

Woodbank Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105292
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	367365
Inspection dates	21–22 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Marie Cordey

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	302
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Allan Dye
Headteacher	Geraldine Woodward
Date of previous school inspection	3 October 2006
School address	Brandlesholme Road Bury BL8 1AX
Telephone number	0161 7611253
Fax number	0161 7641948
Email address	woodbank@bury.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons and observed 11 teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including the school's self-evaluation evidence, the school improvement plan and internal and external monitoring reports of the school's work. Inspectors analysed 101 questionnaires completed by parents and carers and also questionnaires completed by pupils and staff.

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

- How well pupils achieve in all subjects, particularly in mathematics.
- The effectiveness of teaching and the curriculum in engaging and challenging all pupils and in raising their attainment.
- The capacity demonstrated by leaders and managers in securing sustainable school improvement.

Information about the school

The school is larger than most primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. A small number of pupils are from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The school has gained Healthy School Status and the Activemark for its sport provision. The previous headteacher retired in July and the school is currently led by a headteacher who is on secondment from another school in the borough. A new headteacher has been appointed and will take up post in January 2012. The deputy headteacher is in an acting capacity. There have been significant staffing changes in the past three years.

A children's centre is situated next to the school which is not managed by the governing body and did not form part of this inspection. A separate inspection report for the children's centre is available on the Ofsted 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

This is a satisfactory school. Pupils are looked after well and they receive good care and support which positively promote their personal development. The enthusiasm that pupils demonstrated when welcoming visitors and their good and thoughtful behaviour reflects this. Pupils are proud of their school and their local community. They demonstrate this by taking on a wide range of responsibilities and contributing to the life of the local community with relish. This reflects the school's good promotion of community cohesion. Pupils feel safe in school and are keen to adopt healthy lifestyles. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school engages well with parents and carers.

Pupils' progress is satisfactory overall and is improving. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, it is good. Attainment is average by the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 6. Leaders and the governing body, with the support of the local authority, have tackled some weaknesses in teaching, set more challenging targets and tracked individual pupil's progress towards meeting these targets. As a result, attainment has improved overall, although standards in mathematics are below those in English. There are still some noticeable weaknesses in pupils' problem-solving skills and the application of their mathematical knowledge. The school has accurately identified this as a priority for improvement and has put in place procedures to bring about the necessary improvement. These have not worked as quickly or effectively as leaders wished because of significant staffing changes in recent years.

Monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance over the past few years has been effective in raising attainment in English but there have been missed opportunities to use monitoring information more rigorously to raise attainment in mathematics. For instance, there have not been clear lines of accountability identified in relation to the school's priorities and targets. Nor have milestones in relation to actions taken been clear enough to support monitoring. More use is now being made of a range of rigorous monitoring activities related to teaching in order to support and challenge its effectiveness. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and some is good or outstanding. The use of assessment information to support learning is variable and lesson planning does not consistently take account of pupils' previous learning or, in some cases, what they are capable of achieving. When this happens, particularly in some mixed-age classes, there is less challenge in lessons and expectations of pupils' performance are lower. Some pupils are not aware of what precisely they need to do in order to improve their work. The pace and challenge of

learning slows when pupils are not encouraged to think for themselves or given time to work independently.

Staffing is now much more stable and a more consistent and regular process of monitoring and evaluation is taking effect. The clear signs of improvement in attainment overall, especially in English, together with accurate self-evaluation, demonstrate the school's satisfactory capacity to sustain improvements.

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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment, especially in mathematics, and improve the effectiveness of the management of raising attainment by:
 - focusing more on improving pupils' application of their mathematical skills, especially in problem solving
 - devising suitable actions and milestones for improvement with clear lines of accountability, particularly in mathematics
 - making further use of a range of rigorous monitoring activities related to improving teaching and the effective use of assessment to better support learning.

- Ensure that all teaching is good or better by:
 - improving lesson planning to match that of the best especially in mixed-age classes
 - ensuring that the work planned is always closely matched to learners' interests and abilities taking into account their prior learning
 - further developing pace and challenge in learning and ensuring that pupils have opportunities to develop the skills of independent learning
 - enabling pupils in all classes to clearly identify their standard of work and understand how to take the next steps in their learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils enjoy lessons most when they are very clear about what they need to do and they are challenged to achieve their best possible work. This is evident in their infectious enthusiasm when they try to sketch accurate drawings based on the effectiveness of their partner's description. Pupils say that they look forward to lessons where they are busy and interested and flourish when they are given 'hard and difficult' tasks. In these lessons, they are energised and committed to learning because of their teachers' high expectations and good subject knowledge. Pupils were very competitive, for example, when they worked to produce high level work on number subtraction. When there are fewer opportunities to be challenged to produce their best work, or when the pace of the lesson slows, pupils learn at a slower rate. Children's starting points in the Early Years Foundation Stage vary but, overall, are below expectations for their age. In Key Stages 1 and 2, attainment has

been variable but overall, attainment in mathematics lags behind that in English. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and their attainment is broadly average. It is average and improving in English, although pupils' reading skills are better than those in writing. Attainment in mathematics is stubbornly below average. Pupils' mental mathematics skills are beginning to improve but there are still improvements to be made in pupils' skills in investigations and in solving problems. Pupils' learning and progress are satisfactory, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Pupils make a good contribution to their school and the wider community through their many positions of responsibility, including on the school and 'eco' councils, for instance. Older pupils are proud to help take care of the younger ones as well as pupils with disabilities. Pupils feel very safe. They enjoy the many trips and visits to celebrate their own cultural heritage and to understand the cultures of people from different faiths and backgrounds. Pupils are charming in the warm manner they converse with each other and adults. They behave well and consider others, reflecting their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have a good understanding about the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle because of nutritionally balanced and appetising school lunches and a very wide variety of physical activities varying from football to fencing. Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is broadly average. They are appropriately prepared for the next stages of their education.

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	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
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

How effective is the provision?

Most lessons are carefully planned to meet the needs of the different abilities and interests of pupils in each class. In these lessons, the detailed subject knowledge of teachers is used effectively to engage pupils in challenging work. For example, in a numeracy lesson, pupils were challenged to work independently and reflect on their mathematical knowledge when applying it to an investigation. Teaching assistants are mostly used effectively to support pupils in small groups and individually because

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

they use up-to-date assessment information to plan individual and group support. Occasionally, when the teacher speaks for too long, pupils' engagement in their learning is reduced. Also on occasion, lessons are not planned sufficiently closely to match the ability of individual pupils, especially when classes are taught in mixed-year groups. The use of assessment information to support pupils' learning is variable. Many pupils know how to improve their work because of accurate and helpful marking but, occasionally, opportunities are missed to ensure that pupils know precisely what they need to do in order to improve their work.

The curriculum adequately meets the needs of all groups of pupils. Leaders and members of the governing body have deliberately concentrated on enriching pupils' lives. This is much appreciated by pupils and their parents and carers. As a result, there is a wide range of sporting activities, numerous educational visits and pupils relish the many visits and trips to support their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Curriculum planning is variable in quality. It is better when it takes into account what pupils have learned previously. This is not consistent, however, across all subjects and classes, especially when planning lessons. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has been improved and resources are used effectively across most subjects.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are confident and well-cared for because of the personal and emotional support they receive from committed teachers and teaching assistants. The parent support advisor makes a significant contribution to improving opportunities for pupils who are in most need of support. The school works effectively with outside agencies, such as speech and language therapists and the local authority in order to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as pupils who need further support. A clear commitment for the care of pupils is reflected in careful arrangements to ensure that pupils are well prepared when they join school in the Early Years Foundation Stage and for the next stage in their education.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Greater clarity in establishing priorities is beginning to help bring about improvements although it is too early to see the full impact of this in sustaining improvements in pupils' achievement. Staff are committed and share the school's drive to raise attainment and drive improvement. The local authority is supporting the school effectively in developing leadership roles. Staffing changes have been significantly reduced and the seconded headteacher is building on previous systems of improvement. More use is now being made of a range of rigorous monitoring activities related to teaching in order to support and challenge its effectiveness. Clear strategies to improve attainment are beginning to be put in place to help to

ensure that when the new headteacher starts in January she can get off to a flying start.

Leaders, managers, teachers and members of the governing body care about the school and are committed to improving pupils’ attainment through challenging targets which help pupils to make appropriate progress. Differences in pupils’ attainment in writing, for example, are beginning to narrow, reflecting the school’s satisfactory commitment to equality of opportunity. The governing body is actively involved in school life and the management of finances is astute and shrewd. The governing body is becoming increasingly challenging of the school’s performance. The good promotion of community cohesion is reflected in links with local primary and secondary schools and a school in Kampala, as well as to a range of activities at school, local and international level.

Parents and carers are very supportive of the school and are regularly informed about their children’s performance. They have been very effective in partnership groups to develop family learning and working with the school to improve attendance. Safeguarding procedures go beyond national requirements, particularly in regard to staff and governing body training and in the high profile with which it is regarded by pupils, parents and carers, staff and the governing body. The parent support advisor promotes the safeguarding of all pupils and their families well, particularly the pupils with the greatest needs.

These are the grades for the 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	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enjoy their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. A wide range of activities such as sand and water play, art, ICT and role play stimulate their imagination and learning. In particular, children enjoy role play and have many opportunities to develop their language and number skills, whether as builders in construction areas or doctors conducting research, for instance. Teaching is good. Consequently, children make good progress in all aspects of learning and especially in their personal development. Children are eager to play outdoors where they make good progress in their learning, particularly in their writing and number skills, and in developing their independence. The range and impact of outdoor activities are

particular strengths in this vibrant setting. Everyday objects, such as colanders, cardboard tubes and plastic jugs are used by children very imaginatively to develop learning in science, number and writing. Nevertheless, there is little large play equipment to encourage and develop children's independence and physical skills. Children from the Reception class were captivated when sending model cars down a pipe and into a container measuring speed and progress. Positive relationships between children and adults reflect the effective team work of all the staff in meeting children's needs. Leadership and management are good. The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage provides clear direction for a positive setting. Staff work well together and there are very good links with parents and carers, who are very supportive of their children's learning both in school and at home. Children are looked after carefully and welfare requirements are fully met.

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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

A third of parents and carers responded through the completed questionnaires, which is about average. Of these, the vast majority were happy with the school's provision and indicated that their children enjoyed being at school. These parents and carers also agreed that the school helped their child to have a healthy lifestyle and that pupils' behaviour was good. Inspectors found that these aspects are good. There was a very small number who had concerns about the school listening to their concerns and suggestions. Inspectors looked at this carefully and found that the school is working effectively to involve parents and carers further.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Woodbank 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 101 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 302 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	63	62	34	34	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	69	68	29	29	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	42	42	48	48	3	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	46	46	48	48	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	54	53	44	44	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	50	50	46	46	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	47	47	48	48	3	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)	44	44	47	47	2	2	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	50	50	44	44	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	34	34	56	55	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	38	45	45	5	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	53	52	42	42	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	62	61	32	32	2	2	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 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 2010/11 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.



23 September 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Woodbank Primary School, Bury, BL8 1AX

It was a pleasure to visit your school. The inspection team enjoyed talking with you and listened carefully to what you had to say as well as what you wrote in the questionnaires. Yours is a satisfactory school. It is good in some areas. You are well behaved, very polite and welcoming. You made us all feel at home because of your enthusiasm and keenness to speak with us. Your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is based on your care for people as individuals, your commitment to fair play and your sense of right and wrong. Well done to each one of you! You particularly enjoy making your good contributions to the school and your local community through all the jobs you do. You are very health conscious and you are rightly proud of all the sporting activities you take part in as well as the trophies you win. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle down quickly and happily. They make good progress and are well-prepared for school life.

You mostly make satisfactory progress and you do your best work in reading. We would particularly like you to improve your work in mathematics. We have asked your school to support you by involving you more in lessons and making your work very clear to you. We have also asked your teachers and teaching assistants to plan your lessons together carefully and to make sure you understand what you need to do to make your work better. We have asked school leaders to look very carefully at how you are doing in your lessons and in your work, so that your standards will improve, especially in mathematics.

We want each one of you to be challenged to achieve your best work. You can all help by continuing to work hard, because we know how eager you are to do your best.

Yours sincerely

Marie Cordey
Lead inspector

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