

St Philip (Westbrook) CofE Aided Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 111385 |
| Local Authority | Warrington |
| Inspection number | 325368 |
| Inspection dates | 20–21 October 2008 |
| Reporting inspector | Judith Tolley |

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) | 408 |
| 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 | Mrs Tina Cross |
| Headteacher | Mr Phil Carswell |
| Date of previous school inspection | 3 October 2005 |
| Date of previous funded early education inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Date of previous childcare inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | Westbrook Warrington Cheshire WA5 8UE |
| Telephone number | 01925 445391 |

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| Age group | 4–11 |
| Inspection dates | 20–21 October 2008 |
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Fax number

01925 411759

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Philip's Church of England Primary School is much larger than average. It serves the new town area of Warrington and its pupils come from a wide variety of pre-school settings within the parish. Pupils are of predominantly White British heritage. The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is low, as is the proportion entitled to a free school meal. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well below average. The school has Artsmark Gold, Activemark and Healthy Schools status. It provides pre and after-school care in its 'Happy Hares' club.

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

St Philip's Church of England Primary School provides a good quality of education for its pupils. Outstanding features, such as the quality of its curriculum and the high quality of pastoral care contribute significantly to the excellent personal development and well-being of its pupils. Pupils' enjoyment and their enthusiasm for learning are tangible. Above average attendance rates are a ringing endorsement of this. Parents typically say, 'the school ensures children feel valued, nurtured and safe'.

The consistently good quality of teaching and learning leads to good progress. Pupils' attainment is above average. In Year 2, standards are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics and in Year 6, standards are above average in English, mathematics and well above average in science. This represents good achievement in relation to pupils' starting points. During their time in the school pupils make excellent progress in developing investigative and thinking skills as a result of the frequent opportunities to work collaboratively and to explore and discuss their ideas with others in lessons. This, together with their developing skills in literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT), means that pupils are very well prepared to secure their future economic well-being. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are given good support and make the same good progress as their peers. However, more able pupils in Key Stage 2 are not always effectively challenged by tasks set, especially in writing and in problem-solving in mathematics.

The curriculum is both innovative and exciting. Focused on the arts and creativity, it provides pupils with the opportunity to develop their skills and pursue their interests in a stimulating and engaging way. Pupils' experience is enhanced by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities.

The excellent quality of pastoral care is supported effectively by the school's work with other institutions and outside agencies to remove barriers to learning and to ensure a smooth transition from one stage of learning to the next. The 'Happy Hares' breakfast club and provision after school offer high quality care for children outside school hours. Pupils have excellent relationships with adults in the school and their behaviour is exemplary. They value the opportunities they have, such as the school council and the 'Lean on Me' mentoring arrangements, to shape their school and take responsibility. They make sensible decisions about healthy living. The school follows government guidelines to ensure pupils' safety and the safe recruitment of staff. The progress of all pupils is closely tracked and challenging learning targets set. Pupils understand these targets and they are given frequent feedback on their progress.

The school is well led and managed. The clear direction provided by the headteacher and senior leadership team, based on a good understanding of the effectiveness of the school's work, has led to good progress since the last inspection. Issues raised in the last report have been successfully tackled and, in addition, the school has radically changed the curriculum to better meet the needs and interests of the pupils. Curriculum leaders for each key stage now play a key role in the school's self-evaluation, monitoring and improvement planning processes. All teachers work very effectively as a team, tracking pupils' progress closely and planning the curriculum accordingly. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are well informed and supportive. They are developing their capacity to act as critical friends. The school provides good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Pupils get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). On entry to Reception the attainment of most pupils is broadly in line with what is expected at this age. As a result of very effective induction procedures, children settle very quickly and make good progress. By the end of the Reception year the majority of pupils are working at a good level of development, with many children attaining standards above the national expectation for their age. This good progress is the result of a very effective induction, good teaching, attractive and stimulating classrooms and the positive way staff work together. Children's personal development is outstanding. Relationships are excellent. Children are very confident and extremely well behaved as a result of the high priority given to promoting their welfare and ensuring they feel safe and happy.

Leadership and management are good. Activities are well planned and children quickly develop positive learning habits and enjoy all they do. There is a good balance between adult-directed activities and allowing children to choose. Since the last inspection a range of resources for outdoor play have been developed and children now have access to a safe and secure outdoor learning area. However, this area is underused resulting in some missed opportunities to extend learning in the outdoor environment.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the level of challenge for the more able pupils in Key Stage 2, especially in writing and in mathematics.
- Increase opportunities for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to learn through outdoor activities.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Most children enter the school with attainment that is broadly in line with expectations for their age. Pupils achieve well and by the end of Year 2, a significant number reach standards higher than those expected for seven year olds. High attainment at this stage has been a feature of the school for several years.

By the end of Year 6, the vast majority of pupils achieve well and standards are above average in English and mathematics and well above in science. However, a small number of more able pupils do not do as well as expected in mathematics and English. The school fell short of its targets for the proportion of pupils expected to reach the higher levels in these subjects. Steps to improve writing and problem-solving in mathematics are beginning to have a positive impact upon standards. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make the same good progress as their classmates as a result of the well targeted support they receive. All pupils achieve well in ICT. They are confident learners who enjoy using computers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils are confident, articulate and routinely consider moral, cultural and spiritual issues in their learning. The school's emphasis on art and creativity plays a significant role in developing pupils' cultural awareness. The school is filled with examples of high quality art work which

add a special dimension to the learning environment and pupils' self-esteem. One pupil said, 'I just love art'. Pupils exhibit a real love of learning and an infectious enthusiasm in their activities. Pupils' social development is exemplary. Behaviour is exemplary in lessons, where pupils display excellent attitudes to learning and total concentration as they enjoy working together in small groups. Around the school, behaviour is also excellent. Pupils are courteous and show great consideration for each other and the school environment. Pupils make an important contribution to the school and the wider community, for instance, in their roles as playground buddies and junior play leaders. All pupils show a high level of care for each other and for the school environment and are very proud of their achievements. Links with the church and other institutions lead to pupils having an excellent understanding of their roles within the community and very effective collaborative work in lessons is an indication of how well they are prepared to ensure their future economic well-being. They make healthy choices, for example, about ways to come to school and the food they eat, and take an active part in a wide range of sporting activities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good and lead to good achievement. A small proportion of outstanding teaching and learning was seen during the inspection. Teachers explain new ideas very clearly using, for instance, the interactive whiteboards, so that pupils rapidly understand and apply these ideas for themselves. Lessons are well planned with well sequenced activities. Pupils, therefore, build well on previous learning. Activities are interesting and fun and immediately engage pupils. As a result of frequent opportunities to discuss ideas with a partner, pupils participate confidently in whole-class discussion and in explaining their ideas to a wider audience. Teachers use questioning very effectively to both support and challenge pupils' thinking as they summarise lessons. However, opportunities are missed to provide an extra level of challenge for more able pupils in tasks set in writing and mathematics, particularly in Key Stage 2. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This enables these pupils to participate confidently in whole-class activities and to complete tasks successfully.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum successfully captures pupils' interest and enables them to explore other cultures and values as well as their own. Frequent opportunities to investigate ideas for themselves and to work collaboratively contribute significantly to their personal development. Curriculum leaders monitor closely what is provided and plan the curriculum in detail to ensure it builds effectively on what pupils know, understand and can do. Pupils have excellent opportunities to develop their creativity through art, design, music and dance. They also have the opportunity to learn a modern language. The school provides a richly stimulating environment for learning with exciting displays of pupils' work and artefacts to investigate and learn from. A very wide range of visits and visitors together with strong links with the wider community, both at home and abroad, enrich the experience for all pupils. Pupils are extremely keen to participate in extra-curricular activities such as the choir, musical and dramatic productions.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of the pastoral care offered to pupils is first-rate. Child protection and safeguarding procedures are in place and arrangements for health and safety ensure pupils learn in a safe and secure learning environment. The school works exceptionally well with outside agencies such as the NSPCC Peace Centre which helps pupils learn to solve problems. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning, for example, through the home learning programme. The school keeps them very well informed about their child's progress. Although pupils receive very good feedback during whole-class discussions at the beginning and end of lessons, this is not always reflected in the marking of their work. Pupils understand their targets but they do not always get sufficiently detailed guidance about how to improve their work. Progress is tracked closely. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified early and effective support is provided. However, the more able pupils are not as securely and consistently targeted to ensure they do as well as they can.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher has a clear vision of the way forward, shared by all staff, and gives very clear direction. The action taken by the school to improve the use of assessment information has been successful. Pupils' progress is effectively monitored and curriculum planning is closely linked to their needs and interests. The introduction of an imaginative new curriculum model has led to middle leaders taking a key role in monitoring, development and improvement planning. Teamwork underpins the work of the school. As a result, all staff are involved in the school's evaluation and improvement processes and there is a high level of consistency. Although leaders have a clear understanding of what should be done to raise standards, this is not always expressed as clearly as it might be in school improvement planning documents. Governors provide welcome support to leaders but have not always held the school to account rigorously enough. The school provides an excellent range of opportunities for parents and families to get involved in the life of the school, and works very closely with the wider community both through the Arts and other local networks and through its links with a partner school in South Africa. This impacts positively on pupils' awareness and understanding of diverse cultures.

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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 |
|---|----------------|

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 | 2 |
| 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 | 2 |
| 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? | 1 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 2 |

Leadership and management

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| 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 | 1 |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion? | 1 |
| 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 | 3 |
| 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**

Inspection of St Philip (Westbrook) C of E Aided Primary School, Warrington, WA5 8UE

On behalf of the inspectors, I would like to thank you all for making us so welcome when we inspected your school recently. We thoroughly enjoyed talking to you and hearing your views.

I am sure you will not be surprised to know that your school is a good one with some things that are outstanding. We were particularly impressed by your behaviour and the excellent way you get on with each other and your teachers. You play an important role in helping make your school as good as it is. You told us how much you enjoy your lessons and it was easy to see why. Teachers work very hard to make your lessons interesting and fun. You make good progress and attain standards that are above average for most children of your age. We noticed how well you got on when you worked together to explore ideas for yourselves. Children in the Reception class also make good progress. We saw how well the younger children learned through play and have asked the school to provide more opportunities for them to do this outside as well as inside.

You are very well looked after and your teachers know very well how each of you is getting on. I expect you know that your headteacher and the teachers work very hard to think up new ideas to make things better. Project work makes your lessons interesting and fun and it was very clear to us how much you enjoy this way of learning. Recently, teachers have been helping you to improve your writing and mathematics. This is working well but we think that some more able pupils can do even better. We have asked the teachers to give these pupils even more difficult work in lessons.

I am confident that you will help your teachers to make sure your school continues to be successful and a happy place to be and to learn.

I wish you every success in the future.