

Ashton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119238
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	358520
Inspection dates	5–6 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Ann Wallis

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	166
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Darren Evans
Headteacher	Mrs Sarah Barraclough
Date of previous school inspection	14 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 13 lessons and saw nine teachers teach. They held meetings with governors, the School Improvement Partner, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, pupils' progress data and other documentation. They analysed 56 questionnaires from parents and carers and also those from pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- How much progress groups of pupils make, particularly in English.
- How effective leaders and managers at all levels are in bringing about and sustaining improvement.
- Whether teaching is consistently good across the school.

Information about the school

This is a below average sized primary school. A well above average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. An average proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and a similar proportion speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The school has gained Healthy School status and an Eco Schools award.

The school has a special education resource facility which caters for up to 16 children aged from four to seven with speech and language impairment. Since the last inspection there has been a significant change in teaching staff. Nine teachers have left the school. The privately run on-site provision for childcare, 'Ashton Stepping Stones', and 'Sure Start Preston West Children's Centre' are both subject to separate inspections and will receive their own inspection reports. The registered provision 'Ashton Before and After School Club' was inspected in January and has received its own inspection report.

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: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Ashton Primary is a satisfactory school. The quality of teaching has improved rapidly since the last inspection. Although attainment remains low, particularly in English and particularly for older pupils, progress is now accelerating securely and quickly and achievement is satisfactory. Leadership and management are good. Leaders have firmly and successfully addressed previous weaknesses in teaching. Although gaps in pupils' learning still remain they are now being narrowed and a legacy of previous underachievement is being eradicated. Self-evaluation is rigorous. Leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the school's work rigorously and are very clear about what is needed to improve the school further. Clear systems for tracking and assessing pupils' progress and intervening in their learning if they need extra help are in place. These are now having an impact in raising attainment in English and accelerating pupils' progress across the school. Consequently, the school has good capacity to improve.

Both pupils and parents are very appreciative of the good care, guidance and support the school gives which contributes well to pupils' personal development. Consequently, pupils know how to stay safe and healthy, attend school regularly and behave well. The school also has strengths in the good partnerships it forges with parents, other schools, and specialist organisations; all of which support pupils' learning well. The school has good links with the local community but has yet to fully develop pupils' understanding of communities and cultures which differ from their own.

Children get a good start to their education in the Reception class where they make good progress from low starting points. They make satisfactory progress overall as they move through the school. At the end of Year 6 attainment currently remains low because pupils have underachieved in the past and have not yet caught up sufficiently to reach their full potential. However, it is pupils in earlier years who have benefitted most from consistently good teaching who are now reaching standards which are closer to the national average. Teaching and learning are good. Most lessons are well paced and teachers' knowledgeable and clear explanations extend pupils understanding well. In a few lessons the pace of learning is slower when teachers talk for too long and pupils have fewer opportunities to learn independently and find out things for themselves. The school is not complacent and recognises the need to share good practice in teaching more widely to ensure all lessons are good or better.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate pupils' progress, particularly in English, building upon improvements in the quality of teaching so it is consistently good or better in all lessons by:

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- sharing good practice in teaching more widely across the school
- reducing the amount of time pupils spend listening and give them more time to learn independently and do things for themselves
- continuing to eradicate a legacy of underachievement so all pupils are achieving as well as they should.
- Improve the promotion of community cohesion by:
 - developing pupils' understanding of communities and cultures which differ from their own
 - evaluating the impact of this work.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory will receive a monitoring visit from an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Children enter the school with skills which are well below those expected for their age and their attainment is below average when they enter Year 1. Most pupils work hard, concentrate well and enjoy learning. In lessons pupils were seen to be making at least satisfactory and often good progress in response to the good teaching they receive, for example, pupils in a mathematics lesson were seen to be working enthusiastically on challenges to construct different shapes. However progress and achievement across the school remain satisfactory because older pupils have gaps in their learning. These are now being closed. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those in the special educational resource facility make the same progress as their peers. They receive constructive individual support from specialist teachers and teaching assistants which gives them the confidence and skills to succeed. Results in tests and assessments for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are rising. They indicate that in 2010 pupils in Year 6 have attained standards which are low in English and much closer to average in mathematics.

Pupils behave well, both in lessons and around the school. Most treat each other, staff and visitors with kindness and respect. They have a clear understanding of right from wrong and willingly take on responsibilities, for example, as members of the school council. Pupils are punctual, attend school regularly and have good teamwork and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. These qualities, combined with their improving literacy and numeracy skills, means they are satisfactorily equipped for their future lives. Pupils enjoy taking part in a wide range of sports and speak knowledgeably about how to eat healthy food. They were keen to say how safe they felt in school.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

The school's monitoring of lessons shows that teaching is improving rapidly. Although some satisfactory teaching remains, the great majority is now good. In the best lessons work proceeds at a brisk pace and is well matched to pupils' needs. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly and ensure that all groups of pupils make at least satisfactory and often good progress. Teachers make good use of varied resources including ICT to engage pupils' interest so they enjoy learning. In a few lessons teachers expect pupils to listen for too long and some become restless so their pace of learning slows down. Pupils' work is marked regularly and they are given clear pointers for improvement. Assessment data is used well to identify where pupils have gaps in their learning and to give them the extra help they need to improve.

The curriculum is reviewed regularly and meets pupils' needs satisfactorily. The curriculum has been firmly focused on raising attainment in English and mathematics. However, different subjects are now being linked more closely together which is making the curriculum more relevant and increasing pupils' enjoyment of learning. Pupils speak enthusiastically about a good range of extra-curricular activities, particularly sports. Year 6 pupils were very keen to tell inspectors about all the highlights of their recent visit to an outdoor education centre.

The good care, guidance and support makes a strong contribution to pupils' progress and to all aspects of their personal development. The school works very closely with outside

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agencies and specialist teachers to ensure that all groups of pupils, particularly the most vulnerable and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, get the expert help they need. Good links with nurseries and other schools ensure that pupils move smoothly between the different stages of their education. The before- and after-school provision offers a suitable range of activities for the children attending. Behaviour in the club is good and staff know the children well. The provision meets the requirements for registration.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The good leadership and management of the headteacher have been instrumental in bringing about improvements to the school. Her very clear vision for improvement is shared by all staff. Staff feel valued and morale is high. Improvements to the quality of teaching, to leadership and management at all levels and in the use of assessment data are having a noticeable impact on raising attainment and improving pupils' achievement. Governors know the school well and have provided valuable stability and support during a time of significant staff change. They have yet to be fully involved in determining the strategic direction of the school. Good partnerships with parents, outside agencies and other schools support the curriculum and enhance pupils' learning well. Safeguarding arrangements are good. Staff are well trained and the school adopts best practice in all areas of risk assessment and child protection. The school works hard to identify any groups of pupils who are underachieving and is successfully closing gaps in their learning. Consequently, all are given good equal opportunities to succeed. The school promotes community cohesion well within the local community. It has yet to fully develop this work with communities further afield within Britain and overseas. The impact of the school's work in promoting community cohesion has not yet been evaluated.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children join the Reception class with skills which are well below those expected for their age, particularly in their personal development. They make good progress so their attainment, although still below, is closer to average when they enter Year 1. Teachers and teaching assistants work hard to ensure children make particularly good progress in their personal development and are equipped with the skills needed to learn. Their progress in communication, language, literacy and their understanding of numbers is slower. Most children enjoy being at school, play happily with their friends and form good relationships with adults. Their progress is assessed carefully and their individual needs are met well. They are well taught and have a good range of learning opportunities both in and outside the classroom. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed. Staff work together to plan children's learning very effectively. All safety and welfare requirements are met well.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

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Views of parents and carers

The vast majority parents and carers are very pleased with the education the school provides. They particularly value the care and support their children are given and several commented on how much the school has improved in recent years. Inspectors entirely endorse these views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ashton Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 56 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 166 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	40	71	16	29	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	41	73	14	25	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	28	50	27	48	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	41	32	57	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	31	55	25	45	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	55	25	45	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	54	26	46	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	30	54	22	39	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	31	55	24	43	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	54	25	45	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	27	48	28	50	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	34	61	22	39	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	66	19	34	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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 October 2010

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Ashton Primary School, Preston, PR2 1TU

Thank you so much for making us welcome when we came to inspect your school last week. A particular 'thank you' to those of you who took time to talk with us about all the things you do and enjoy at school. Please thank your parents and carers for filling in our questionnaire.

These are some of the things we have said about your school in our report.

- Yours is a satisfactory school where you make satisfactory progress.
- The care, guidance and support and the teaching you receive are good.
- Your school is well led and managed.
- You behave well and know how to stay safe and healthy.

This is what we have asked the staff to do:

-help you to attain even higher standards and make faster progress, particularly in English by:

making all lessons even better

asking you to spend less time listening and giving you more time to find out things for yourselves

continuing to give extra help to those of you who have fallen behind in your learning.

- improve your understanding of people who live in communities and come from countries which are different to your own.

You can help your school improve even further by attending school regularly and working with your teachers to achieve the very best you can.

Yours sincerely,

Ann Wallis

Lead Inspector

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