

Coppull St John's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119469
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	327044
Inspection date	26 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Jennie Platt

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	117
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 Roy Coulson
Headteacher	Mrs Lorraine Ellis
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Preston Road Coppull Chorley Lancashire PR7 5DU
Telephone number	01257 791403

Age group	4–11
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01257 791403

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and the following issues:

- the achievement of pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage and of the more able pupils in Years 1 and 2. The progress pupils make in writing
- the effectiveness of the school's tracking procedures
- how the school evaluates its own practice
- how the school evaluates the impact of community cohesion and what are the plans to extend provision in the future.

Evidence was gathered from school documents, including the school's own self-evaluation, data, discussions with pupils, the chair of governors, headteacher and staff, observations of the school at work and the responses of a questionnaire to parents.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail and the inspectors found that the school's own assessments, although over positive in some areas were broadly accurate and these have been included in the report.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average school providing education for children in the small community of Coppull. A below average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Most pupils are of White British heritage with very few from minority ethnic groups. No pupils are learning to speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. An above average number of pupils have a statement of special educational need. A very small number of pupils are in the care of the local authority. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision consists of children in a mixed age Reception and Year 1 class. The school provides a before and after school club which is not managed by the governors and is not part of this inspection.

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 an effective school. Not least of the many strengths is the pupils' good personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Social skills are outstanding and lead to excellent relationships throughout the school. This underpins the welcoming and caring ethos that is such an important feature of the school. Not surprisingly behaviour is good. It is excellent for the older pupils who also have extremely positive attitudes to their work. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and this can be seen in the daily life of the school. Parents are very pleased about the education their children receive. One parent summed up the view of many by writing, 'I can see in school that every pupil is happy, contented and involved. A major advantage in early school life.'

Achievement is good. Standards vary year-on-year because of the small numbers in each year and their differing abilities. Teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 show that over time standards are above average with examples of standards being significantly higher in mathematics. A dip in 2008 to broadly average was linked to the ability of the cohort who started school at a lower level than usually seen in the school. Nevertheless, all pupils make good progress considering their differing starting points. Results of national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 again fluctuate being well above average in 2007 and broadly average in the unvalidated results for 2008. Progress is uneven in Key Stage 2, although good overall, accelerating as pupils move into their final year, so that the current Year 6 pupils are working at above average standards in English, science and mathematics. This represents good achievement taking into account the ability range within this group. Writing is the weakest aspect. Although satisfactory overall, pupils' handwriting and spelling skills are not always high enough. The new approach to teaching letters and sounds is starting to have an impact but this is not yet evident in overall standards. Test results and assessments show that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and looked after children make good progress often reaching the level expected for their age. Pupils with a statement of special educational need often make excellent progress to overcome their barriers to learning because the additional support they receive is closely tailored to their individual needs.

Good teaching is a major factor in the pupils' good progress. Throughout the school lessons are well managed and the variety of activities employed sustains pupils' enthusiasm for learning. Teachers effectively include pupils in their own learning by making it clear what is expected of them and checking their progress in the conclusion. In Year 6, the teacher created a real enthusiasm for poetry with visual images and a pause to imagine the sounds of a river. Questions were challenging and a clear purpose for the activity, to share their poetry with others, sustained pupils' interest most effectively. In the best lessons seen the pace of lessons is brisk and tasks are challenging. However, this is not always the case in Key Stage 2 and occasionally the pace is not fast enough with pupils listening for too long and not working at high enough levels. Academic tracking is good and information used well to support those needing an extra boost to their learning.

The school takes very good care of pupils' pastoral needs. Formal systems for safeguarding pupils are in place. Staff training is regular and pertinent to the needs of the pupils. The more vulnerable pupils receive very sensitive support and additional help is sought from external agencies to ensure they receive the best possible advice. This is symptomatic of this school which values and nurtures all pupils. The curriculum is of high quality. It focuses well on teaching basic skills and combines this with an effective programme for personal, social and economic

development. As a result, pupils are well prepared for the future. The emphasis on health education is another strong feature and is reflected in pupils' good understanding of the importance of keeping healthy and the school's achievement of national healthy schools award and a sports mark. This understanding is seen in daily practice as pupils are very energetic at play and in physical education lessons. Certainly, Year 6 pupils were seen thoroughly enjoying their golf lesson. The new approach to planning the curriculum has combined subjects under an overarching theme which makes learning more relevant. The pupils especially enjoyed learning about the Egyptians during their topic on the amazing world. They confidently shared their considerable knowledge in the school's act of worship. Several parents expressed disappointment that there are no after school clubs that do not require a payment. The school has organised more clubs at lunchtime to increase the numbers attending but this does restrict the time available for these activities. Visits are numerous and link closely to the current topics. Professional tuition is used effectively and the sounds of many different instruments being played were evident during the inspection.

Whilst overall leadership and management are good, the individual leadership of the headteacher is excellent. She has an enthusiasm for education which keeps the school in line with current thinking. Difficulties with the old building have been overcome, sustaining the character of the school while still ensuring it meets the needs of today's education. The school's work in promoting community cohesion is satisfactory overall. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and local community. Pupils play a lead in many local events as well as having a good understanding of their role in the school community. They support each other and develop a real sense of belonging to a community. They extend this willingness to help others to raising funds for national charities. Despite a lack of formal planning or evaluation of the impact of links with the community the school is very aware of its role and is looking for ways to provide pupils with a more informed view of life in a multi-cultural society. Although a small management team, all understand their roles and are clear about the way ahead. They embrace changes as can be seen in their willingness to adapt the curriculum. The more creative curriculum has enabled the school to give pupils more opportunities for drama and discussion concerns raised at the previous inspection. Overall progress since then is good and standards have risen although writing still remains an aspect needing attention. Governance is effective especially in checking on spending and supporting the building projects that have so improved facilities. Self-evaluation is generally accurate although over positive in some aspects as it focuses too much on provision rather than impact on standards. This is similar in the school's development plan where priorities are not always sharp enough. This restricts planning being as effective as it could be. Nevertheless, in a small school staff share their information well and sustain high levels of care end education. They clearly know what is needed to take the school forward. As a result, the school has good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start in the Reception class. Attainment on entry to school varies year on year because of the small numbers and the children's wide range of abilities. It fluctuates between what is typical for this age group and slightly below this level. Standards reached by the end of Reception are at least average and in some years are above average. The current children started with standards that are usual for this age and are working at above average standards. Effective teaching ensures that regardless of their starting point all children make good progress. Their personal development, in particular, is well supported so children quickly

develop independence, take turns and share well during activities. Children enjoy new friendships and play and learn well together, frequently showing good levels of concentration and effort. For example, in the role play area children enjoyed being the character of Mrs Wishy Washy, paddling in imaginary sea and building in the sand. Their enjoyment of their learning is evident in the enthusiastic way they talk about their work. Occasionally, too many activities are led by staff and insufficient opportunities are available for children to initiate their own learning. The outdoor space is attractive and used well but it is difficult to access and this prevents natural free flow of learning to the outdoors. Well established routines and enriching experiences ensure pupils grow in confidence as they understand what is expected of them. Children's welfare has a high priority so they feel secure and thrive in the caring atmosphere. Staff get to know and respond to each individual child and so children are confident and articulate learners. Leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Assessment procedures are enabling staff to monitor children's progress but this information is not being used well enough to identify priorities and inform future planning. Nevertheless, policy and practice reflect recent changes in statutory requirements.

What the school should do to improve further

- Further improve pupils' skills in handwriting and spelling.
- Ensure that teaching is consistently challenging throughout Key Stage 2.
- Make more use of assessment information when evaluating the school's effectiveness, including the Early Years Foundation Stage, and ensure future priorities focus enough on raising standards.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

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?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

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

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

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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

27 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Coppull St John's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Lancashire,
PR7 5DU

Thank you so much for the warm welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited you recently. We had a wonderful day and enjoyed meeting so many of you.

You go to a good school and make good progress and leave school with standards that are above average. Teaching is good and you work hard in lessons and listen closely to your teachers. We were impressed by how caring you are towards each other and the excellent friendships you have established. You behave well and attend regularly and this is very important. Your teachers plan interesting activities and the new idea of combining subjects into one topic appears to be working well. It was good to watch your performance in assembly and we are sure your parents were very impressed with your knowledge of Egypt. Your school takes care of you very well and you also look after others by raising funds for the less fortunate.

We think you and your teachers could make your school even better. Changes are being made to improve your writing and we think these need to be extended to ensure your handwriting and spelling get even better. We would like teachers to check that work is always set at just the right level for each of you. Staff make decisions about how to make your school better and we have asked that they check the school's priorities always focus on raising standards.

You have a lot to be proud of in your school. You make a big contribution to it by creating such a happy and friendly community. We wish you much happiness for the future.

Yours faithfully

Jennie Platt and Julie Webster

Inspectors