

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 105301
Local Authority Bury
Inspection number 287187
Inspection dates 29–30 November 2006
Reporting inspector Steve Isherwood HMI

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 on roll (school) | 233 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Date of previous school inspection | 19 November 2001 |
| School address | Holhouse Lane Greenmount, Bury Lancashire BL8 4HD |
| Telephone number | 01204 884031 |
| Fax number | 01204 882168 |
| Chair | Mr L Murray |
| Headteacher | Mrs J Howard |

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is an averaged sized primary school situated in the village of Greenmount, to the north of Bury. The area served by the school is socially and economically advantaged and very few pupils are eligible for free school meals. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Two pupils have a statement of special educational need. A before and after-school club operates from the

school premises. The club is not managed by the governing body and is subject to a separate inspection from Ofsted.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1 Outstanding

Grade 2 Good

Grade 3 Satisfactory

Grade 4 Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good, improving school with some outstanding features. Children reach high standards and achieve well. Their personal development is outstanding. They behave very well and have positive attitudes to learning. Every child is valued and grows in confidence and self-esteem. Children enjoy coming to school, feel safe and get on well with each other. Older children take good care of younger ones and, through the school council, they make a positive difference to school life.

The success of the school is underpinned by highly effective leadership of the headteacher and the commitment and teamwork of staff. One parent expressed the views of many when she said, 'Everyone pulls in the same direction to achieve a happy and successful school.' Parents are hugely supportive of the school and recognise the high standards of care it provides. They appreciate the extensive range of sporting and musical activities on offer. The school has gained an enviable reputation within the community and it has developed good partnerships with other schools and agencies.

Teaching is of good quality characterised by positive relationships and high expectations. The Foundation Stage provides children with an excellent start. From the moment they enter the school, activities capture the interest of young learners and enable them to succeed. All children, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make good progress. By Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are exceptionally high. In lessons, skilful questioning keeps children on their toes. Children are enthusiastic. Teachers engage them in lively and stimulating debate, which results in high levels of interest and enjoyment. Learning outside of lessons is enriched by the many clubs and activities which contribute to children's enjoyment.

The school is not complacent. The school leadership team, including governors, are fully committed to improvement. They have correctly identified that children could do even better in developing their writing skills. Appropriate action is being taken and improvement in writing is beginning to be seen. The school is also aware that the range of teaching styles is limited at present and plans to introduce a broader range of teaching strategies to make lessons more vital to engage the children's interest to an even higher degree.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards further in writing by providing more opportunities for children to apply their skills in subjects other than in English.
- Improve teaching and learning further by broadening the range of teaching strategies used in lessons to stimulate children's greater involvement in learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are very high and have been consistently high for several years. This represents good achievement for these children. However, they achieve less well in writing than they should.

When children first enter the school their attainment is above that which is typical for children of this age. They make an impressive start in Reception. They make very good progress and by the beginning of Key Stage 1 (Year 1), many reach levels of skill, knowledge and understanding well beyond those expected of children of this age. By the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2), standards are consistently well above average in reading, writing and mathematics.

Children, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, continue to make good progress in Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6). Challenging targets for the end of key stage national tests are generally met. Standards in English, mathematics and science are exceptionally high, as reflected in the latest test results for Year 6, in 2006. In recent years, standards in writing have been significantly lower than in reading. In 2005, assessments in Year 2, and the national tests at Year 6, confirmed that too few pupils reached the higher levels in writing.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children's personal development is outstanding. They behave very well and are caring and considerate towards each other. For example, older children organise playground activities for the younger ones and help children from the Reception class in the dining hall. The children's good attendance testifies to their enjoyment of school. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Through religious education lessons, visits to places of worship within the local community and assemblies children develop a clear understanding of Christianity and other major world faiths. They become aware of the needs of others and raise funds for several charitable causes.

Children play an active role in decision making through the school council and they feel that the staff take their views into account. Through the choir and orchestra they make a contribution to the wider community. Children generally adopt healthy lifestyles and are keen competitors in sport and games. They frequently make healthy eating choices at lunchtime but many do not choose a healthy snack at morning break. Children's high standards in basic skills and in

information and communication technology provide a firm foundation for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. They are outstanding in the Foundation Stage classes, where they enable children to get off to a flying start. Teachers throughout the school have high expectations of the children and help them to develop very positive attitudes to learning. As a result, pupils make good progress. Teachers engage pupils in lively discussions with skilful questioning. Activities for children are well matched to their abilities to capture their interest and enthusiasm. For example, Year 6 pupils enjoyed designing an advertisement to persuade people to apply for the job of Father Christmas.

The effective partnership between teachers and classroom assistants adds value to teaching and learning and ensures children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive the support they require. This group of children makes good progress as a result of well planned activities taught by skilful classroom assistants. Teachers use the information from their assessments of children's work well to help them plan the next steps in learning. They mark work conscientiously, but the quality of marking is not consistent and does not always help children realise what they should do to improve.

Teaching has a sharp focus on the development of key literacy and numeracy skills within English and mathematics. Teachers are starting to develop opportunities to develop key skills in lessons across the curriculum, but this work is at an early stage of development.

The school recognises that teachers have used a limited range of teaching styles in the past. It has begun to extend the range of teaching strategies: for example, to involve children more actively in lessons.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is of good quality. It is broad and balanced and planned to ensure children acquire skills progressively. Teachers have begun to make useful links between subjects and draw the links together so that they can be taught as topics. This approach is developed most fully in the Foundation Stage, where the children experience a vibrant curriculum. This provides a wide range of opportunities for learning through investigation and practical activities. Children in this age group make very good progress as a result of their high quality learning opportunities. Teachers in Key Stages 1 and 2 are providing more opportunities to promote the skills of enquiry, investigation and creativity, enhancing the pupils' interest and enjoyment of their work. Such opportunities, particularly those for writing in subjects other than English, are not yet

sufficiently developed to make a measurable impact on standards in writing. The school offers a high quality range of extra-curricular provision, particularly in sport and music. These add considerable enrichment to the children's experience of school and to their personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Although care, guidance and support is good overall, the school provides an outstanding level of care for children and this is recognised by the parents. This level of care enables children to feel happy and secure. Procedures for child protection, for checks on all adults working in school and for the safety and security of the site are in place. Well directed additional support is provided for the children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, enabling them to make good progress. The school gives careful attention to the needs of its vulnerable children and provides them with very good personal support. Children's progress and attainment are carefully tracked and take into account the outcomes of regular assessment. The children know of and understand their individual targets for improvement in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and they are supported in working towards them. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress and school events through regular bulletins: they are consulted through questionnaires and also encouraged to give informal feedback. Good links are made with local nurseries and play groups. The induction of children into Reception is eased by opportunities for them to visit before they begin school. Strong links with the local high school and good communications with other secondary schools in the area underpin good arrangements to support transition at the end of Key Stage 2.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The high standards identified at the time of the last inspection have been maintained and improved. This is because of the very strong leadership of the headteacher. She has the confidence of the staff and has developed the school well. It is forward thinking and reflective. The members of the leadership team possess a strong understanding of their roles and share the vision of the headteacher. She has an outstanding awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. As a result, there is clear understanding of what needs to be done to improve further and plans of good quality are in place. The professional development of staff is given top priority.

The commitment to tackle underachievement is a strength of the leadership team. Through the work of an extended team of teachers and well trained teaching assistants, the school has implemented action to raise achievement in writing. These actions are beginning to bear fruit, with increasing numbers of children achieving more highly.

The governing body plays an important part in shaping the school's direction and challenges the leadership by questioning the benefits of new procedures or initiatives. Its members are

extremely committed, well trained and offer good quality support to the school. As a consequence, and along with its other strengths, the school has good capacity to improve further.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate **School Overall**

Overall effectiveness

| | |
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| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 2 |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 2 |
| The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 1 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 2 |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes |

Achievement and standards

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| How well do learners achieve? | 2 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 1 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 2 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 2 |

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Personal development and well-being

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|---|---|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 1 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 1 |
| The behaviour of learners | 1 |
| The attendance of learners | 2 |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 2 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 |

The quality of provision

| | |
|--|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' | 2 |
|--|---|

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate **School Overall**

needs?

How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? 2

How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? 2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? 2

How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education 2

How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets 2

How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can 2

How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money 2

The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities 2

Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements? Yes

Does this school require special measures? No

Does this school require a notice to improve? No

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

As you know Mrs Auton and I visited your school recently to find out how well you are learning. We enjoyed our two days with you and thank you for being so polite and friendly. You made us feel very welcome. I am writing to let you let you know what we found.

Firstly, we would like you to know that you go to a good school. We are delighted that you work hard in lessons, always try to do your best and behave extremely well. We like the way that you get along with each other and we were impressed with your concern for others less fortunate than yourselves through your fundraising. It was very pleasing to see that so many of you enjoy music and keeping fit in sport and physical activities. We were delighted to hear the school orchestra play and we have never seen so many trophies as you have in your entrance hall.

We are impressed with the way you make decisions in the school council and think for yourselves. You are taught well, feel safe and you make good progress in your learning. Mrs Howard, the staff and governors work very hard to make the school as good as it can be and we are sure that it will continue to improve. We have asked them to do just two things which will help make your school even better.

We have asked if teachers can ensure you continue to improve your writing skills and that your lessons include opportunities for you to learn in many different ways.

Thank you for helping us with the inspection.

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