

Littleborough Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105785
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	377297
Inspection dates	9–10 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Adrian Guy 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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	425
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pauline Mitchell
Headteacher	Martine Sinker
Date of previous school inspection	04 October 2006
School address	Calderbrook Road Littleborough OL15 9HW
Telephone number	01706 378556
Fax number	01706 376961
Email address	head@littleborough.rochdale.sch.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 25 lessons, taught by 16 teachers. They saw teaching in each of the 15 classes in the school. This included joint observations with the headteacher. They held meetings with school staff, members of the governing body, the local authority representative and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and scrutinised a number of documents, such as those relating to safeguarding pupils; the teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment and their progress; the school improvement plan and documents identified by the school to support its self-evaluation. Inspectors also took into consideration the 94 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, and those returned by staff and pupils.

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

- Whether, given their starting points, all pupils are supported and challenged sufficiently in their learning so that they are able to make consistently good progress and attain the highest standards of which they are capable.
- Whether the school's provision, and in particular the quality of teaching, ensures equality of opportunity and enables pupils, particularly those who are less able or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, to make good progress.
- Whether, through self-evaluation, leaders, managers and the governing body have an accurate grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and can demonstrate capacity for sustained improvement.
- Whether the Early Years Foundation Stage secures the highest quality provision and learning through successful leadership and management.
- Whether the school is effectively developing pupils' understanding of cultural diversity.

Information about the school

Littleborough is a larger than average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average. The proportion of pupils from a minority ethnic background is much lower than average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is around half the national average. Similarly, the percentage with a statement of special educational needs is around half the national figure. The number of children joining and leaving the school partway through their education is lower than the national average. The school has a number of awards, including the Basic Skills quality mark, Healthy School status, the Activemark, and the Effective School Council award. The school runs two before- and after-school clubs, which are managed by the governing body.

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 school provides its pupils with a good education. Through highly effective partnerships with various agencies it provides outstanding care, guidance and support for pupils, particularly for those who are vulnerable due to their circumstances. Pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles and take advantage of the wide variety of clubs and activities on offer. As a result, they make very healthy food choices and are highly active. Pupils' behaviour makes a strong contribution to their learning and they value the wide range of opportunities provided to enrich the curriculum. Most parents and carers have very positive views of the school and appreciate the care shown by staff particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage where children have a very positive start to their education.

Since the previous inspection, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has been consistently above average. Although standards declined slightly in 2011, most pupils at the end of Year 6 gained the expected level for their age in English and mathematics. This represents good progress from starting points generally in line with those typical for their age. This was also reflected in most of the lessons observed, where pupils' progress was good.

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is reflected in their very good behaviour and the extent to which they get on together, cooperate well and show positive attitudes to learning. The school is aware that pupils' understanding and experience of cultural diversity and different communities within the United Kingdom is less well developed.

The very large majority of teaching across the school is good with some outstanding practice. The school has successfully focused on introducing features of cooperative learning and strategies for ensuring pupils are aware of how they can succeed. As a result, there is a greater degree of consistency in teaching and pupils' engagement and enjoyment are strong. However, aspects of the school's assessment information show that teachers often have differing perspectives on pupils' attainment at the end of one year and the beginning of the next.

The new headteacher has quickly established a clear vision and direction for the school, which is shared by the staff and members of the governing body. They have agreed plans and established teams to achieve their correctly identified priorities. However, these plans do not currently include sufficiently sharp criteria

against which leaders and the governing body can measure progress and evaluate success. Consequently, aspects of monitoring and accountability have insufficient focus on the impact on standards. The school has instigated good systems for staff training and development and as a result, staff are clear about the direction of school improvement and their part in it. Together with strong sense of teamwork, high levels of commitment by staff and school leaders, and accurate evaluation of the school's work, this demonstrates the school's capacity to improve further is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further raise attainment and increase the proportion of pupils who make good progress by:
 - ensuring teachers agree pupils' levels of attainment at the beginning and end of each year
 - refining tracking systems to identify and monitor good progress.
- Develop pupils' understanding and experience of cultural diversity and different communities within the United Kingdom by:
 - developing opportunities for pupils to engage with others from a full range of communities and cultures
 - integrating aspects of diversity into the curriculum.
- Further develop leadership and management and enable the governing body to hold the school to account more effectively by:
 - sharpening the school development plan to include measurable criteria against which progress can be evaluated
 - developing the skills of leaders to monitor the impact and effectiveness of the work of the school on raising standards.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

When they start in Nursery, children's skills and knowledge are those expected for their age. They make good progress so that by the end of Year 6 their attainment is above average. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress as a result of the support they receive. In lessons, pupils work with enthusiasm and motivation. They enjoy their learning and apply themselves well to tasks, particularly when working cooperatively. For example, in a Year 6 lesson centred on a very engaging story, pupils discussed questions with great enthusiasm, sharing ideas and maturely giving opposing points of view and opinions.

The school takes excellent care of its pupils and enables them to progress well in aspects of their personal development. Pupils say they feel safe and behave well in school. They are polite, considerate and get on together well. Pupils participate enthusiastically in school and community life. They take their school council and fund-raising roles very seriously. In learning about healthy living, they know about the dangers of alcohol and potentially harmful substances, take plenty of exercise and take advantage of a wide range of clubs and activities beyond the classroom.

They were keen to tell inspectors about the healthy snacks they sell in the tuck shop. Their above average attendance, together with good attainment and social skills, such as teamwork and cooperation, mean that they develop good attitudes and attributes that contribute successfully to their future economic well-being.

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	2
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	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The good teaching seen in most lessons was characterised by:

- well planned, interesting and challenging activities
- well motivated pupils who engage enthusiastically
- good opportunities for pupils to cooperate and share ideas
- work which was well matched to pupils' individual needs
- well paced, clearly communicated expectations and explanations.

These features enabled pupils to make good progress in their learning. However, on occasions there is an over-emphasis on adult direction and 'teacher-talk'. Here the pace of learning slows and opportunities are missed to encourage pupils to be more independent and move learning on so that pupils make even better progress. The school has a focus on developing the use of assessment for learning and pupils are clear about the steps they need to take to achieve successful learning. Marking is positive and helpful, however, there remain some inconsistencies across year groups and opportunities are missed for pupils to respond to teachers' questions in their books.

The curriculum is adapted well and themes are used effectively to cover different subjects and requirements of the National Curriculum. This is enriched by a wide variety of extra-curricular activities, including such diverse activities as fishing and bowls, with members of the local community. There is a high take up of sporting and physical activity which makes a strong contribution to pupils' well-being. The school's provision is further enhanced by very well organised before- and after-school clubs

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

where pupils enjoy a wide range of constructive and enjoyable activities in a calm, orderly and safe environment.

Outstanding care, guidance and support for pupils are at the heart of the school's ethos. Pupils are valued and encouraged and those who need support personally or in their learning receive it. Pupils know the adults care about them and help them to do well. Highly effective partnerships with external agencies support pupils who may be vulnerable due to their circumstances. The impact of the school's supportive and nurturing approach is evident in pupils' strong personal development and above average attendance.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The school has been successful in maintaining good levels of achievement since the last inspection. The headteacher has developed a strong staff team which shares a collective vision. Responsibility for monitoring pupils' attainment and curriculum subjects is distributed among the staff, ensuring that there is accountability for pupils' progress. The school's development plans and self-evaluation are appropriate and accurate. However, aspects of monitoring and accountability against sharp, measureable milestones, which focus on the impact of the school's work on standards, are less strongly developed. Members of the governing body have the skills and knowledge to challenge and support the school in all areas of the school's work. They have effective communications and links with parents and carers and have consulted them for their views. The school has effective policies and procedures in relation to promoting equality and tackling discrimination and is currently reviewing these to ensure all aspects of equality are promoted. Highly effective partnerships are key in helping the school to deliver aspects of its work that require specialist expertise and knowledge, particularly in the support it gives pupils who are vulnerable due to their circumstances. All staff demonstrate a deeply embedded commitment to pupils' safety and procedures for safeguarding pupils are good.

Parents and carers have positive views of the school and are kept appropriately informed through reports, meetings, text messages and newsletters. The school has held workshops to support parents' and carers' understanding of aspects of its work. The availability and approachability of the staff and the governing body, as well as surveys, give parents and carers opportunities to make their views known. There is a strong sense of a cohesive community within the school, with appropriate links to the local community. The school is aware of the need to widen this focus and provide more opportunities for pupils to develop wider perspectives and further develop their positive attitudes and dispositions to enable them to live in, and make a positive contribution to, a diverse community.

These are the grades for the 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	1
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

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are supported very well indeed as they settle into school. They make good progress as a result of effective provision so that, by the time they leave the Reception Year, their levels of achievement are slightly above those generally expected for their age.

A good variety of activities is provided to promote children’s learning. These, together with good and sometimes outstanding teaching, enable children to develop skills and understanding in all areas of the curriculum. There are many opportunities for independent play and a range of adult-led activities. However, some opportunities are missed to promote and assess effective learning through activities that children initiate themselves.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led. Transition arrangements have a positive impact on helping children to settle in quickly and the leader and all adults have established effective links with parents and carers. Children’s development is securely assessed but systems for establishing an overview of children’s achievements are less well developed.

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

Of the parents and carers who returned questionnaires to the inspection team, most were very supportive of the school. They agree that their children enjoy school, are kept safe and are well taught. A very small minority disagree that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour and takes account of their concerns.

Inspectors examined these issues carefully. They found evidence that the school had appropriate systems for managing unacceptable behaviour and that pupils' behaviour was good. Inspectors also found that the school has appropriate strategies for engaging parents and carers and actively seeks their views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Littleborough 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 94 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 425 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	63	67	28	30	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	70	74	22	23	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	39	41	49	52	5	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	47	50	42	45	3	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	43	46	47	50	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	55	59	35	37	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	54	57	38	40	2	2	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)	39	41	40	43	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	45	48	41	44	5	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	32	34	48	51	8	9	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	34	36	41	44	6	6	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	39	41	45	48	3	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	51	54	41	44	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	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.



11 November 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Littleborough Community Primary School, Littleborough
OL15 9HW**

Thank you for welcoming the inspection team to your school recently. You may remember us coming to see how well you are all learning. We learned a lot from watching your lessons, talking to you about your learning and life at school and looking at your work.

Your school provides you with a good education. The adults work really hard at looking after you and keeping you safe. Your well-being is really important to them. We were pleased to see that you behave and get along together well. You are given interesting things to learn about and a wide range of clubs and activities to join which also help you keep very healthy. I was very impressed by your school council, your tuck shop and the efforts you make in raising money for charity.

These are the things we have agreed with your headteacher and the governing body that your school should improve next:

- make sure that your last teacher agrees with your new teacher exactly what you have learned so you all make good progress and achieve as well as you can
- ensure you learn and experience more about the diversity of cultures and communities in the United Kingdom
- make sure that school leaders and the governing body are better at checking that your school improves in the way they want it to.

I am sure that you will have some good ideas about how to improve your school. Remember, you can all play your part by continuing to work hard and attending school as often as possible. All the inspectors wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Adrian Guy
Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234**, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.