

Devonshire Road Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105154
Local Authority	Bolton
Inspection number	355714
Inspection dates	8–9 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Jane Austin HMI

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	396
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Barbara Porter
Headteacher	Mrs Francis Barry
Date of previous school inspection	22 May 2007
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Introduction

When the school was inspected in September 2009 its overall effectiveness was judged inadequate and it was given a notice to improve. A monitoring inspection took place in April 2010 and found that the school's progress in making the improvements required was satisfactory. The most recent inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Twenty-one lessons were observed taught by 15 teachers. Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, staff, members of the governing body, pupils and representatives of the local authority. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including: procedures to safeguard pupils; the action plan; data on pupils' attainment and progress; and samples of pupils' work. Responses in 177 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, 100 completed by pupils and 12 from staff, were analysed.

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

- The level of pupils' attainment and their overall rate of progress were examined.
- The accuracy of assessment, and the use of the information gathered from it in planning and delivering lessons appropriate to pupils' learning needs, were scrutinised.
- The capacity of the school for continued and sustained improvement was evaluated.

Information about the school

Devonshire Road is much larger than the average-sized primary school. About half the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, with almost a third of Pakistani heritage. Almost 40% speak English as an additional language with five pupils at the early stages of learning the language. A slightly higher than average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for free school meals. Although the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is much lower than average, the proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. More pupils join and leave during the school year than is usual. The school has gained the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Nurturing Environment award and Healthy School status.

The headteacher retired at the end of the last academic year. The school has been led this term by the headteacher of a local school in the role of executive headteacher. A new substantive headteacher has been appointed from January 2011. The executive headteacher will continue to support the school. The school has received extensive support from the local authority.

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

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. It is providing a satisfactory education for its pupils.

The executive headteacher's incisive analysis of the school's needs, sharply focused planning and fast-paced drive for improvement have paid dividends in a short period. She has put in place the structures and systems for continued improvement and, in conjunction with the local authority, ensured that staff have had the training required to implement these. Essential systems for assessing pupils' progress regularly, and intervening where this is not good enough, have been established. Middle leaders are rapidly gaining the skills to evaluate the quality of provision, so the school now has the management information required as the foundation for improvement. These developments mean that the school's capacity to improve is satisfactory. They are, however, quite recent and leaders recognise that further work is needed to embed them and develop the expertise of middle leaders.

Pupils' attainment is broadly average and their achievement is satisfactory. Together with improved attendance, now in line with the national average, pupils' enthusiasm for learning and good behaviour provide a firm platform for learning. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Pupils make satisfactory progress, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. An increasing proportion of lessons have good features, in part because the use of assessment to match work to pupils' needs has improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory. However, some variation in the accuracy of assessments remains and this accounts for uneven rates of progress across the school. The curriculum is satisfactory overall but opportunities for pupils to practise their basic skills across a range of subjects are not planned systematically.

Care, guidance and support have improved and are now satisfactory. The school has introduced a wide range of successful strategies to raise attendance. Good attendance is given a high profile, for instance in assemblies. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are satisfactory. Partnerships with parents are satisfactory overall. However, questionnaires indicate some concerns about how well the school responds to parents' queries about their child's progress and how best they might support this. There were also concerns about how well the school listens to their views on school life more generally.

Governance has improved and is satisfactory. The governing body is much better informed about the school's performance and offers a greater level of challenge than at the time of the previous inspection. It has ensured that statutory duties, including those related to safeguarding pupils, are met. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment by:
 - improving the consistency of teaching and learning so that it is good or better throughout the school
 - ensuring that assessments of pupils' learning provide a secure basis for identifying their needs and for planning lessons
 - providing opportunities for pupils to apply their basic skills across the curriculum.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - developing the skills of middle leaders in monitoring and evaluating provision in order to accelerate pupils' progress
 - making fuller use of the systems for tracking pupils' progress better to identify their learning needs and raise their attainment.
- Strengthen communication and partnerships with parents and carers by:
 - ensuring that they are kept fully informed about their child's progress and how best they can support this
 - taking their views into account when making decisions about school life.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

When children join the Reception class their skills and understanding are broadly in line with those expected for their age. Attainment across the school remains broadly average as pupils move through the school. A fall in the results of the Year 6 national tests in 2010 to below average reflects the lower attainment of a significant number of pupils who joined the cohort towards the end of Key Stage 2. Outcomes for those pupils who completed Years 3 to 6 at the school were in line with national averages. Pupils' enjoyment of learning and their positive attitudes make a good contribution to their satisfactory progress. They are motivated and diligent learners, collaborate well in pairs and groups, and waste no time in getting down to tasks. They respond well to activities which are fun and based on real life. For example, a Year 6 class were enthused by the challenge to calculate whether or not they spent enough time in lessons each week to meet legal requirements. These characteristics mean that their preparation for the next stage of their education is satisfactory.

Pupils say they feel safe in school. They speak warmly of the support provided by the learning mentor who helps them develop strategies to manage their emotions and deal with any upsets. They say that any incidents of bullying are dealt with swiftly and effectively. Pupils can explain which choices contribute to a healthy lifestyle but they do not always make these. They make a satisfactory contribution to the school community, for instance as school councillors and monitors, and more widely through charitable fund-raising. This contributes to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development which, though satisfactory overall, is weaker in the spiritual and cultural dimensions.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

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	3
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	3
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?

Although satisfactory overall, the quality of teaching is variable and this means that pupils' progress across the school is uneven. In the best lessons the benefits of considerable training by the local authority are evident. These lessons get off to a crisp start with quick-fire activities that capture pupils' enthusiasm and lay the ground for the next step in learning. Resources are attractive and well organised. Teachers' expositions and instructions are clear and brisk so that pupils are quickly engaged in thought-provoking activities. Tasks are matched effectively to pupils' needs, enabling all to make progress and lessons to move at a good pace. Questioning is used effectively to probe pupils' understanding. Where teaching is less effective, assessment is insufficiently accurate and not used acutely enough to ensure that tasks meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils are not allowed to take enough responsibility for their conduct or learning and this slows the pace of lessons. Nonetheless, pupils behave well.

The school ensures that pupils have sufficient opportunity to develop their basic skills. However, opportunities for pupils to practise these beyond English, mathematics and information and communication technology lessons are restricted, in part because the development of cross-curricular links is limited and piecemeal. Expectations regarding good practice in literacy and numeracy have not been consistently maintained across the curriculum until very recently so that good habits have not always been reinforced.

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Suitable provision is made to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. There is a satisfactory range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities: pupils say they would welcome more trips and visits.

The school tracks the performance of various groups of pupils to ensure that none are disadvantaged. Appropriate support is provided for those whose circumstances make them vulnerable and for their families. There are suitable links with a range of specialist agencies to ensure pupils' needs are identified and met. Arrangements for the transition of children from the Reception class to Year 1 have improved with a better match of provision to pupils' needs. However, the arrangements for the induction of children joining Reception are not firmly established and vary year-on-year.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The executive headteacher has brought a wealth of expertise to leading the school and challenged all to aim high. She has led from the front and with determination. Careful prioritising has enabled significant improvements to be made rapidly and laid good foundations for the next stage of development. The executive headteacher has worked assiduously to foster leadership capacity, particularly for middle leaders, since the senior team has been weakened for some time by long-term staff absences. The leadership of teaching and learning is increasingly resting with middle leaders, with support from the local authority. There is a much tighter link between monitoring lessons and checking that the necessary improvements have been made. In a range of areas, greater consistency is being established; for instance, in the teaching of handwriting and calculation as well as in assessment and marking.

The school tackles discrimination firmly and its promotion of equal opportunity is satisfactory. Work to promote community cohesion is satisfactory. An audit has been conducted and some local links are in place. Global links are at an early stage of development.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
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 are secure, happy and settled in the Reception class. Relationships are good and children behave well. When they join, children's skills and understanding are broadly as expected for their age and they make satisfactory progress. There is detailed recording of each child's progress in their learning journeys, with good opportunities for parents to get involved, for instance through noting what their child has done at home. The learning environment is well organised with effective use of both indoor and outdoor areas, although spaces could be set up more imaginatively. There is a suitable balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities. Adults support children's play appropriately and provide good role models for interactions.

The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. The leader, new to the post and well supported by the local authority, has made many improvements to the provision. She has identified the need to improve reading and put suitable measures in place to address this.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

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Views of parents and carers

An above-average proportion of parents returned questionnaires. Most were positive about the work of the school. A number expressed concerns, including through written comments, regarding how well the school communicates with parents and carers, particularly about their child's performance. Some also indicated that the school does not follow up their concerns or suggestions. Inspectors agree that improvements should be made in these areas. A number of parents feel that their children are not making sufficient progress and that unacceptable behaviour is not dealt with effectively. Inspection evidence shows that, overall, pupils are making satisfactory progress. Pupils' behaviour is good and the school manages behaviour well.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Devonshire Road 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 177 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 396 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	70	40	96	54	4	2	7	4
The school keeps my child safe	84	47	82	46	4	2	3	2
My school informs me about my child's progress	57	32	90	51	18	10	6	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	59	33	91	51	19	11	7	4
The teaching is good at this school	58	33	96	54	13	7	6	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	56	32	97	55	21	12	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	49	28	108	61	11	6	3	2
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)	56	32	95	54	5	3	6	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	50	28	98	55	18	10	5	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	50	28	89	50	18	10	14	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	21	97	55	23	13	6	3
The school is led and managed effectively	32	18	106	60	25	14	8	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	67	38	83	47	13	7	8	5

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.



10 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Devonshire Road Primary School, Bolton BL1 4ND

I would like to thank you all, and especially those of you who gave up time to talk to us, for helping us with the inspection. I am pleased to be able to tell you that we think your school has improved and is now providing you with a satisfactory education.

We were impressed by your good behaviour, how well you work together and the responsible approach you have to your roles as monitors or school councillors. You are enthusiastic learners, especially when your teachers prepare interesting activities. You told us you feel safe in school and know how to make healthy choices. Many more of you are coming to school regularly and attendance has gone up a lot. This will help you to make better progress.

In order for the school to continue to improve we have asked the staff to make sure that:

- your teachers know exactly how well you are doing
- they plan work that is always at the right level for you so that you learn as quickly as possible and reach higher standards
- you have plenty of opportunities to practise your literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills in all the subjects and topics you do
- your parents know how well you are doing and how they can help you with your work.

You can help your school to improve by continuing to work hard in lessons and aiming for the very best attendance.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Jane Austin

Her Majesty's Inspector

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