

# Bolton by Bowland Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119688
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	327109
<b>Inspection date</b>	25 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Dave Byrne

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)	33
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>	Rev Canon David Mewis
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr David Lloyd
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 January 2006
<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>	Gisburn Road Bolton-by-Bowland Clitheroe Lancashire BB7 4NP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01200 447632

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date</b>	25 November 2008
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**Fax number**

01200 447632

**Age group** 4-11

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the attainment of children starting school in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the rate of progress across the school
- whether the curriculum is good enough to make sure that all pupils, including the able, gifted and talented reach the standards of which they are capable
- the school's contribution to community cohesion.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found enough evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, are in some cases better than the inspection findings. Evidence was gathered from observations of lessons, scrutiny of school documents and samples of pupils' work, discussions with the headteacher, teachers and support staff, pupils and governors. Parents' views, as reflected in the Ofsted questionnaire, were also considered.

## Description of the school

This is a small rural school with very small numbers in each year group. There is EYFS provision comprising of a Nursery and Reception class working with Key Stage 1 for part of the day. All pupils are of White British ethnicity. The school serves an area with relatively low levels of social deprivation. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is very low and the percentage of pupils requiring support for learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The leadership of the school has changed since the last inspection. Since December 2007, the school has been led by the headteacher of a nearby school, splitting his time between both schools. The school is due to form a collaboration with the school of the current headteacher from January 2009.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and improving school. Pupils develop good levels of personal development, but they could achieve better academically. Parents are generally very happy with the school and support the school and their children well. Pupils are generally eager to attend, which is reflected in the above average attendance figures.

A strength of the school is the excellent links it has with others to promote the pupils' well-being. It is very much a respected part of the village and church. Its close association with the local high school and its increasing links with schools nearby and further afield, means that the school is currently making a good contribution to community cohesion. Much is provided by the school to broaden pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider world. Recent initiatives such as the Africa Theme Week are improving the pupils' understanding of cultures other than their own. Pupils' behaviour is excellent and they are willing learners. They are quiet and generally attentive during lessons. They have a passion for saving the world and are rightly proud of the initiatives being taken by the Eco Council. The quality of the council is recognised by the school's recent acquisition of the Eco Bronze Award. Pupils develop into mature individuals. They have a good understanding of the choices needed to be healthy and have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe. Spiritual and moral development is excellent and this, together with their good social skills prepares pupils well for their next stage of education.

The good levels of pupils' personal development are not always built on so that pupils do as well as they can academically. Discussions with pupils and reviews of samples of pupils' work, as well as observations of teaching, indicate that pupils could do better. This is most noticeable in writing and investigative elements of mathematics. Assessment data held by the school, supported by inspection evidence indicates that the rate of progress varies across the school. After a good start in EYFS, progress slows in Key Stage 1. Results at the end of Year 2 are broadly average but pupils are not making enough progress. In Key Stage 2, progress picks up and in Years 5 and 6 pupils gain results that are above average. Given the good levels with which pupils start school in Year 1 this represents satisfactory achievement.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and ensures that pupils learn at a steady rate, within a secure environment. Good relationships exist between pupils and adults. The grouping of pupils by ability offers the potential for meeting the needs of all pupils, and does so well for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who make good progress. However, expectations are not always high enough for other pupils. The pupils themselves said, 'we could be given harder work'. Much time is spent in lessons listening to adults and responding to instructions and this holds back pupils with flair and the confidence to learn in new and challenging situations. Opportunities for pupils to develop communication skills are held back by the use of too many worksheets which demand little writing or creative thought. The contribution of marking to improving pupils' work is satisfactory. It offers words of praise and encouragement, but does not consistently set expectations for improvement.

The satisfactory curriculum meets statutory requirements. It is improving under the guidance of the new headteacher. Planning is currently being adapted to enable pupils to exploit links between subjects and allow them to be more imaginative and creative. At the moment, however, pupils have few opportunities for developing their writing skills across the curriculum which holds back their achievement. Good efforts are made to enrich lessons. Pupils gain advantage from having access to a good range of after school activities. Good use is also made of

educational visits within the village and local community, as well as further afield, for example, to Chester Zoo. Two strengths of the curriculum are the way all pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 have access to learning an instrument and in developing a basic understanding of French.

The school is a very caring, safe and secure place for pupils and adults. All procedures for safeguarding pupils meet requirements. Staff keep a close eye on the pupils and readily offer support and help if there are personal or emotional needs. Academic guidance is satisfactory and improving. Good initiatives have been taken recently to strengthen the quality of information about pupils' progress to parents, some of whom feel better information is needed. Pupils are becoming aware of their own targets for improvement and the school is currently evaluating ways of integrating this more closely with day-to-day activities.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school is in good hands with a new headteacher who is in the process of getting to know the school. He has a good vision for the school's future and is backed by a strong and supportive governing body which knows that achievement can be better. After a period when the school's leadership was uncertain, the school is now set to improve. The good vision is shared by staff who are relishing the challenge of moving the school forward and in creating a more dynamic and exciting curriculum. The school recognises that the systems for monitoring the progress of pupils needs strengthening so that as many pupils as possible reach their academic potential. The school's own self-evaluation is rather optimistic in some key areas which reflects the need for greater rigour in how it monitors itself. The recent initiatives introduced by the headteacher and governors have resulted in the school making satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children get off to a good start to school life in the EYFS. The provision is well managed so that children's welfare is effectively promoted. Recent improvements in the use of the accommodation and the appointment of a talented teaching assistant have benefited the quality of provision. The range of skills of children starting school varies but is generally above what is typical for their age. Children make good progress and by the time they start Year 1, most have reached standards that are above and often well above average. Many children have advanced levels of mathematical and physical development for their age. They talk with great knowledge of the difference between cubes and cuboids and two Reception boys even talked about the hundred measurements on the measuring beakers they used as they explored rice, sand and 'sparkly things'. They have good levels of personal, social and emotional development and form good relationships. Children are interested and willing to learn. When exploring different three dimensional shapes, they showed good levels of concentration and the confidence to try out new ideas. Children use equipment well for their age, for example, by very carefully spooning lentils into bottles and shaping play dough into sounds matching those of their name. Children speak well and confidently volunteer their own ideas during discussions with the teaching assistant and others. Already, children are learning to link sounds to letters and starting to write their own names. Assessment is used well to pick out the needs of individuals and activities have a good balance between some adult directed learning and activities which encourage children to make their own decisions. The opportunity to interact with pupils in Key Stage 1 benefits all pupils as it broadens the children's experiences of others.

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

- Improve teaching by enabling pupils to take more responsibility for their own learning and make better use of marking to set high standards.
- Refine the way the curriculum is planned so that pupils have more opportunities to write and get involved in investigative activities.
- Strengthen the procedures for monitoring the pupils' performance so that any who are underachieving make the progress of which they are capable.

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

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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>	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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?</b>	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?	2

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	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	2

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<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	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	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?	3

## 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	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 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bolton by Bowland Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Lancashire,  
BB7 4NP

The time my colleague and I spent with you was very enjoyable. The purpose of the visit was to find out how well your school is doing. At the moment you go to a satisfactory school which has some good features. It is very caring and supportive of you but some of you are not achieving as well as you could do.

Your behaviour is excellent. You treat others well and are willing to learn. You are rightly proud of all that you do to help the school. The actions you are taking to save the planet are impressive and together with your good understanding of healthy eating and excellent awareness of keeping safe, you are well set for being happy in life.

When we talked with you, you said that you felt that at times you could be made to work harder. We agree with this. Those of you who find learning difficult get good support, and do well, but some of you find work easy, and could be given more challenging things to do. We have asked the school to give more thought to finding ways of encouraging you to take more responsibility for your learning and to do more in the way of investigations, for example, in mathematics. Even though some of you write well, the school has been asked to give you many more opportunities for writing in all subjects.

You are starting a new phase in the school soon with a new headteacher. He has great ideas for making learning more fun and as he gets to know you all, we hope you can work with him in doing this. Your ideas are valued. At the moment, the school needs to do more to have a better picture of those of you who need to work harder. We have asked the school to find ways of improving marking and also checking on how well you are all doing.

Please thank your parents for returning their questionnaires. They are very supportive of the school. You are fortunate to have such close links with the village and local community, to which you all make excellent contributions.

Yours sincerely

Dave Byrne

Lead inspector