

Bradley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119175
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	379746
Inspection dates	2–3 February 2012
Lead inspector	Diane Auton

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	382
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Wahida Abbas
Headteacher	Alison Mitchell
Date of previous school inspection	14 October 2008
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Introduction

Inspection team

Diane Auton
Elaine Maloney
Terry Bond

Additional inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors visited 16 teachers in their classrooms and observed 19 lessons. They listened to pupils read in Key Stage 1 and observed the teaching of letters and sounds in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, groups of pupils and parents and carers. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school development plan, safeguarding and equality policies and minutes of the governing body meetings. Parents and carers did not respond to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in sufficient numbers, in order to aid inspection planning. However, inspectors reviewed information provided by parents and carers in 94 completed questionnaires. They also took into account the views of pupils in Key Stage 2 and those of staff expressed in the questionnaires they returned.

Information about the school

The school is larger than most primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of disabled pupils, pupils with special educational needs or with a statement of special educational needs is also average. Most pupils are British Asian, with a small proportion of White British pupils. Most pupils do not speak English as their home language and most are at a very early stage of learning to speak and understand English when they join the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school meets the current floor standard.

Since its last inspection, the school has experienced significant staffing turbulence, including both personnel changes and long-term, health-related absences; some of the latter are still ongoing. The school did not have an appointed headteacher during the school year 2009-2010. A new headteacher came into post in September 2010 and a new assistant headteacher was appointed in November 2010.

Since its last inspection, the school has achieved the Sports Quality Mark, the Quality in Study Support and Extended Services award from Canterbury Christ Church University and accreditation from Salford University for creative listening training. The school provides a breakfast club every day during term time.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key Findings

- The school's overall effectiveness is currently satisfactory. Children join the Reception class with skills considerably below those usually expected for their age; they make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Attainment by the end of Year 6 has been below average for several years, because progress rates have been uneven as pupils move up through the school. Actions taken to address this in the last and current years are starting to make an impact, however, and, as a result, progress is improving, often rapidly, and pupils' attainment is starting to rise. There has not been time for these improvements to be reflected in assessment outcomes at the end of the key stages.
- Teaching is satisfactory rather than good overall, because it is inconsistent across classes. Although good and outstanding teaching was seen during the inspection, in a significant minority of lessons, teaching was only satisfactory. Work in pupils' books in most classes showed that they benefit from good advice and direction provided through constructive marking; in some classes, however, marking is less helpful and pupils make slower progress.
- Pupils feel extremely safe and secure in school. Their behaviour is good, often excellent, and they are considerate of others. Older pupils frequently act as buddies to younger ones, enhancing the school's supportive 'family' ethos. Pupils work hard in lessons and take a pride in their work and achievements.
- The new headteacher has created a positive team ethos and the governing body and staff share her vision for taking the school forward. Effective monitoring has helped to lift the overall quality of teaching, but there is more to do to ensure consistency. The curriculum is designed well so that lessons are interesting and engaging for pupils. The school development plan sets out appropriate actions to bring about improvement, but success criteria are not defined sharply enough, and this reduces leaders' ability to assess the impact of their actions.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Reinforce the ongoing drive to raise attainment and accelerate the rate of pupils' progress by:
 - ensuring through rigorous monitoring that the quality of teaching is consistently good or better across the school
 - improving consistency in the quality of marking, so that marking always gives pupils clear guidance about the next steps they need to take in order to improve their work
 - defining precise success criteria in the school development plan, so that the impact of actions can be measured accurately to provide an overview of school performance.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory. This is an improving picture, however. Pupils are responsive in lessons and they apply themselves diligently to their work. They are enthusiastic learners, sometimes becoming deeply absorbed in their activities in lessons. They listen carefully to instructions, work well with a partner or in a group, discuss and share ideas collaboratively. Pupils working in a writing activity in Year 6, for example, provided constructive criticism and advice for each other, re-drafting their writing in detailed discussion with their partners in the lesson. This was clearly helping them to raise the standard of their work. Attainment across the school is below average but is improving rapidly and is now much closer to age-related expectations.

Despite their exceptionally low starting points on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage, children settle in quickly and develop interest, curiosity and positive attitudes to learning in the Reception classes. Good teaching and sensitive support enable them to establish basic English language skills successfully during their first year in school. Pupils throughout the school progress increasingly well in developing linguistic skills and confidence. In Year 6, for example, pupils showed they were able to discuss complex issues in a literacy lesson and could identify and explain inference in a text.

The good teaching in most classes is enabling pupils to approach more challenging tasks with growing confidence. In the minority of classes where teaching is less effective, however, progress is slower. Across the school, pupils' rate of progress in literacy has started to accelerate. Regular, well-targeted teaching of letters and the sounds they make and well-structured guided reading sessions are giving younger pupils the tools they need to move their learning forward. Pupils are using their developing skills to read new or difficult words and they read with interest and enjoyment. Attainment in reading by the end of the Year 2 and Year 6 is now broadly average.

Evidence from the school's assessment data, from lesson observations and from scrutiny of work in pupils' books all confirmed that progress is at least satisfactory in all year groups, in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities make satisfactory, often good, progress, as a result of the well-targeted support

the school provides for them. Overall, the majority of parents' and carers' responses indicated that they are happy with their children's progress and attainment.

Quality of teaching

With few exceptions, parents and carers indicate that they are pleased with the quality of teaching provided for their children. Most lessons are planned well to take the range of learners' needs into account. The pace of learning is brisk and this is helping pupils to progress well in good or outstanding lessons. Most teachers have high expectations of pupils. Teaching assistants contribute well to all pupils' learning and progress and particularly to that of pupils with additional needs. Excellent relationships in the classroom mean that pupils are secure and happy and ready to learn. In the small number of less effective lessons seen, pupils' interests were not fully captured and tasks were not always matched well to their learning needs.

Pupils work in teaching sets grouped according to pupils' attainment in mathematics in Key Stage 2 and in English in Years 4, 5 and 6. This relatively new strategy is starting to have a positive impact on outcomes for pupils, especially where it is supported by good or outstanding teaching. Pupils of lower and average ability benefit considerably from smaller group teaching and the pace of learning is usually brisk for more-able pupils. Imaginative teaching strategies are sometimes used to good effect, bringing learning alive for pupils. For example, a vibrant literacy activity in the Reception classes was based on the story of 'The Green Queen'. Children greatly enjoyed asking questions and exploring the events in the story with staff who were in role and costume. They were totally captivated and engaged by the activity and made very good progress in speaking and listening during the session.

Curriculum planning often contributes well to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In some of the most effective lessons, pupils were encouraged to consider complex and sensitive issues. In Year 6, for example, pupils had been reading 'Goodnight Mr. Tom' by Michelle Magorian. In the literacy lesson, they explored and developed alternatives to the course of events in the story and the impact such changes could have on characters' feelings and actions. They showed mature understanding and empathy, they listened very well to each other's ideas and went on to produce written accounts of good quality.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour is good and often excellent. All pupils are fully included in every aspect of school life. Pupils show a sensitive awareness of the individual needs of their peers who have special educational needs and those with disabilities. In conversation with an inspector, pupils remarked that, 'We are all unique,' and spoke enthusiastically about a 'Face Me' project they had taken part in, which 'taught us more about how to understand each other'. They have great trust in the adults in school. They say that school is a safe place, 'teachers listen', and that help is always on hand if they encounter any problems. They have a well-developed understanding of different types of bullying and are able to explain clearly why they believe that there is no bullying in the school. Although a small minority of parents and carers express some concerns about bullying, most feel the school deals effectively with any behavioural issues that may occur.

The school works effectively in partnership with the parents and carers of any children whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable, in order to help to break down any

barriers to learning and for them to make progress. The well-attended breakfast club gets the day off to a happy start. Attendance has improved rapidly during the past five terms and is now in line with the national average for primary schools.

Leadership and management

In her relatively short time in post, the headteacher has started to move the school forward. Staff at all levels contribute increasingly to helping drive improvement. The school chooses and plans appropriate actions for raising attainment and promoting pupils' learning and progress, although success criteria for measuring how well the school is doing are not sufficiently precise. The information gained from regular and rigorous progress reviews is used well to ensure appropriate levels of challenge and support in learning activities. The actively involved and well informed governing body is developing its capacity to challenge and hold the school to account. Areas for improvement have been identified accurately and work is under way to address them. All of these factors mean that the school has satisfactory capacity to continue to improve.

The school complies well with statutory requirements for safeguarding through well managed procedures and through an ongoing review of their effectiveness. The school supports the good promotion of equal opportunities and access to educational entitlement; discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.

The curriculum is good. This is because subjects are brought together in topics and themes that are interesting, relevant and engaging for pupils. The curriculum is enriched by opportunities for pupils to develop skills in sports and the arts and by an exceptional range of after-school activities. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about many of these, which include Modern Arabic, forensic science, Bollywood dancing and a 'book café', saying that 'everyone wants to come to the clubs!' A range of visitors and visits, including residential trips, contributes effectively to promoting pupils' academic, personal, social, health and citizenship education.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils clearly understand and adhere to the school's simple code for behaviour. They show an excellent understanding of the sound moral and social values the school promotes. There are many opportunities in lessons and assemblies for them to reflect on and discuss important issues and they show mature and thoughtful attitudes in their discussions. They are gaining valuable cultural insights through the school's active involvement with local initiatives, such as the multi-faith Building Bridges Pendle project, and with projects in Pakistan, through the Pakistani Welfare Forum.

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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	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 2010 to 31 August 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.
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.
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.



6 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bradley Primary School, Nelson, BB9 7RF

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your school. As you know, we came to see how well the school is doing and how you are all getting on with your learning. We enjoyed our visit very much and it was a great pleasure for us to meet you all.

We found that Bradley is a satisfactory school where many improvements are starting to happen. We saw that it is a happy place for you to learn in and grow together. Your education gets off to a good start in the Reception classes. You are well behaved and very polite young people. Your attendance has improved and is now average. Keep up the good work and see if you can make it even better! It was good to see that you work hard in your lessons, enjoy your work very much and get on very well with each other and with the grown-ups in school. They look after you well. They are working very hard, too, to make sure that you are provided with an interesting curriculum, and we were very pleased to hear you tell us how much you enjoy your lessons. Because of all this, your learning and progress are both improving.

The school's leaders agree with us that further improvements are needed, so that you can all achieve as well as possible. These are some things I have asked them to do next, because I think they will help your school to carry on improving.

- Make sure that teaching is always good or better.
- Make sure that, when teachers mark your books, they always give you clear advice on what to do next to improve your work.
- Improve the big plan that they make for the school each year by putting more details in it about how they are going to measure how well the school is doing.

You can help with all of this by continuing to be happy, hard-working learners. Thank you once again for a very enjoyable two days and best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Diane Auton
Lead inspector

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