed my visit very much. I would like to share with you what I found out.

You go to a good school where you make good progress and reach standards that are similar to those reached by other children. Teaching is good and your learning is made interesting and enjoyable. Your behaviour is excellent and I was impressed with your politeness and consideration towards me, the staff and each other. You told me that the school keeps you safe and how much you enjoy school including the many clubs, activities and visits organised for you. You like to eat healthily and take lots of exercise. I really like your enthusiasm for taking responsibility in and out of school. Your school council is doing a great job organising 'litter picks' and 'letter drops' in your community, as well as making sure the school knows how you feel about its work. Many of you help to make sure that the youngest children are happy and involved in play at lunchtimes. Your musical and dramatic performances bring pleasure to others and you raise lots of money for your school and for charities.

I would like you to do even better with your work and so I have asked the school to do two things that will help.

I have asked your teachers to give those of you working at the highest levels even more opportunities to work together and individually in all subjects. This will help further your skills and knowledge so you make even more progress. Also, I have asked your school to improve the ways it sets your targets and checks your progress as you move through school to make sure you are all doing as well as possible. You can help by continuing to work hard and trying your best.