

Queensbridge Primary School

Inspection report

Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	381567
Inspection dates	15–16 December 2011
Reporting inspector	Robert Jones

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	248
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joanne Latta
Headteacher	Christopher Fielding
Date of previous school inspection	17 June 2009
School address	St Germain Street Farnworth Bolton BL4 7BL
Telephone number	01204 332577
Fax number	01204 332578
Email address	fieldingc@queensbridge.bolton.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 15 lessons, taught by seven staff and held meetings with a member of the governing body, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including policies, the school improvement plan, records of pupils' progress and documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils. The inspection team received and analysed 52 questionnaires from parents and carers, as well as a number of questionnaires completed by pupils and from staff.

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

- The extent of the challenge provided in lessons for boys in Key Stage 1.
- The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation at all levels of leadership.
- The quality of learning for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties, who have a statement of special educational needs.
- How well children in the Early Years Foundation Stage acquire skills in communication, language and literacy.

Information about the school

This is an average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is considerably above the national average. Average numbers of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and a greater number of pupils than average speak English as an additional language. More pupils than average have special educational needs and/or disabilities and many more than average have a statement of special educational needs. There is a resource base for pupils with complex special educational needs and/or disabilities on the site, which is entirely funded by the school. At the time of the inspection, eight pupils were using this resource base.

Many staff are new to the school. The current headteacher took up post in September 2010 as did the subject leaders of English and mathematics. The school holds various awards, including the Healthy School status, Eco School Bronze Award and the International Schools Award.

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. It has improved rapidly to the point where several aspects of its work are now outstanding. Underpinned by a strong ethos of inclusion, tolerance and mutual understanding, this is a school where every child really does matter. One parental comment summed up the thoughts of many, 'Queensbridge does not just educate, it nurtures'.

Pupils with complex special educational needs and/or disabilities receive exceptional support for their needs through the 'smart room' resource base. In the afternoons, these pupils integrate extremely well with the rest of the school, taking part in classroom activities alongside their peers. Consequently, the school promotes equal opportunities to an outstanding level and the care, guidance and support afforded to pupils is first-rate. Moreover, this strong, inclusive ethos has resulted in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development being excellent. Outstanding governance provides substantial support and challenge and has been instrumental in supporting school leaders in raising achievement and engaging parents and carers effectively.

For several years, attainment in English and mathematics had been low. The school has adopted an uncompromising stance on raising achievement through improvements in teaching, assessment and with interventions to help pupils catch up if they fall behind. These measures have been highly successful and have resulted in attainment that is average. Pupils make good progress overall but occasionally they make satisfactory progress. This is due to some remaining inconsistencies in the way they are challenged in class and some lack of opportunities to learn independently.

Self-evaluation is incisive and detailed. It is undertaken well by leaders at all levels and has resulted in tangible improvements in outcomes for pupils. For example, weaknesses in mathematics teaching were analysed and swift measures put into place to remedy the problems. This resulted in Year 6 pupils making outstanding progress in mathematics. Monitoring and evaluation systems are sharp and analytical but simple, which have enabled leaders to hold staff to account well for pupils' progress. Consequently, morale is high among staff and there is no sense of complacency. These factors illustrate well the school's good capacity to sustain its improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress further in English and mathematics by:
 - providing increased levels of challenge in all lessons for higher-attaining pupils
 - improving the quality of questioning so it challenges more pupils and ensures that they are required to answer in full sentences
 - ensuring every opportunity is taken for pupils to work independently by working in teams solving problems and finding out answers and solutions for themselves.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

In lessons, pupils quickly develop good skills in literacy through the many opportunities provided to write in different contexts and to apply their new knowledge to their own work. For example, pupils used their new knowledge of rhetorical questions to write an ending to a story. This approach makes learning real and memorable to pupils who, as a result, make good and sometimes outstanding progress. Correspondingly, behaviour is good in lessons and around the school overall. Occasionally, there are missed opportunities to allow pupils to work independently by working in teams solving problems and finding out answers and solutions for themselves.

Pupils achieve well and enjoy school, which is reflected in rising attendance, which is average. Children enter the Nursery class with skills that are well below expectations and leave Year 6 with attainment that is average. Inspection evidence indicates that the rate of progress is accelerating rapidly for pupils currently in the school and attainment is rising. This represents a rapid improvement from the low attainment in 2009 and 2010. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress due to the close attention given to their needs. Those with complex needs benefit enormously from being fully involved in mainstream classroom activities in the afternoons. The extremely harmonious nature of this school ensures that pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from minority ethnic backgrounds make similarly good progress. Furthermore, pupils who arrive at the school with limited English language skills make rapid progress due to them making friends quickly and being fully integrated into classroom activities. The emphasis on inclusion, cooperation and acceptance has benefited all pupils, who show a great deal of care towards each other and a mature well developed understanding of disability.

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

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

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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teachers plan work well to ensure pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are developed methodically. Reading is taught systematically throughout the school during 'letters and sounds' time in mixed-age groups. This ensures pupils develop literacy skills appropriate to their needs and abilities. Strong leadership in mathematics has ensured there is now a consistency in practice, which has led to pupils making good and sometimes outstanding progress in mathematics. Teachers know pupils well, which has enabled them to customise learning carefully to meet pupils' diverse needs. Inspectors looked carefully at the challenge provided for boys in Key Stage 1. This was good on the whole, with boys as well as girls being stretched well to do their best. However, on occasions there is insufficient challenge for higher-attaining pupils, which results in them sometimes completing the work quickly and waiting for others to finish. Where teaching is most effective, teachers question pupils well to ensure they give well-considered answers and prompt pupils to give fuller answers to questions. On occasions, questioning sometimes only challenges those pupils who are motivated to put their hands up to answer or may require only single-word answers. Pupils are well aware of what they need to do to improve their work and the time that is set aside for teachers to discuss progress with individual pupils is instrumental in raising achievement.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and is enhanced by a range of visits and visitors to the school. Members of the governing body use their expertise to enrich the curriculum, for example, by giving talks about the police service. Literacy and numeracy are developed well across the curriculum through themes that run through the year. The curriculum in Key Stage 1 is developing well to ensure there is a smooth transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Exemplary care, guidance and support ensure pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable receive the best possible attention to their needs. Plans to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are meticulous in their detail. The school works extremely well with the nearby special school to ensure provision and the quality of assessment for those pupils with complex needs is outstanding. Staff use signed communication to support pupils with limited or no speech and the school trains parents and carers in the use of signed communication so they are better able to help their children at home.

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 headteacher, by virtue of his drive, energy and passion has, in a relatively short space of time, driven improvements and shared his ambition well. Throughout the school there is a palpable sense of shared responsibility and a uniformly resolute commitment to the full inclusion of each and every pupil. School leaders are justifiably proud of their achievements to date but are not complacent. Good quality plans are in place to develop provision further, with the governing body providing excellent support, advice and challenge at each step of every development. Members of the governing body are a frequent presence in the school. Their contributions to the school through their complementary skills are considerable and have been significant factors in helping the school to improve quickly.

Gaps in pupils' achievement have closed significantly. Exceptional commitment to inclusion and integration of pupils who have complex needs means equal opportunities are promoted to an outstanding level. Safeguarding adopts nationally recognised good practice, being particularly rigorous in assessing risks for pupils with complex special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school promotes community cohesion well. It has been particularly effective in building links with the local community, for example, through pupils playing bowls with senior members of the community. Moreover, members of the governing body engage the community well, for example, by organising a falconry demonstration on the school grounds.

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	1
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	1
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

On entry to the Nursery class, children have well below expected skills in communication, language and literacy. Good quality teaching means that they make good progress and quickly develop an understanding of letters and their corresponding sounds. Writing skills are developed well in interesting ways, for example, by writing Christmas cards and lists for Father Christmas. Children quickly develop the routines and social skills needed to succeed as they progress through the school. Children from different backgrounds learn and play happily alongside each other and they quickly develop a good understanding of disability due to the integration of children with complex additional needs into the classes. During the inspection, children cooperated well with each other to stage their Christmas nativity play, with costumes made by a member of the governing body. The school is currently developing the outdoor area further to offer increased opportunities to extend children’s experiences across all areas of learning. All staff contribute well to assessments and parents and carers are kept fully informed of what their children do during the day through the ‘learning journey’ books and the ‘stay and play’ sessions.

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

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school’s work. Their positive comments focused on how well the school caters for pupils with complex special educational needs and/or disabilities and how the cultural diversity within the school helped pupils to appreciate other cultures and backgrounds. The inspection team endorse these positive views.

A very small minority of parents and carers expressed concerns about behaviour of pupils. Inspectors reviewed documentation relating to past and present behaviour of pupils. They found that the number of behaviour-related incidents has reduced significantly over the past 18 months. Correspondingly, this is directly related to the improvements in teaching and, in turn, the improved rates of progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Queensbridge 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 52 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 248 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	33	63	18	35	0	0	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	33	63	19	37	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	31	60	19	37	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	60	18	35	3	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	30	58	20	38	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	58	21	40	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	50	25	48	1	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)	28	54	23	44	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	52	24	46	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	44	25	48	4	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	48	24	46	3	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	33	63	19	37	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	71	15	29	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.



19 December 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Queensbridge Primary School, Bolton, BL4 7BL

Thank you for the welcome you gave us when we came to inspect your school recently. I particularly enjoyed listening to you read and thoroughly enjoyed watching the nursery children performing their nativity play.

I am pleased to tell you that you go to a good school. Some things are outstanding and I would like to tell you about those first. We were so impressed by the care and support you receive, especially those of you who need the most care. You are all so supportive of each other and we noticed how well you all looked after each other during lunchtimes and in class. The school makes sure you all get an equal chance to succeed. You all know members of your governing body well who support the school very well and have helped it to improve so quickly.

These things of course do not just happen. Your teachers prepare your lessons very carefully so you are able to enjoy lessons and make good progress.

There are always things that could be done to improve things further. I have asked your headteacher to help you make even more progress in English and mathematics by doing three things. Firstly, by making sure those of you who can manage harder work are really stretched to do your very best. Secondly, to ask you questions that really make you all think hard and answer in full sentences. Finally, to give you plenty of opportunities to work things out independently by working in teams. You can help by being the sensible, mature young people you are today.

I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Jones
Lead inspector

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