

Mytham Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 105190 |
| Local authority | Bolton |
| Inspection number | 377194 |
| Inspection dates | 15–16 February 2012 |
| Lead inspector | Liz Godman |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 326 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | William Earnshaw |
| Headteacher | Angela Eastwood |
| Date of previous school inspection | 5 November 2008 |
| School address | Mytham Road Little Lever Bolton BL3 1JG |
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Introduction

Inspection team

| | |
|-------------|----------------------|
| Liz Godman | Additional inspector |
| Jean Tarry | Additional inspector |
| Mark Hilton | Additional inspector |

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 27 lessons taught by 15 teachers or teaching assistants. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body and staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at the school's records of monitoring and evaluation, school development plans and pupils' progress data. Inspectors looked at questionnaires returned by pupils and staff and 111 completed questionnaires from parents and carers.

Information about the school

The school is larger than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average, while the proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly average. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The school meets the current floor standard.

There are breakfast, after-school and holiday clubs which operate at the school. These are not managed by the school's governing body and are subject to separate inspection arrangements. The school has the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Leading Parent Partnership Award and Investors in People status.

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 | 2 |
| Leadership and management | 2 |

Key Findings

- This is a good school. Almost all pupils, parents and carers agree.
- The pupils' achievement is good. Children in the Reception class make good progress across the areas of learning. Good progress continues in Years 1 and 2, where pupils develop secure skills in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 2, pupils reach above average skills in reading and tackle texts confidently. By Year 6, pupils' skills in reading, writing and mathematics are at national averages because of their good progress. Their reading skills are particularly good.
- The school is not outstanding because, while teaching is good overall and a small proportion is outstanding, some teaching is satisfactory. The outstanding teaching provides a model for others and is characterised by detailed planning and activities which are modified in the light of pupils' learning and responses. Where teaching is occasionally satisfactory, teachers do not check consistently what pupils are learning, so do not adjust the work to meet their needs closely, or the pace of learning drops slightly. In many classes, pupils receive very clear feedback and are actively involved in assessing their own learning, which helps their good progress. In a very few classes, the quality of marking is less consistent and effective.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Almost all pupils say they feel safe and that bullying is rare and dealt with effectively. All parents and carers agree that their child is safe in school. The good curriculum develops pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills well. Pupils are confident and polite.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and governing body know the school well. They have used this knowledge effectively to improve teaching, particularly of writing. Senior leaders' lesson observations identify accurately points for development in teaching. However, occasionally, checks are not rigorous

enough to ensure these points and agreed whole-school approaches, to assessment for example, have been implemented.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better in all lessons by:
 - ensuring that all teachers make regular checks on what pupils are learning in the lesson
 - adjusting work to match more closely the needs of every pupil in the class and ensuring learning always progresses at a rapid pace
 - removing the inconsistencies in marking and feedback given to pupils in some classes
 - ensuring that leaders and managers follow up points for development identified during their lesson observations for individual teachers and that agreed whole-school approaches are implemented consistently.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' learning is good in most lessons and sometimes outstanding. Pupils are eager to learn, particularly enjoying practical activities and writing about the topics they are studying. Pupils in Year 2 wrote instructions with enthusiasm and precisely followed them to make a fossil rubbing. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs also make good progress in lessons, as a result of the skilled support they receive. The teaching they receive in small groups helps them to consolidate understanding from a previous lesson. Pupils in Year 4 worked with a teaching assistant to secure their interpretation of bar graphs. Those in Year 5 worked with a specialist teacher and successfully built their skills in mathematics, solving problems by halving and doubling numbers.

Children enter the Reception classes with skills below those typical for their age. They make good progress across the areas of learning and gain a secure grounding in letters and the sounds they make to help them read and write simple words. Good progress continues through Key Stage 1, so that by the end of Year 2, pupils' reading skills are above average. Pupils also make good progress in mathematics, reaching average levels by the end of the key stage.

Good progress continues through Key Stage 2, accelerating rapidly in Year 6 due to the outstanding teaching in these classes. Year 6 pupils read fluently, expressing views articulately and with high aspirations for the future. The school's data confirm that progress in reading is a strength, particularly for boys. The current Year 6 pupils are on track to exceed the national average by the end of the school year. At the end of Year 6 in 2011, the proportion of pupils who reached Level 4 and above in English and mathematics was also above average. Almost all parents and carers agree that their child is making good progress.

In the past, attainment in writing lagged behind that of other subjects. The concerted focus on this is accelerating pupils' progress. Pupils in all year groups are

increasingly motivated to write at length, taking good care with presentation and handwriting. There is also good use of information and communication technology (ICT), which is proving effective in engaging boys in writing. There are no significant differences in the attainment and progress of different groups of pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals.

Quality of teaching

The good and sometimes outstanding teaching is key to pupils' good achievement and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. An overwhelming majority of parents and carers agree that teaching is good. Teachers ensure the curriculum is planned carefully to meet the needs of each pupil. They deploy the highly skilled teaching assistants effectively to ensure the progress of individuals and groups. For example, during writing lessons, teaching assistants help pupils to talk through ideas and draw their attention to the key vocabulary to use. Adults' high expectations are raising pupils' aspirations. Teachers in Year 2 emphasised the use of 'imperative verbs' as the pupils wrote instructions. Effective classroom displays promote learning very well. In Year 6, outstanding teaching is supported by excellent use of 'working walls'. These aid cultural development by giving pupils a clear perspective on the features of good newspaper accounts or classic literature for children. Throughout the school, displays celebrate pupils' work well and the school provides a stimulating environment for learning. This sets a high standard and promotes pupils' respect for others' achievements and for the school's premises.

There is a small amount of satisfactory teaching. Here, the match of work to pupils' needs is less precise and the teacher does not make regular checks of pupils' learning. Very occasionally, work is too challenging and pupils are confused as to what they have to do or do not have skills needed to complete the task. Also, where teaching is satisfactory, the pace slows a little because too much time is spent on the introduction. This is also a feature of some of the otherwise good teaching, which prevents it from being outstanding.

In many lessons, pupils have excellent opportunities to evaluate their learning and that of others. In most classes, teachers ensure pupils have time to respond positively to feedback, from their peers or from marking by the teacher. The maturity with which pupils mark others' work and the seriousness with which they take feedback from their peers are indicative of the way in which teaching promotes pupils' good spiritual, moral and social development. In all classes, pupils' work is marked regularly. In most, pupils receive clear feedback about how well they have achieved in relation to their targets and they know how to improve their work. In a very small number of classes, marking is less consistently specific in pointing out to the pupils how to improve their work.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Most pupils say behaviour is good and that they feel safe. All parents and carers responding to the questionnaire agree their child is safe in school and almost all think there is a good standard of behaviour. A small minority of parents and carers feel that their child's lessons are disrupted by bad behaviour. Inspectors found no evidence of this. Adults manage behaviour well and teaching assistants provide good

support for pupils with identified behavioural difficulties, helping them to sustain their engagement. Just occasionally, when the lesson is less engaging, a few pupils' concentration lapses and their work rate slows. Pupils know how to stay safe and understand the risks to their safety, especially safe use of the internet because this is promoted clearly.

Almost all pupils, parents and carers say bullying is rare and, if it does occur, is dealt with swiftly. The school's careful records confirm this. Pupils understand the different forms of bullying and say that prejudice-based bullying is almost unknown. They comment that where incidents do arise, they take the form of disagreements which are resolved quickly. Pupils show respect for their local culture and for a wide variety of other cultures. The few pupils from minority ethnic groups feel fully included and play a strong part in the life of the school, for example, as school council members.

Behaviour at break and lunchtimes is good. The school has improved the play space available for Key Stage 2, with a caged area for ball games. Playground leaders help to ensure safety and good behaviour at breaks. The Key Stage 1 playground is less spacious, but younger pupils' behaviour and play at break times are also good. Pupils' attendance is well above the national average and their punctuality is evidence of their enthusiasm for school.

Leadership and management

The headteacher and senior leaders have secured good teamwork, which has resulted in good improvement since the last inspection. Strengths have been maintained and areas for improvement have been addressed successfully. Information and communication technology is now used well to support learning and the Early Years Foundation Stage classrooms are less cramped. The leadership of teaching, the curriculum and learning is also good. The curriculum provides well-chosen and interesting topics, with a good range of visits, visitors and special events. This promotes pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, giving them varied and interesting experiences.

School self-evaluation is highly accurate. Leaders know the strengths and areas for development in teaching. There are clear strategies to tackle weaknesses, which are proving effective. Professional development opportunities are targeted well to meet individual and whole-school needs. Leaders' high expectations and their relentless focus on improving teaching have resulted in substantial improvements in achievement in English and mathematics, confirmed in the re-award of the Basic Skills Quality Mark. The full effects of the focus on improvement have yet to be realised in every class and subject. Leaders recognise the need to follow up points for development for individual teachers from lesson observations and to ensure that agreed whole-school approaches are implemented consistently. Nevertheless, accurate self-evaluation, strong leadership and a track record of improvement mean that the school has good capacity for further improvement.

The governing body provides good support and challenge. Its members communicate well with parents and carers. The school's senior leaders are receptive to suggestions from parents, carers and pupils as part of their commitment to a high quality of education for all. The governing body fulfils its legal duties and the school's

arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements. Senior leaders' knowledge of pupils and their support for families are very effective in promoting pupils' well-being and in removing barriers to learning. This secures equality of opportunity. Leaders tackle discrimination vigorously. The school takes every step to communicate and engage with parents and carers so that they can assist in their child's learning. Almost all parents and carers would recommend the school to another parent or carer.

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.



17 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mytham Primary School, Bolton, BL3 1JG

Thank you for your help with the inspection. We enjoyed meeting you and seeing you at work. You go to a good school and almost all your parents and carers agree.

Children in the Reception classes make a good start to their education. In Years 1 and 2, you develop good skills in reading, writing and mathematics. We enjoyed watching you write instructions for fossil rubbings. Good progress continues through to Year 6, where your skills in reading, writing and mathematics are at national averages because of your good progress. We think there are some budding journalists among you, although I hope that aliens do not land in Little Lever too often.

Teaching is good and some is outstanding. There is also a small amount of satisfactory teaching. Where teaching is outstanding, the lessons are planned very carefully and adjusted to meet the needs of everyone. Where teaching is not quite as good, your teachers do not keep such a careful check on what you are learning, so the work is not quite right for everyone. Sometimes too, when things are not as interesting, you do not do as much work. In many classes, especially in Year 6, the marking helps you to improve and you enjoy marking your own and others' work. In a few other classes, marking is not quite as helpful to you.

You behave well and almost all of you say you feel safe. Your parents and carers agree that you are safe at school. Your headteacher, senior staff and governing body use their good knowledge of the school to improve teaching and your writing.

To make the school even better for you, we have asked them to:

- make sure teaching in all lessons is good or outstanding
- check in all lessons how well you are learning
- make sure the work is always right for everyone and that you learn quickly
- make sure marking and feedback are always helpful
- check these things are happening in every class.

You can help by continuing to work hard. I wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely
Liz Godman
Lead inspector

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