

# Washacre Primary School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 105199            |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Bolton            |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 355724            |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 1–2 February 2011 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Pat Kime HMI      |

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

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| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 3–11   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 138  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Mrs Gill Williams  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Miss Lisa Mitchell   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 19 September 2007  |
| <b>School address</b>                      | Clough Avenue<br>Westthoughton, Bolton<br>Lancashire BL5 2NJ |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01942 634756   |
| <b>Fax number</b>                          | 01942 634755   |
| <b>Email address</b>                       | mitchell@washacre.bolton.sch.uk                              |

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|--------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Age group</b>         | 3–11              |
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. The inspectors observed seven lessons, seeing all the teachers, and made short visits to a further seven. They had discussions with staff, pupils, parents and carers, and governors. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation provided by the school, including records of pupils' progress and the plans for school improvement. They considered responses to the inspection questionnaire that were received from pupils, staff and 16 parents or carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Has the improvement in attainment, seen in 2010 test results been maintained?
- Is there enough good teaching to enable pupils to reach the standard expected for their age by the time they leave the school?
- In view of the staff changes and the number of inexperienced teachers, is there sufficient leadership and management capacity to improve the school?
- How effectively does the school work in partnership with the on-site children's centre?

## Information about the school

The school is smaller than the average primary school. Nearly half the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. This is a very high proportion. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and almost all of these speak English. The percentage of pupils identified by the school as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is twice the national average and a significant proportion of these have emotional, behavioural or social difficulties. More pupils than average join or leave the school part way through their primary education, often late in Key Stage 2. There have been many changes of staff since the last inspection, including the appointment of four newly qualified teachers in September 2009. A new deputy headteacher has been appointed to start in April 2011. Several of the governors have only recently joined the governing body.

There is a children's centre in the same building as the school. It was inspected by Ofsted in the same week as the school and will receive a separate report which will be published on Ofsted's website.

**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

The school has been through some ups and downs since it was last inspected and has had a period of intensive support from the local authority and the City Challenge for Manchester. The school is now back on track and academic standards are picking up. The school provides its pupils with a satisfactory education. The quality of care is good, particularly for the most vulnerable, and pupils feel safe at school.

By the time pupils leave the school, their attainment is a little below the national average. Nonetheless, after a one-year dip, attainment improved greatly last year and the current Year 6 pupils' work is at a similar standard. Also, attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has improved over the last two years.

Pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning but, although there is some good teaching, lessons are not routinely planned with sufficient rigour to ensure that all pupils' learning needs are met fully. A revitalised policy for managing pupils' behaviour has ensured a consistent approach across the school. Consequently, lessons are orderly, despite the number of pupils with behavioural difficulties. The school provides considerable additional support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This enables them to progress as well as their classmates.

The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles, contribute to the community and develop the skills and personal attributes they will need for future success is satisfactory.

The headteacher and the governing body plan soundly for the future and they understand where improvement is most needed and have drawn up sound workable plans for the next term. The appointment of a new leader for the Early Years Foundation Stage has strengthened the leadership team and led to improved provision for the youngest children. In partnership with the local authority, the school has ensured good support for the recently qualified teachers and has raised the overall quality of teaching. However, these staff are at an early stage in developing the skills to contribute to the school's drive for improvement, for instance by leading its work in different subjects. Taking account of all these factors, the school's capacity for improvement is satisfactory at present.

The school has strong partnerships with many external agencies which aid its support of pupils who are vulnerable or who have particular needs. Its links with the on-site children's centre, however, are not strong and they have limited impact on the outcomes for pupils.

Up to 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.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In order to improve pupils' achievement and raise attainment, the school should:
- Improve the quality of teaching so that the large majority is at least good by:
  - - improving the match of work in lessons to pupils' varied learning needs so that all pupils are sufficiently challenged by their work
  - - ensuring that learning objectives and the criteria by which pupils' success is measured are sufficiently precise to support teachers' day-to-day assessment of pupils' learning
  - - ensuring that marking always helps pupils know how to improve their work
  - - ensuring that pupils have sufficient opportunities to develop the skills of independent learning.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - - strengthening the staff's capacity to contribute to leadership and management of the school
  - - formulating longer-term plans to guide the school's development.
- Develop a stronger partnership with the on-site children's centre to tackle the disadvantages that cause children's attainment to be below average when they join the Nursery.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

|          |
|----------|
| <b>3</b> |
|----------|

When children start in the Nursery, they can usually do less than most children their age. They make satisfactory progress in their time at Washacre but their attainment falls a little below the national average. In most of the lessons observed, pupils made satisfactory progress. The school's records show that the proportion of pupils making good or better progress has increased. However, in Key Stage 2 there is still a legacy of previous underachievement to overcome, with the areas of weakness varying between year groups.

Attainment improved last year. The school recognised pupils were not doing well enough and put extra staff in the top class. The current Year 6 pupils are working at a similar level to last year's leavers. This, along with a rising trend of attainment in Key Stage 1, shows that improvement is being sustained. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make progress at a similar rate to their classmates. In the Key Stage 2 tests last year pupils known to be eligible for free school meals did better than most similar pupils nationally. Pupils who join the school late are sometimes behind their classmates but they start to catch up.

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory in most respects. Pupils have a sound understanding of healthy living. They enjoy physical education and the extra-curricular sports clubs and the take up of school meals is high. Some groups of pupils have good opportunities to contribute to school life. For example, some of those with behavioural difficulties planned the school garden and the school council has played a major role in planning for development of the playground. The school's attendance rate has improved and last year it was higher than average. Pupils feel very safe at school and they are confident to turn to staff for help with any problems.

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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*

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>  | <b>3</b> |
| Taking into account:  |          |
| Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>   | 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        |
| <b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Pupils' behaviour</b>  | <b>3</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>  | <b>3</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>  | <b>3</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b> | <b>3</b> |
| Taking into account:  |          |
| Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>   | 2        |
| <b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>  | <b>3</b> |

<sup>1</sup> 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?

In most cases inspectors' observations of lessons confirmed the headteacher's judgements of the quality of teaching, which is predominantly satisfactory. There is no evidence of any inadequate teaching remaining and there are pockets of good teaching. However, there is not enough good teaching to enable pupils whose attainment on entry is below average to fully meet the standard expected for their age by the time they leave the school.

Typically teachers have positive relationships with pupils and manage behaviour well so lessons are orderly. Pupils know where they stand because the staff implement the school's behaviour policy consistently.

In the more effective lessons, excellent relationships between teacher and pupils result in a comfortable atmosphere of shared pursuit of achievement. In such lessons work is tailored for different groups of pupils and the activities are designed to appeal to pupils. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils wrote reports about the 'Miraculous Moon Race' after undertaking research and watching news footage of the first moon landings.

Some shortcomings in teaching hinder the effectiveness of lessons. While work is usually pitched at a suitable level for the pupils' age, it is sometimes not matched closely enough to pupils' range of learning needs, lacking challenge for some. This more often affects the brighter pupils; those with special educational needs and/or disabilities usually receive

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additional help. Learning intentions are not always sufficiently precise to support careful lesson-by-lesson assessment of how well pupils are learning. Marking is of variable quality. At times it over-emphasises indicating what pupils have achieved at the expense of pointing out how they might do better and checking that such advice is heeded. In some lessons, adults step in too soon to help pupils, who therefore lose opportunities to develop independence as learners.

The curriculum covers all that is required and in most subjects it is adequately planned to ensure that work becomes progressively more demanding as pupils move up the school. However, this is the first year that some of the classes have catered for two year groups and, in some non-core subjects, the planning does not take full account of this. The curriculum is sufficiently enriched by extra-curricular clubs and educational visits and visitors. Opportunities for pupils to participate in local inter-school sports have increased recently. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities meets their needs satisfactorily and, for those with behavioural difficulties, it is often good.

Pastoral care is good. The school takes good care of pupils and champions the most vulnerable. It is active in securing support from outside agencies to meet their needs. Pupils are confident that the adults care about them and will help them if they have any worries.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The school has benefited from external support through a period of staff changes and fluctuating attainment. This support is now much reduced. The quality of teaching has improved and the school has the capacity and determination to drive its own improvement. The headteacher has a good understanding of what needs to be done and the plans for further improvement are sound, though they look ahead only a term at a time. Teachers who joined the school when they were newly qualified confirm that they benefited from a high level of support and guidance last year. These teachers are now ready to develop skills to contribute to the school's leadership and management.

Governance is sound. Some useful in-house training has been provided by the Chair of the Governing Body and the headteacher to familiarise new governors with their roles and responsibilities and with data on the school's performance. Arrangements have been introduced to enable new governors to deepen their knowledge of the school. For instance, they have been paired up with class teachers. The governing body has audited its work and produced a sound action plan which shows that it knows the school's strengths and areas for development and it recognises the scope for greater involvement

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in strategic planning. The potential exists to build a stronger partnership with the children's centre. A member of the children's centre staff serves on the school's governing body and the school is represented on the children's centre advisory board. At present these links have limited impact on children's starting point when they join the Nursery.

Pupils have equal opportunities at Washacre. The success of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals serve as an example. The headteacher's very thorough tracking of pupils' progress underpins decisions about where to place additional support. The school works closely with the local authority's specialist staff to support pupils who have behavioural difficulties so they make progress and do not hinder learning for others.

The school gives a high priority to ensuring its pupils are safe and meets its statutory duties in this regard. Its arrangements, including those for child protection, are good. Staff are suitably trained. The headteacher acts swiftly to mobilise necessary support for pupils and keeps a close eye on how they get on as a result of it.

The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. It knows its local community and has planned links with it as well as with school's abroad. Wider links nationally and the promotion of community cohesion through work across the curriculum are less carefully considered and planned.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Much has been done this school year to improve the quality of resources and the organisation of the Early Years Foundation Stage classroom, to strengthen teamwork and to improve the arrangements for assessing children's progress. The indoor provision is now good. The classroom is a lively and welcoming environment for learning. Outdoors,



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there are some very appealing resources and children's activities lead to worthwhile learning. However, not all areas of learning are catered for outdoors.

Children settle into school well. They enjoy learning and grow in confidence and independence. The direct teaching of small groups of children is generally good. The promotion of learning through children's self-chosen play activities is more varied; at times staff do not make the most of opportunities to push learning on.

In 2010, children left the Reception class with lower attainment than is typical for children of this age, particularly in some of the skills for early reading and writing and mathematics which are the weakest areas when they start school. Boys did less well than girls. The school's records show that rates of progress are better this year. This is encouraging but it is too early to confirm the impact of improvements in provision and leadership and management on the outcomes for children.

Even though the children's centre is co-located with the school, many parents and carers of children starting in the Nursery have not used its facilities. The Early Years Foundation Stage team leader has joined the advisory board for the children's centre. She is keen to develop the partnership between school and children's centre, seeing the potential to help children develop readiness for school and to raise their attainment on entry.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>                   | <b>3</b> |
| Taking into account:   |          |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage                          | 3        |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage                       | 2        |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2        |

**Views of parents and carers**

The percentage of questionnaires returned to the inspection team was low. Most of the returned questionnaires were from parents or carers of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. These parents and carers are unanimous in their satisfaction with the school. Parents and carers who spoke informally with inspectors were also highly positive about the school. They find the staff very approachable and caring. The inspectors' judgements on some key aspects of the school's work, such as pupils' progress and the teaching, are not as positive as those of these parents and carers.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Washacre 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 16 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 138 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements  | Strongly agree |    | Agree |    | Disagree |   | Strongly disagree |   |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
|   | Total          | %  | Total | %  | Total    | % | Total             | % |
| My child enjoys school  | 13             | 81 | 3     | 19 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe  | 12             | 75 | 4     | 25 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress  | 8              | 50 | 8     | 50 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school   | 9              | 56 | 7     | 44 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school   | 11             | 69 | 5     | 31 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning  | 9              | 56 | 7     | 44 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle   | 11             | 69 | 5     | 31 | 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) | 4              | 25 | 11    | 69 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs  | 10             | 63 | 6     | 38 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour  | 5              | 31 | 10    | 63 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns   | 7              | 44 | 8     | 50 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively   | 10             | 63 | 6     | 38 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school   | 11             | 69 | 4     | 25 | 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      | 59  | 35   | 3            | 3          |
| Primary schools      | 9   | 44   | 39           | 7          |
| Secondary schools    | 13  | 36   | 41           | 11         |
| Sixth forms          | 15  | 39   | 43           | 3          |
| Special schools      | 35  | 43   | 17           | 5          |
| Pupil referral units | 21  | 42   | 29           | 9          |
| All schools          | 13  | 43   | 37           | 8          |

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul> |
| 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.**



3 February 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Washacre Primary School, Bolton, BL5 2NJ**

Thank you for welcoming the inspection team when we came to your school recently. I am writing on behalf of us all. We enjoyed our time at Washacre. Listening to you and observing your lessons helped us to form our judgements. This letter is to report these judgements to you.

You are getting a satisfactory education. The school went through a bad patch when pupils did not do well enough but things are back on track now. Results in the SATS shot up last year and the current Year 6 look to be doing just as well. The staff take good care of you. They go out of their way to help pupils with extra needs and they make sure you are all safe at school. We were pleased to see that your record on school attendance is better than most schools. Well done; do not let it slip.

Miss Mitchell and the inspectors discussed how your school could be improved and the most important things to achieve are:

- more good teaching
- building up the teachers' skills for taking on some of the leadership jobs
- strengthening the partnership between the school and the children's centre.

I wish you all well for the future. I am sure you will have good ideas about how the school could improve and you will be able to propose them through the school council.

Yours sincerely,

Pat Kime

Her Majesty's Inspector

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