

Leverhulme Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131271
Local Authority	Bolton
Inspection number	360244
Inspection dates	2–3 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Steven Hill

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	331
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr John Byrne
Headteacher	Mr Nigel Ashton
Date of previous school inspection	6 February 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Nineteen lessons were observed taught by 11 teachers. Meetings were held with staff, pupils and representatives of the governing body. The inspection team observed the school's work, and looked at samples of pupils' books and other work, and how it was marked. A variety of documentation was scrutinised, with a particular focus on that relating to pupils' progress, the curriculum and safeguarding. Questionnaires were analysed from staff, pupils in Key Stage 2 and 63 parents and carers.

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

- The team analysed the extent to which progress has improved since the last inspection, particularly in writing, with a focus on the comparative achievement of girls and boys.
- Inspectors checked how well teachers provide sufficient challenge in lessons to different groups, and whether they show pupils clearly how to improve their work.
- The team analysed the effectiveness of the school's monitoring of provision and its tracking of pupils' progress, particularly the role of subject leaders in these processes.

Information about the school

Leverhulme is an above-average-sized primary school in an urban area. The very large majority of pupils are of White British origin, with a few coming from a range of different minority ethnic heritages. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. Just over half of the pupils are known to be entitled to free school meals, a very high proportion. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The school has recently gained the International School award, and is also an International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) World School, authorised to deliver the Primary Years Programme of the IBO. Children of different ages in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught together in a single unit, newly refurbished since the last inspection. There was some disruption to staffing in Key Stage 1 at the start of this academic year.

The school hosts before and after-school clubs, as well as a holiday club. These are managed privately and are inspected and reported upon separately.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school which has made great strides since the last inspection because of good leadership and management. The headteacher and a cohesive leadership team have worked together effectively to increase pupils' progress by helping colleagues to improve the quality and consistency of their teaching. Subject leaders play a full part in this process. Teaching is now good and pupils achieve well throughout the school. Improved tracking of pupils' progress enables teachers to provide challenging work for all groups. This has also helped the school to intervene effectively to help any individuals who start to underachieve to catch up. The provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, which was already good, has also improved and is now outstanding. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and, together with the strong track record of better outcomes and provision, shows that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

The provision for care, guidance and support is good. In particular, pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable are helped to succeed socially and academically. The school is a harmonious community where pupils enjoy learning and get on well together. Pupils feel extremely safe in school and are confident that the adults will deal with any untoward issues that arise. Their behaviour is good and this supports their good learning. They have well-developed skills in working collaboratively, and show independence when required. However, they have only limited opportunities to undertake responsibilities around the school and older pupils, in particular, are keen to do more. They are proud of their school and conscientiously undertake those responsibilities they are given. Pupils greatly enjoy the wide-ranging activities provided by the good curriculum, especially in sports, and value the international dimension. They develop good skills in information and communication technology (ICT) when they work in the computer suite. However, they have too few opportunities to use these skills in other subjects when they work in the classroom, as the equipment available is limited in quantity and quality.

Pupils make good progress from low starting points and achieve average standards at the end of Year 6. For some years, attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has been significantly below average, particularly for boys in writing. Many pupils are slow to develop a fluent style of handwriting, which slows their progress and continues to do so throughout the school. Standards are rising and, in 2010, attainment at the end of Year 2 was broadly average in reading and mathematics, but was still significantly below average in writing. Progress has been somewhat erratic in the last year because of instabilities in teaching. Pupils in Year 2 have not yet made the progress that might have been expected from their starting points at the end of Reception. More stable staffing this term, consistent teaching and a new programme to help pupils improve their writing, are now leading to rapid progress in the class. At Key Stage 2, pupils are making good progress in writing. Records show that Year 6 pupils who left in 2010 achieved particularly well during their time in Key

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Stage 2. Boys did especially well, so that their previous shortfall in standards was overcome.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards of writing at Key Stage 1, and hence in the rest of the school, by:
 - - developing and embedding the recently introduced programme to help pupils write at length
 - - ensuring pupils start to use a fluent, cursive style of writing at an earlier age
 - - consolidating the improved teaching at Key Stage 1.
- Give pupils more and better opportunities to use their ICT skills in other subjects, particularly by ensuring that there is sufficient good-quality equipment available to support this.
- Give pupils more opportunities to take on a wider range of jobs and responsibilities around the school, so that they can help the school to improve.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with attainment that is generally below, and often well below, that expected for their age. They make good progress across the school to achieve average standards by the end of Year 6. Different groups, such as those known to be entitled to free school meals, and the small number from minority ethnic groups, all achieve well. Pupils work hard and take a pride in their achievements. They enjoy learning, and relationships are very good. In an English lesson in Year 4, for example, boys and girls worked extremely well together to act out scenes from a play. They collaborated well, and their behaviour was excellent as they put a great deal of effort and enthusiasm into their performances. They showed great animation and expression in their speech, displaying a good understanding of the script. Year 6 pupils demonstrated great perseverance in a science lesson as they worked as teams on electrical circuits, thinking through ideas carefully in response to their teacher's challenging questioning. In an outstanding lesson in Year 2, all pupils made excellent progress in their understanding of symmetry because different tasks were extremely well matched to their different needs. They responded thoughtfully and enthusiastically to their teacher's searching questions. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same good progress as their classmates. This is because they are given work that is manageable but challenging, in line with their attainment. In addition, teachers and teaching assistants continually urge them to refine and improve their work, encouraging independent thinking while ensuring that help is provided when needed. Pupils who have emotional difficulties receive excellent support, notably from the learning mentor, which makes a great contribution to their personal development, and ensures they are able to learn well.

Pupils from all backgrounds get on well together at play and in class. They enjoy learning about people from different parts of the world, illustrated by some good work on display about Haiti. They have a secure understanding of right and wrong, and show respect and tolerance for others. They contribute to a range of charities to help those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils take a pride in being on the school council, but many pupils are unclear about its impact, or to what extent they influence decisions in school. Pupils

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greatly enjoy school life and have an excellent understanding of how they are kept safe, and how to keep themselves safe. They are very enthusiastic about exercise and sport, observed when pupils in Year 6 joined in a gymnastics lesson energetically, attaining high standards. Pupils understand the importance of hygiene and a balanced diet. Attendance has improved in the last few years and is now average. Together with their satisfactory skills in literacy and numeracy, and their positive attitudes to work, this ensures pupils are appropriately prepared for their future lives, in school and beyond.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
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	2

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?

Teaching and learning are good across the school, with an increasing number of outstanding lessons. Pupils are managed well and they respond positively to their teachers' high expectations of work and behaviour. Good use is made of the school's better systems to track pupils' attainment to plan work that is matched well to the needs of different groups, so all make good progress. A good range of effective intervention groups is used to provide extra help for any pupils whose progress falters. Teachers and teaching assistants are skilled at monitoring pupils' progress during lessons, quickly addressing any misconceptions and continually challenging pupils to extend their thinking and refine their work. Marking is of good quality, a major improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are told very clearly in what ways they have succeeded, and how they can improve in the future. Good use is often made of discussion to help pupils to think

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through their ideas. Teachers use interactive whiteboards well to illustrate their explanations and to model tasks.

The curriculum has a strong international element and makes a good contribution to pupils' enjoyment and to their cultural development. It develops their understanding of the wider world very well, while fully covering National Curriculum programmes. Good links are made between different subjects in the themes studied, which helps make learning more meaningful to pupils. In a good lesson in the computer suite, pupils made notes after using the internet to research different habitats. This helped develop their understanding of science and geography, as well as their literacy and ICT skills. However, other opportunities to develop such links through ICT are sometimes missed in lessons in the classroom. There is a wide range of extra-curricular clubs, particularly for sport, which extend pupils' learning, as well as a good range of educational visits to enhance the curriculum.

The good quality pastoral care is based on a secure knowledge of pupils' needs and high quality work to tackle the needs of those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. There are striking examples of how the care and support provided by staff, making good use of outside agencies, and fully involving their families, have helped such pupils to cope with problems and to succeed in learning. A good focus on attendance has reduced the number of persistent absentees and raised overall attendance figures. Arrangements for children starting school and for those moving to secondary school are good. A good start has been made on easing transition between the Reception and Year 1 classes by modifying the curriculum, but this work is not complete.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior leadership team have fostered a common purpose among staff and driven forward improvements well, with good backing from a knowledgeable governing body. Subject leaders now play a full part in the extensive monitoring of lessons which has been very effective in helping teachers improve their practice. Governance is good. The governing body has a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and provides a good balance of support and challenge to help the school move forwards. Pupils from different backgrounds are all fully included in the different aspects of school life, and the school successfully promotes an ethos of tolerance and respect for other people. Equal opportunities are further enhanced by the rigorous addressing of any underachievement by different groups. Most notably, an earlier shortfall in boys' achievement in writing has been eliminated by the end of Year 6. Good links with a range

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of partners support pupils' well-being, especially those in challenging circumstances. Relationships with other local schools contribute well to improvements in the curriculum, particularly in extending sporting opportunities. Links with other schools around the world, for example in Sumatra, enhance pupils' cultural development, as well as strongly supporting its good promotion of community cohesion. The school has a positive relationship with parents and carers, and provides them with good information about their children's progress. Their views are sought regularly, and taken into account in decision making. They and their children have contributed their views towards the school's procedures for safeguarding, helping make them good. The school fully meets requirements for safeguarding, giving it a high priority, and is proactive in involving outside agencies when needed.

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	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Excellent leadership and management have resulted in outstanding effectiveness. The leader uses data extremely well to drive up standards and improve provision. A clear picture of the provision's strengths and weaknesses is based on frequent monitoring and rigorous action to address any issues that arise. As a result, provision is outstanding. The new unit provides an excellent environment for learning and is very well resourced. Planning is exceptionally detailed and, because it is securely based on accurate observations of individuals, meets each child's needs extremely well. Welfare requirements are fully met. Children make good progress and attainment has improved so that, in most years, children reach standards that only fall a little short of the national average. Reception children made good progress in their literacy skills in a session when they were encouraged to predict elements of a story, while adults also make sure they were focused on the links between letters and sounds in words. Relationships are excellent so children are happy in the setting and show high levels of independence. They make their views

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known and staff respond well by matching activities to their interests as well as their attainment. Behaviour is consistently good.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

The response rate of parents and carers to the questionnaires was relatively low. Those parents and carers who replied were extremely positive about the school and what it provides for their children. They particularly value that their children are safe and happy, and that they are making good progress because of good teaching. Inspection evidence supports these positive judgements.

A few parents and carers had concerns that their children's particular needs are not met, or that the school does not take their views into account. Inspection evidence indicates that the school is good at taking pupils' individual needs into account, and that this supports their good progress. The systems that the school has to take parents' and carers' views into account are good, and staff were able to point to a number of instances where provision had changed in response to the views expressed.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Leverhulme Community 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 63 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 331 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	37	59	24	38	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	32	51	29	46	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	22	35	36	57	2	3	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	41	33	52	0	0	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	24	38	37	59	0	0	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	30	39	62	2	3	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	30	41	65	2	3	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)	15	24	44	70	0	0	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	30	37	59	3	5	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	40	36	57	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	24	42	67	4	6	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	24	38	34	54	1	2	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	28	44	32	51	1	2	1	2

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).

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">■ 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.



4 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Leverhulme Community Primary School, Bolton, BL2 6EE

Thank you for all your help and your warm welcome when we inspected your school. We enjoyed talking to you and were pleased to see that you work hard in lessons. You told us that you enjoy learning, and that you feel very safe at school, because the adults take good care of you, and we could see that this is true.

Your school is providing you with a good education. It has improved a lot since the last inspection, because all the staff have worked hard to make things better. You are making good progress because the teachers are good at helping you to learn. The Reception and Nursery children are given a particularly good start to their learning. By the end of school, you are reaching the standards that are expected. However, many of you were a little slow in getting started on your writing in Years 1 and 2, so that you have to work particularly hard to catch up in the older classes. We have asked the school to concentrate on improving writing in the younger classes, so that everyone gets off to a better start. We were impressed by your good behaviour and by how well you all get along together. You are very sensible at taking on jobs around the school, and you told us you would like to have more responsibilities. We have agreed with your headteacher that this is a good idea, and he and the other adults are going to organise this, so that you can help the school to get even better.

You get plenty of interesting things to do in the school, especially sport, and you learn a good deal about different people in the world. You are good at using the computers in the ICT suite, but do not have enough chance to use your skills back in the classroom. We have agreed with the adults that they are going to change this. We hope that you carry on enjoying life at Leverhulme, and that you keep working hard, especially with your writing, and the different jobs you do.

We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Steven Hill

Lead inspector

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