

Melling St Wilfrid Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119536
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	379830
Inspection dates	10–11 July 2012
Lead inspector	Susan Walsh

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	25
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jill Evans
Headteacher	Geraldine Andrews
Date of previous school inspection	21 January 2009
School address	Lodge Lane Melling Carnforth LA6 2RE
Telephone number	01524 221538
Fax number	Not applicable
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Introduction

Inspection team

Susan Walsh

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days notice. The inspector visited eight lessons and saw four teachers teach. Meetings were held with pupils, staff, and members of the governing body. The inspector observed the work of the school. She looked at the school development plan, minutes of governing body meetings, and the school's records of pupils' progress, as well as a wide range of the pupils' work. Safeguarding documents and other policies were scrutinised. Questionnaires completed by 11 parents and carers were analysed, as well as questionnaires from pupils and staff.

Information about the school

This is a very small primary school, where pupils are taught in two mixed-age classes. Very few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is above average. Most pupils come from outside Melling village. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the usual times is higher than seen typically. The headteacher has a significant teaching commitment. The headteacher works full-time and is supported by a senior teacher and two teachers who work part-time, plus two support staff. The school meets the current floor standards, which set the government's minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school that is heavily involved with its local community. It is not yet an outstanding school because teaching is good, rather than outstanding, and pupils' progress in mathematics is not as good as progress in English, more-able pupils do not make enough progress in writing, and data about pupils' progress is not used to best effect. Pupils' outstanding attitudes to learning, including their ability to work independently and to use their initiative, make an important contribution to their progress.
- Pupils make good progress from their individual starting points to reach average levels of attainment. Progress is consistently good in Key Stage 1. Although pupils in Key Stage 2 make good progress in reading and writing, their progress in mathematics is only satisfactory and this is linked to inconsistencies in the curriculum for mathematics. Additionally, more-able pupils do not always reach the higher Level 5 in writing at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The quality of teaching is good. Activities are always exciting, interesting and delivered with great enthusiasm. The teaching of reading skills is a particular strength. However, the quality of mathematics teaching in Key Stage 2 is inconsistent. Explanations of mathematical concepts, sometimes, lack clarity and the quality of adult support is variable. Marking does not always tell pupils how to improve their writing.
- Behaviour is outstanding. In lessons, pupils listen carefully to their teachers always and try their very best. Pupils feel extremely safe and secure in the school and have very high levels of self-esteem.
- Staff and members of the governing body are highly ambitious for the pupils. Consequently, pupils are provided with a wide range of exciting opportunities that promote their spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development successfully. Teachers work well to share good practice and the management of performance is good. Although the school has extensive data relating to pupils' individual progress, it has not yet analysed and evaluated this data in order to identify subtle variations in patterns of progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress in mathematics in Key Stage 2 by:
 - ensuring that pupils have a good understanding of shape, space, and measure, and can solve problems and manipulate data
 - making certain that explanations of mathematical concepts and methods are always crystal clear
 - checking that pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, are making good gains in their learning when they are working with adults other than the class teacher.

- Maximise the progress that more-able pupils make in writing by:
 - making sure that pupils have ample opportunities to practise creative story writing and use exciting vocabulary and other techniques to make their writing more interesting
 - improving marking and target setting, so that all pupils are provided with specific guidance about how to improve their work.

- Improve the impact of leadership and management by developing the analysis of data, so that the school has a clearer view of patterns of progress over time.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Children's skills levels on joining the Reception class vary considerably from year to year. However, in recent years, attainment on entry has often been below average. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because of good teaching, where expectations are high. The good progress is sustained in Key Stage 1. For example, when children from Year 1 and 2 were taught the column method of addition, one boy exclaimed joyfully, 'I could not do this before, but now I am a Billy Whizz'. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress also in reading and writing, as well as mathematics. Most are able to read fluently with expression and a good level of understanding. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is variable, reflecting pupils' individual starting points. However, it is never lower than the national average, including in reading.

Although the progress observed in lessons is good in Key Stage 2, it is more inconsistent than in Key Stage 1. Progress in reading is particularly swift and pupils, usually, reach above average attainment at the end of Key Stage 2. The good emphasis on completing research for topic work means that pupils get ample opportunities to develop their reading skills. They learn to skim text and quickly pick out relevant information. Work on children's novels, such as 'Carrie's War', is used well to develop pupils' comprehension skills. Although pupils, generally, make good progress in writing, relatively few reach the higher Level 5. Pupils' handwriting is usually very neat. Their sentences are well structured and almost always grammatically correct. However, their vocabulary choices are not always imaginative and engaging techniques, such as the use of metaphors, similes, and alliteration, are

used infrequently. There are extensive opportunities for factual writing and pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) well to improve their presentation. Opportunities to compose long stories are more limited. Progress in mathematics, although satisfactory, is slower than progress in reading and writing. Pupils' work is usually well presented and there is a strong emphasis on number and calculation. There has been less emphasis on developing pupils' understanding of space, shape, and measure, their ability to solve problems, and to handle data.

Parents and carers are correct when they say that their children achieve well. Attainment measures at the end of Key Stage 2 are often based on a very small number of pupils. Attainment has been broadly average in recent years, reflecting the fact that some more-able pupils leave before they have completed Key Stage 2. The school is especially good at supporting potentially vulnerable pupils, including those that join the school later in the academic year than usual. Pupils settle in quickly and make good progress. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress also in developing their social skills and are very well motivated. However, their progress in mathematics is slower because of variations in the quality of support they receive.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is never less than good. There are pockets of outstanding practice, for example, in music and in aspects of lessons in Key Stage 1. Consequently, most pupils achieve well over time. Teachers' expectations are high and result in a good volume of neat and well-presented work. A good effort is made to make certain that the needs of pupils of different ages and abilities are met within the two small classes. That is particularly successful in Key Stage 1, where staff have a very good understanding of how young children learn. Staff are skilled in teaching phonics (the sounds that letters make) sessions and they articulate letter sounds well.

Parents and carers are right to be pleased with the quality of teaching. They describe staff as 'warm and friendly'. Lessons in both classes are delivered with huge zeal, consequently, pupils are very keen to learn. The teaching of mathematics in Key Stage 2 is sometimes not as successful in comparison with the teaching of other subjects. That is because teachers' explanations of mathematical concepts are not always crystal clear. Teachers do not always do enough to check the learning of pupils when they are working with adults other than the class teacher, particularly those who find learning more difficult. Therefore, teachers are not always quick enough to spot when progress is slowing.

Teachers teach the interesting curriculum well and pupils are actively encouraged to use their skills in a wide range of subjects. Activities are often linked to real-life situations; an Olympic theme, for instance, is currently being enjoyed by pupils throughout the school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is promoted well. For example, in a personal and social development lesson about whether it is right to copy commercial CDs, teachers ensured that there was a lively discussion about legal issues and moral dilemmas. Pupils in Key Stage 1 receive good advice about how to make their work better but the quality of academic guidance is more variable in Key Stage 2. Sometimes, the marking of pupils' writing just congratulates more-able pupils, rather telling them clearly about how to improve

their work. Additionally, pupils are unfamiliar with National Curriculum levels and do not always know how to move their work to the next level. That is because targets are referred to infrequently in marking or in lessons.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils have highly positive attitudes to learning. Their resilience and independence is actively encouraged by staff, consequently, pupils are well prepared for secondary school. Parents and carers have only positive things to say about pupils' attitudes and behaviour. Parents and carers of pupils who have recently joined the school are effusive in their praise for pupils' personal development, saying that there has been a 'transformation' in their children's levels of 'confidence and enthusiasm'.

Pupils get on extremely well together and records show that this is usual. They say that fallings out are rare and bullying unknown. They have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying. During playtimes, pupils of different ages have fun together. In lessons, pupils collaborate well. For example, when Key Stage 2 pupils were using computers to look for information to inform the magazine articles that they were writing, they worked very well together. Pupils show high levels of courtesy to each other and often have levels of maturity that exceed those expected for their ages. They say that they feel extremely safe and secure in a school. Their knowledge of how to keep safe is very wide ranging. For instance, not only do they understand fully what they must do to keep safe when using the internet, but they know also that adults should have sensible attitudes towards drinking alcohol. Attendance rates are above average and this has a very positive impact on pupils' progress because they, rarely, miss lessons.

Leadership and management

The headteacher and the senior teacher have been pivotal in improving the school and consolidating a previously good performance. They balance their teaching responsibilities and leadership roles successfully. All teaching staff manage curriculum responsibilities effectively in this very small school. The school has demonstrated a good capacity to sustain improvement. Team teaching and mutual cooperation are strong features of the school's work. As a result of good professional development, teachers are able to share good practice regularly and learn from one another. The management of performance is good. Formal observations of teaching are well structured and focus clearly on the impact of teaching on pupils' progress.

The governing body is thoroughly involved in the life of the school and has a robust programme of monitoring and evaluation. Self-evaluation is generally accurate and is used to inform development planning. The school knows individual pupils extremely well and keeps a close eye on their academic progress and personal well-being. However, the school does not always make optimum use of whole-school data to analyse subtle variations in patterns of attainment and progress.

The curriculum is well organised. The extensive use of exciting and relevant topics ensures that there are good opportunities for practising reading, factual writing, and using ICT. Sport and music are particularly successful features of the good curriculum, which promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development

effectively. There are well-developed partnerships with a wide range of local providers of education and these are used well to extend opportunities for pupils. While the school has very close links with the local community, links with the wider community in the United Kingdom are more limited and, as a result, the pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures is restricted. That said, the school has created a very harmonious atmosphere, in which everyone is equally welcome and respected, whatever their background or abilities, and the promotion of equal opportunities is good. Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements.

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



12 July 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Melling St Wilfrid Church of England Primary School,
Carnforth, LA6 2RE**

It was a privilege to visit your school. I enjoyed talking to you all and listened very carefully to what you had to say. I was very impressed by your commitment to learning. I enjoyed looking at your topic books particularly and was pleased to see that you make good use of information and communication technology. You told me that you enjoy your physical education lessons and have lots of opportunities to be involved in sport. I thought that the visit from the orchestra from the high school was inspiring and noticed that you all made very good progress in your keyboard lesson.

You go to a good school. You make good progress because teaching is good. Some of you join the school late in the year and it is good to see that you settle in so quickly. I noticed that older pupils make better progress in reading and writing than in mathematics. I have asked your teachers to boost your progress in mathematics by making sure that all areas of the curriculum for mathematics are covered in enough depth, making certain that their explanations are crystal clear and checking your progress when you are working with other adults in the classroom. I noticed also that the older pupils who find learning easy could produce more exciting writing. I have asked your teachers to help you with this by providing you with better guidance and encouraging you to develop your vocabulary and story writing techniques.

The leaders and managers at your school are doing a good job and are working to improve your school. You can help your school to improve further by continuing to do your best in lessons.

Yours sincerely

Susan Walsh
Lead Inspector

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