

Barton St Lawrence Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119562
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	339471
Inspection dates	2–3 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Mr David Byrne

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	73
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Louise Birchall
Headteacher	Mrs Julie Bolton
Date of previous school inspection	July 2007
School address	Jepps Avenue Barton Preston PR3 5AS
Telephone number	01772 862664
Fax number	01772 862162
Email address	head@st-lawrence.lancs.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors, one of whom focussed solely on the quality of safeguarding. The inspectors visited seven lessons and one assembly and observed three teachers in their classrooms. Meetings were held with governors, staff and groups of pupils; approximately two fifths of inspection time was spent looking at learning including time spent observing pupils at play and in lessons. A selection of school documents were looked at, including those related to safeguarding, the progress and attainment of pupils, the curriculum, the school's development plan and the way the school evaluates its own performance. The views of parents and carers, through 41 returned inspection questionnaires, and the views of staff and pupils, were evaluated and reviewed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the progress and achievement of pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2
- whether there are any variations in the quality of teaching
- the impact of assessment on learning
- the accuracy of the school's self-evaluation and its contribution to school improvement.

Information about the school

This is a small school. The percentage of pupils taking free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also below average although the percentage with statements of special educational needs is relatively high. An above average percentage of pupils join or leave the school at times other than normal. Since the last inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed and a privately managed Nursery has been established on site which is inspected separately by Ofsted.

The school has gained a number of awards including two Learning Excellence Awards for Good Practice for Sustainability of Modern Foreign Language across School and Innovative Practice for Thinking Skills for Writing. It also has the diocese of Blackburn Church School Distinctiveness Award, the Healthy School's Award, an Active Mark, the Quality Mark and the Eco School's Bronze Award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is a fantastic school where children are encouraged to do their best in everything.' This view expressed by one parent or carer is typical of the vast majority. They are amazed by the friendly, family atmosphere and the way that the school includes everyone regardless of ability or ethnicity. Inspection findings agree with such views. Since the last inspection outstanding leadership, management and governance have improved the school significantly. Staff and pupils know exactly what is expected of them and share a desire to do as well as they can. Very accurate evaluations of itself, supported by very effective, well-thought-out assessment systems and development plans, give the school an excellent capacity for improvement. It gives excellent value for money.

Pupils thrive in a caring and secure environment which promotes very high attendance. Outstanding teaching engages pupils and the pace of learning is rapid. Exemplary care, support and guidance, including excellent procedures for safeguarding, contribute to pupils' outstanding achievement and social and emotional development. At the heart of learning is the pupils' excellent understanding of how well they are doing and how to improve. Attainment is rising rapidly across the school. From their starting points, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make excellent progress and increasingly they leave Year 6 with high attainment in English, mathematics and science. An imaginative approach to what is an outstanding curriculum values the pupils' interests. It provides a wide range of interesting after-school clubs which provide many opportunities for pupils to excel, particularly in sport. While children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have an excellent start, some weaknesses in resources reduce the quality of learning in some areas.

Throughout the school, relationships are excellent. Mutual respect between pupils and adults contribute to their outstanding behaviour and excellent levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Their contribution to their school and local community is exemplary. Pupils have an outstanding understanding of the choices for living safe and healthy lives and many put this knowledge into practice. Very productive links exist with parents and carers who are encouraged to get engaged in their children's education. Pupils benefit greatly from many links with schools and institutions both locally and further afield. The schools excellent commitment to equal opportunities ensures that pupils become mature, articulate and confident young people, extremely well prepared for their next stage of education.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement further by improving the quality of learning resources in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils are proud of their school. Their care for each other is 'second to none' and their desire to do well is immense. Excellent levels of enjoyment result in high attendance. From Reception onwards, pupils display advanced levels of independence, confidently making choices and gathering information, for example, by safely using the internet. Pupils are very focused on what they have been asked to do and work extremely conscientiously. The pupils' involvement in the assessment of their work is very well embedded. This gives them an excellent understanding of how to set their own targets, which is a key factor in the rapid rise in attainment. Pupils willingly take on a wide range of responsibilities. They feel adults listen to them and respond positively to their ideas. For instance, as school councillors, they engage in decision making and are especially proud of the way they have participated in meetings with councillors from other schools.

Learning is outstanding because teachers inspire and enthuse pupils. A legacy of underachievement at Key Stage 2 has been completely removed. Challenging academic targets are met. From the pupils' starting points, achievement is outstanding. The inspection findings show that there is excellent progress in all classes. Attainment is currently above average with many examples of high attainment in writing and aspects of mathematics, and some outstanding performances in a variety of sporting events. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make excellent progress as a result of excellent teaching and gifted and talented pupils achieve extremely well.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

¹The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teachers know their pupils very well. They care deeply and use much energy to devise very successful ways of supporting everyone. It is not just pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities that have work tailored to their need as everyone is treated as an individual within the mixed-age classes. Pupils are given very clear guidance in lessons and expectations are crystal clear. Through the excellent use of assessment information, each pupil knows how well they have done and where they can improve. Marking is of a high quality. Pupils confidently talk of their National Curriculum levels without fear or threat and say this knowledge motivates them to do better.

The school embraces innovative curriculum design which really benefits learning. The emphasis on developing skills alongside exploring the interests of pupils generates very focused yet exciting learning. Excellent communication with parents and carers about each half-term’s topic offers opportunities for them to get involved too. Visits to a local factory, hatching quail eggs, walking to local hilltops have all recently inspired pupils. End of topic celebrations, for example, the ‘Ugly Bug Ball’ to complete a unit on mini-beasts, cleverly reinforces what has been learnt. Excellent sporting provision, coupled with regular involvements in drama and dance, gives everyone a chance to shine. Learning outdoors is highly valued with staff making best use of mundanely resourced school grounds.

A quotation from one parent or carer that the school is, ‘....safe, welcoming and encourages healthy, happy children’, accurately reflects the high quality care and support that it provides. Pupils say they always have someone to turn to. Their very caring attitudes are successfully nurtured, by, for example, training older pupils to be ‘buddies’ and help younger ones. Transition arrangements are carefully planned through excellent partnerships formed with the on-site Nursery, local high schools and networking with local primaries.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher leads and manages the school extremely well. Staff morale is very high and everyone is enthusiastic about the direction of the school. Everyone involved in the school is empowered to offer an opinion and contribute to it in some way. The school greatly values the involvement of parents and carers and this benefits pupils enormously. Excellent links with other schools, outside agencies and the local authority contribute to high-quality systems for school improvement.

The governing body is very effective. It is perceptive and understands fully its role in making sure all statutory requirements are met and weaknesses are tackled. There is

a unanimous commitment to promoting equality and avoiding any form of discrimination. Safeguarding procedures are meticulously applied and ensure that pupils are safe at all times. All risks are considered, and sensible but rigorous action taken to remove them. The effectiveness of the school’s contribution to community cohesion has some excellent features, particularly with regard to its contribution to its local area. The school is in the process of establishing a systematic way of monitoring the effectiveness of its community cohesion policy. Financially, the school is secure and extremely well managed to gain best value from its income.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

‘I feel that the school meets both the educational and social needs for my child and could not be happier with my child’s progress.’ This comment from one parent sums up parents’ opinions well and epitomises the high quality of education provided. Excellent leadership and management have created a highly effective unit in which caters for each child. Staff provide high levels of challenge to extend children beyond their relatively advanced starting points. Consequently, children make rapid progress and most start Year 1 with a high level of attainment.

Excellent links with parents and also with the on-site Nursery results in excellent partnerships that benefit children. Imaginative activities inspire children to have fun. Whether it is in the ‘witches den’ indoors or sailing away on an improvised ‘pirate ship’ outdoors, children develop very well in all areas of learning. Children are bursting with curiosity and clearly enjoy sharing and working with others. A touch of formality is also built into each day. Adult-led sessions on phonics, for example, give children very good guidance on how to read and write sounds and encourage them to ‘have a go at writing’. Although resources are suitable for most aspects of learning, some are lacking in quality. Ambitious plans to develop the outdoor learning area are imminent, but indoors, some resources are rather limited, for example, for learning through information and communication technology. Teaching and support staff do a super job with what they have, but they cannot provide some of the learning experiences that they would ideally like to. The welfare and progress of children are carefully monitored and all aspects of safeguarding are in place.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are very positive about the quality of education their children receive with very few having any concerns. The vast majority feel that the school is very caring and that children do very well. Staff are seen as being very approachable and as keeping them well informed. The quality of teaching is highly praised and the impact of the new headteacher very much valued. Links with the community and the range of sporting and extra-curricular events are mentioned in a very positive light. One or two parents were unsure about some aspects of security and playground supervision. The inspection findings indicate that the positive comments of parents are very much upheld. The concerns expressed are not founded in the evidence gathered. The school has a very rigorous approach to safeguarding and security and playground supervision outdoors is by two staff members who minimise risk.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Barton St Lawrence Church of England Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received 41 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 73 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	78	6	15	2	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	32	78	7	17	2	5	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	29	71	12	29	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	33	80	7	17	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	34	83	7	17	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	33	80	6	15	2	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	34	83	6	15	1	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	27	66	10	24	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	31	76	9	22	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	68	13	32	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	68	11	27	2	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	33	80	7	17	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	35	85	4	10	2	5	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



4 March 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Barton St Lawrence Church of England Primary School,
Preston, PR3 5AS**

Yours is an outstanding school. This does not mean it is perfect and there is always more to be done, but you are given an excellent opportunity to do well later in life. You are taught exceedingly well and receive excellent care, support and guidance. You make outstanding progress in lessons and your behaviour is excellent. The exciting things that you do in school, including a superb range of sporting activities, makes school a fun place for you to be. The many smiles I saw and the laughter I heard in lessons, at playtime and during lunch showed me how much you enjoy school. Your knowledge of how to eat sensibly and the importance of exercise sets you up well to remain fit and healthy in future.

It was very impressive to see how well you understand your own achievement and can explain what your next steps are to get better. This is an important reason why so many of you work very hard and are driven to do as well as possible. You are right when you say that you are secure; the school is very good at keeping you safe at all times. In the Reception, children all make an excellent start to their school life but I feel that some resources indoors and outdoors lack the high quality that children deserve. I have asked the school to seek ways of improving them.

All outstanding schools benefit from outstanding leadership and your headteacher is great. She knows about each of you and has created a super team that involves you, your teachers and parents and members of the community. I trust that you will all continue to work hard for yourselves but also to help others so that the school continues to get even better in future.

I wish you all the very best as you move onto the secondary school and hope that the care and support that St Lawrence gives you will help you do very well in life.

Yours sincerely

Mr David Byrne
Lead inspector

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