

Highfield Primary School

Inspection report

| | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 105182 |
| Local authority | Bolton |
| Inspection number | 377189 |
| Inspection dates | 15–16 February 2012 |
| Lead inspector | Andrew Clark |

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 | 329 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Dorothy Grimes |
| Headteacher | David Glyn-Jones |
| Date of previous school inspection | 8 October 2008 |
| School address | Marsh Lane Farnworth Bolton BL4 0AP |
| Telephone number | 01204 571749 |
| Fax number | 01204 793756 |
| Email address | office@highfield.bolton.sch.uk |



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



© Crown copyright 2012

Introduction

Inspection team

Andrew Clark
Clare Daniel
Anthony Buckley

Additional inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed 12 teachers teaching 16 lessons, including a joint observation with a member of the school's senior leadership team. The inspectors also observed several intervention sessions led by teaching assistants. Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and other governor representatives, and school staff including senior and middle leaders. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school development plan, safeguarding and behaviour policies, and minutes of the governing body meetings. Sixty-nine questionnaires from parents and carers were analysed, together with those completed by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

Highfield is larger than an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A small proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. A few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average. The school meets the current floor standard. The school has achieved several awards including Healthy Schools status, Eco-School Silver Award and Sportsmark.

The headteacher and approximately half of the teaching staff have joined the school since it was last inspected.

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. The pupils achieve well and their attainment is average overall in English and mathematics by the time they leave in Year 6. Standards in reading are above average. Pupils are eager to learn and present their work with care. Parents and carers are positive about the care and quality of education their children receive and strongly recommend the school.
- The quality of teaching is good overall. As a result, all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress throughout the school. Work is matched well to pupils’ needs and lessons are exciting and engaging. Very occasionally, relative weaknesses in the quality of teaching limit pupils making the best progress. Teaching is sometimes outstanding. The school is not outstanding because not enough teaching is yet of that quality.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils are good. Their behaviour in the classroom contributes well to the progress they make. There are very few instances of bullying and pupils are well informed about how to manage their own behaviour and to keep safe. Pupils’ sense of responsibility is enhanced through roles on the school and eco councils.
- The headteacher provides a clear vision for future development and is a strong role model. He is well supported by an effective senior leadership team and governing body. Teaching is led well. Procedures to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching have led to good improvements since the school was last inspected and it is well placed to continue to develop. However, the systematic involvement of all staff in contributing to developing their own and others’ work is not fully established. The curriculum is good and promotes personal development well through initiatives such as the ‘forest school’. As a consequence, pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Move the quality of teaching to outstanding in order to hasten progress and raise standards further by:
 - ensuring work challenges all groups of pupils throughout lessons
 - ensuring that pupils understand and use the guidance from marking and feedback to improve their own work.
- Ensure that all leaders and staff act promptly and effectively in responding to the outcomes of the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of their teaching.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Children make good progress from their attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage, which is generally well below that typical for their age. A strong focus on promoting children's communication skills and the rigorous use of accurate assessments to plan their next steps ensure they are keen and well prepared for future learning.

Pupils of all abilities make good progress from their starting points throughout school. They take a pride in their work and are conscientious and careful in response to teachers' consistently high expectations. The pupils work well collaboratively in group activities and make good use of opportunities for discussion in pairs to improve their understanding. Pupils increasingly take responsibility for managing and improving their own work by, for example, making good use of reference resources such as punctuation and vocabulary guides and 'working walls' which display helpful advice. However, on a very few occasions pupils do not respond fully to feedback and marking to improve their own work. The parents' and carers' response to the questionnaires indicate that children make good progress, which is reflected in the inspection findings.

All groups of pupils make good progress. This is reflected in National Curriculum assessments and tests which show a trend of improvement. The progress of more-able pupils is good. For example, in a lesson in Key Stage 2 pupils made especially good progress in asking and solving mathematical questions about mean, mode and range in their first-hand data gathering. A key strength was in the precision they showed in creating frequency graphs and histograms. This quality of work is typical of pupils of all ages. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress throughout the school because lessons are well planned to match work closely to their identified needs. Effective interventions from teachers and skilled teaching assistants ensure that their basic skills are systematically applied and developed.

Pupils' progress in reading is particularly good. It has been a focus for improvement through well-planned strategies to link letters to their sounds and promote comprehension skills. Pupils benefit by working with others of similar ability regardless of age. Pupils' attainment in reading is average by Year 2 and above average by the time they leave school. Standards in reading have risen since the last inspection at both key stages. Throughout the school pupils enjoy reading a wide range of appropriately challenging books and good-quality

fiction in English lessons. The school is successfully focusing on ensuring these standards continue and that standards of writing and mathematics rise to meet them.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is good overall. Relationships are very good and teachers make learning exciting for all groups of pupils. Pupils say that they enjoy learning and teachers help them reach their targets well. In a very small number of lessons the pace of learning and match of work to the needs of all groups of pupils are not always effective in ensuring the very best progress.

Teachers' questioning skills are good and are used well to enrich pupils' understanding. Teachers make very regular use of opportunities, such as talking with partners, for pupils to discuss, clarify their understanding and to explain their ideas to others. This often leads to meaningful written work and contributes significantly to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills.

Good links are made between subjects to make learning purposeful and to stimulate the imagination. This is often very innovative, for example in using pupils' factual research on Tudor timelines to set mathematical problem-solving tasks. Teachers have high expectations for pupils to take a pride in their work and to present it well. Work books are well organised and often high-quality displays reflect the value teachers and pupils place on good presentation. Pupils' work is accurately assessed. Pupils have a good understanding of the success criteria they are aiming to achieve in lessons because they are often involved in setting them. The teachers are thorough and systematic in providing marking and feedback on pupils' work. They regularly set precise targets for pupils to improve their own work. However, they do not consistently ensure pupils act on the advice given. Parents and carers are very positive about the quality of teaching in the school and the support that their children receive, especially for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This is also reflected in the findings of the inspection.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour is good. It is often exemplary in lessons and strongly contributes to the effectiveness of teaching. The learning mentor and the coordinator for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs provide strong support and effective guidance to pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. They work closely with parents and carers, who have very positive views about pupils' behaviour. Pupils say they feel safe and that behaviour is good. Their attendance is above average and they are punctual, ready and eager to learn. Pupils are involved in creating and monitoring school rules, especially through the school council. The findings of the inspection reflect the views of parents, carers and pupils.

The school maintains detailed records of any behavioural incidents. These are rare and appropriate action is quickly taken to address them. Pupils are well informed about different types of bullying and how to manage and avoid it. There is very little indication of bullying of any kind and pupils and their parents and carers are confident that if it should arise it would be swiftly and appropriately managed. The school makes good use of awards and celebrations to promote good behaviour and safe conduct.

Leadership and management

The school is led and managed well. The headteacher and senior leadership team have established a purposeful and effective ethos which is shared by all those involved in the school. The governing body is ambitious and well managed and makes a good contribution to school development planning. The school has an accurate view of its strengths and has a good capacity for continuous improvement overall. Monitoring and evaluation procedures are deployed well to improve achievement overall. However, although appropriate areas for improvements are clearly identified through lesson monitoring, steps to enable staff to address the few weaknesses identified are not always clearly established and taken promptly.

The curriculum is good. There is robust planning for the teaching of basic literacy and numeracy and key learning skills. Pupils have good opportunities to apply them. The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a language-rich learning environment, with well-planned activities for children to select for themselves. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are aware of others, and empathetic to their needs, in many different circumstances. They have good levels of self-esteem and self-awareness in response to well-planned opportunities to take responsibilities and extend their social and leadership skills. Pupils take a good level of responsibility for the care and management of the school's chickens and have a good understanding of environmental issues through their involvement in the 'forest school' and school gardens.

The governing body and school leaders ensure the school's effective promotion of equality of opportunity for all to succeed, and they tackle issues of discrimination well. Assessment procedures are used effectively in identifying and supporting any emerging differences in pupils' progress so that all groups of learners achieve well. The school has good procedures to promote safeguarding and to ensure all staff are suitable to work with children.

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 Highfield Primary School, Bolton BL4 0AP

Thank you for making the team feel very welcome when we inspected your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and visiting you in your lessons. You go to a good school. These are some of the best things about it.

- You make good progress throughout the school and reach average attainment by Year 6 because of good teaching. Your reading is particularly good.
- Your behaviour is good because everyone takes good care of you.
- You use your writing and mathematical skills in many different subjects. You take care to set out your work carefully.
- Your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. You take responsibilities through the school and Eco councils. You take good care of your school chickens and your woodland area.
- You enjoy your lessons and teachers give you practical and fun things to learn about.

To help your school to improve even more, I have asked your headteacher and the governing body to focus more on the improvement of teaching and make it even better by:

- making sure the work you are given to do throughout lessons is always challenging to all of you
- making full use of marking and feedback to involve you in improving your own work and helping you quickly reach the next step in your learning.

You can help by always trying your best, thinking hard and continuing to enjoy and attend school.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Clark
Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234**, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.