

# Calder Vale St John Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119518
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	327056
<b>Inspection date</b>	9 December 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mark Williams HMI

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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<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 (total)	31
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Chris Stanley-Smith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Elizabeth Heritage
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 December 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Calder Vale Garstang Preston Lancashire PR3 1SR

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date</b>	9 December 2008
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors who investigated the overall quality of education for pupils. At the same time, the Church of England's National Society carried out an inspection of the religious character of the school. This report is available separately.

## Description of the school

The school is a very small voluntary aided primary school, set in a rural location serving the mainly industrial hamlet of Calder Vale, near Garstang. There are no pupils currently having free school meals. All children are of White British heritage. 13% of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. While this is below the national average, caution must be applied as numbers throughout the school are very small.

The headteacher has been working on a part-time basis since September 2007. Children are currently taught by two full-time teachers in two classes: one covering the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Key Stage 1; the other covering Key Stage 2. The school holds the following awards: national Healthy School status, Active Sportsmark and Investors in People. Early in 2008 the school received a Green Partnership award and is currently working towards the bronze 'ECO' award.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Calder Vale St John Church of England Primary School provides its pupils with a satisfactory standard of education. Within this picture there are good and sometimes outstanding elements. The good features are the overall quality in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Key Stage 1, the personal development and well-being of all pupils, and the care, guidance and support provided by the school. In addition, the strong Christian ethos is evident throughout the school. These features typify why the school, situated directly alongside the village church, is at the heart of the community. Parents are very positive about the school. Of the 20 families with children at the school, half returned the inspection questionnaire and all were positive about the school's work and the impact it has on their children. As one parent said, reflecting the views of many, 'You will meet confident, self-assured, kind and happy children'. The inspector did.

By the time pupils leave the school at the age of 11 they have attained standards that are generally above average. This represents satisfactory progress from their starting points in the Reception class in the EYFS, although the picture is mixed across the school. Pupils get off to a flying start in the EYFS. Here they are helped to learn and develop outstandingly well. As a result they make good and sometimes better progress. This good progress continues in Key Stage 1 but it slows down in Key Stage 2. The school is working to improve the rates of progress for the pupils in Years 3 to 6. This mixed picture is also evident in the quality of teaching and in the curriculum. Both are strong in the EYFS and Key Stage 1, and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Pupils up to and including Year 2 are typically involved in lessons that meet their needs well. In Years 3 to 6 attention to what they can already do is sometimes limited, which leads to tasks and activities that are not always matched well to needs and do not always provide sufficient challenge in lessons.

The school evaluated leadership and management to be good. The inspection judges it to be satisfactory. The governors have allowed the headteacher to decrease her working time to three days a week. In effect, because she no longer has a teaching commitment, the amount of time she has available to lead and manage has increased. This time has been used effectively, for example, to identify the slowing of pupil progress in Key Stage 2. However, impact on pupils, despite improvement, is slow. The school's own self-evaluation is broadly accurate although the headteacher recognises the records it makes about lessons observed are sometimes too rosy and do not include judgements which will help teachers to move forward. The governors are enthusiastic and, indeed, proud of their school. They are aware they need to be more involved in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. The judgements made by this inspection are, in the main, lower than the ones made in December 2005. Nonetheless, given the changes in the structure of the school and leadership, it has made generally satisfactory progress since the previous inspection. Its capacity to improve further is satisfactory. Links with other agencies, including schools, are good as is the support of the school improvement partner (SIP) from the local authority.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children make good progress in their learning and therefore achieve well. They quickly become confident individuals and settle in well. Strong links exist with parents/carers. All staff work well together to provide very stimulating environments for learning and development inside

and outside the classroom. For example, the classroom shared with Years 1 and 2 has a range of interactive displays, currently reflecting themed work about space and light. Photographs show the children thoroughly enjoying working with older children making space rockets they could sit in and, in their imaginative play, fly. As a result of very careful planning to ensure each child's needs are met well and build on previous experience, the children are rightly excited about their learning and participate fully. They are well prepared for Key Stage 1. The school is correct in its view that the overall quality of the EYFS is good.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Build on current work to enhance the quality of teaching and the curriculum in Key Stage 2, thereby improving rates of pupil progress in Years 3 to 6 to at least the good levels found elsewhere in the school
- Tap the governors' enthusiasm by involving them fully in the monitoring and evaluation of the school's work.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Of the 31 pupils currently in the school, just over half entered the EYFS with skills and abilities above those typical for their age. Nonetheless there is some variability from year-to-year and, owing to very small numbers, it is not always possible to make national comparisons.

Standards are good, overall. Progress across the school is judged to be satisfactory, although the picture is mixed. The inspection agrees with the school's own evaluation.

Since the previous inspection standards attained by pupils in the end of Key Stage 1 assessments declined in 2006 and 2007 and rose again in 2008, although these latest results have yet to be validated. Despite the decline, the results consistently remained above average, significantly so in 2008. Overall, they represent good progress, which is the result of consistently good teaching, some of it outstanding, and a curriculum well matched to pupils' needs. The work of pupils currently in Years 1 and 2 is at least above average in standard and shows the pupils are continuing to make good progress, particularly in their writing and their ability to apply skills in literacy and numeracy across the curriculum.

In Key Stage 2 standards in Year 6 tests in English, mathematics and science fell to below average levels in 2006. Whilst representing satisfactory progress from starting points, progress from the end of Key Stage 1 was unsatisfactory. Standards rose to broadly average levels in 2007 representing satisfactory progress overall. The unvalidated results for 2008 show above average standards were attained, again representing satisfactory progress. The work of pupils currently in Years 3 to 6 is above average in standard, so over the past three years there has been a picture of improvement. Overall progress is satisfactory, although it varies from pupil to pupil with some making good progress and others making, at times, less than they ought. This is because what pupils are asked to do in lessons is not always matched well to their needs and, as a result, they are not always provided with sufficient challenge. Attention to what the pupils can already do is sometimes limited. In short, progress in this Key Stage could be better.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The school has rightly evaluated outcomes for pupils in this area as good. Some, indeed, are outstanding. These include excellent attendance rates, considering the sometimes adverse weather conditions that affect the school; how well the pupils adopt safe practices, evident during this inspection in very sensible attitudes in icy conditions; their contribution to the community as seen in their support for charitable causes such as Water Aid; and not least their excellent, well mannered behaviour. They are articulate and confident in speaking with adults. Relationships are strong.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They show increasing awareness of cultures other than their own, and enjoyed visiting a mosque in Preston. Their lunch boxes show a good awareness of healthy foods. They enjoy school and are, with their above average understanding of basic skills, prepared well for their next stage of education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. It is good in the EYFS and Key Stage 1 where staff use their knowledge of their pupils very well to plan lessons and activities that meet individual needs well. Consistently good teaching of these younger pupils, with some that is outstanding, enthuses pupils and stretches and challenges them. Pupils are always busy working. As a result, they make consistently good progress, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The picture is different in Key Stage 2. Here, because activities are not always based on secure knowledge of what pupils can do, they are not always sufficiently challenged in their work. Sometimes they complete it early and sit with little to do; on other occasions they do too little because the work has not been matched well to their needs. As a result, pupils make progress that is satisfactory but which has slowed down since leaving Year 2.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

A similar picture of different quality exists with the curriculum. Across the school there are good ideas and activities. Visits to the mosque in Preston and to Houghton Tower have provided opportunities to enhance pupils' learning. Other examples include whole-school work in which pupils, based on a visit from the RSPB, have begun to make their own perceptions felt in order to create a collage. In addition, a good range of extra-curricular activities is provided.

Nonetheless, the curriculum is judged to be satisfactory overall, in agreement with the school's evaluation, because there is inconsistency in the way it is broken down into subsequent tasks, activities and lessons that meet the needs of pupils. It does this best in the EYFS and in Key Stage 1, which set an example for what could be done in Key Stage 2.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 2

Care is excellent; guidance and support are good. The strong Christian ethos is reflected in the high levels of care shown to pupils. Parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were unanimous in acknowledging this. Staff, led by the headteacher's positive attitude and example, ensure the school is a safe, welcoming place. They know the children very well. Appropriate safeguarding procedures are in place and risks managed very well. This is particularly important given the school's isolated position.

Pupils are well guided and supported in their learning and personal development. Marking of work is generally of good quality with, for example, in Year 3 to 6's books, some helpful comments to pupils as to how they can improve their work and eliminate errors. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have individual education plans to help them progress. These are of good quality although the school is aware the evaluation of the success of each plan is not sufficiently recorded.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis and relationships with parents and the wider community are good. Leaders are successful in promoting a strong Christian ethos which influences the school's work well.

Since the previous inspection there have been a number of changes in the school, not least concerning the headteacher. She no longer has a teaching commitment and thus has been able to focus on leading and managing. This has been positive in identifying the slowing of pupil progress in Key Stage 2, in previous years and putting successful plans into place to redress the situation. However, while improvements are being made, they are only gradually impacting on pupils. The school is in receipt of good support from its school improvement partner but is aware it needs to ensure plans for improvement are fully enacted and that the outcomes of such actions are recorded more accurately. The result of this not always being the case is that leaders' evaluation of the school's performance is broadly accurate although it paints too positive a picture in some areas. The governors are enthusiastic and proud of their school. They are aware they have a key role in monitoring and evaluating the school's work and need to do so more fully than in the past.

**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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## 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?	3
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	3

### 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?	1
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

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

<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	1
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	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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**

10 December 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Calder Vale St John Church of England Primary School, Lancashire, PR3 1SR

Thank you so much for your warm welcome when I inspected your school recently. I enjoyed sitting in on your lessons and talking with you. I especially enjoyed listening to your lovely singing when I was looking at your work. I do hope the Nativity Play went well.

I have reported that your school provides you with a satisfactory education. During your time at the school you make satisfactory progress in your learning to attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science. You make better progress in the Reception and Year 1 and 2 classes and this is because you have things to do and learn that are well matched to your abilities. This is not always the case at Key Stage 2 and you make satisfactory progress here. I have asked the leaders of the school to make sure the best of what happens in Reception and Key Stage 1 also happens in Key Stage 2 so that that you make at least good progress during all of your time at Calder Vale. I have also asked the governors to be more involved in checking how well the school is working.

Your personal development is good and this will help you to grow into well rounded young people and adults. You are helped in your time at school because of the good levels of care, guidance and support provided by adults.

These are the features of your school that stand out most of all:

- the care the adults show you
- your behaviour and positive attitudes
- your rates of attendance
- the way you keep safe
- your contribution to the community beyond school
- the way children in the EYFS are helped to learn and develop.

I have judged these to be outstanding.

I wish you every blessing for the future.

Mark Williams

Her Majesty's Inspector