

Bowling Green Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107503
Local authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	377584
Inspection dates	24–25 April 2012
Lead inspector	Brenda Clarke

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	156
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stacey Leonard
Headteacher	Anne Walker
Date of previous school inspection	2 April 2008
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Introduction

Inspection team

Brenda Clarke
Lynne Read

Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors took account of the on-line Parent View survey when planning the inspection. The inspectors observed eight teachers teaching 13 lessons or part lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made visits to three classes to hear pupils read. Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, members of the governing body and school staff, including senior and middle managers. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the tracking of pupils' progress over time, safeguarding procedures, the school development plan and school-evaluation procedures. The inspectors analysed 71 parental and carers' questionnaires, as well as those completed by staff and pupils.

Information about the school

The school is smaller in size than the average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well-below average. Almost all are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. The school meets the current floor standards, which are the minimum standards expected by the government.

The school has achieved Healthy School and Active School status.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. It is not outstanding because teaching is not better than good and it promotes good rather than exceptional progress. The school's strengths are in pupils' behaviour and safety, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and in the school's exemplary pastoral care of those who are vulnerable.
- The school has maintained above-average attainment and good rates of progress overall since the last inspection. Throughout the school, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above average for most pupils. In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, pupils achieve well overall, but progress in early understanding of sounds and letters when reading and writing is satisfactory rather than good for a small minority of pupils.
- Teaching is good overall and contributes significantly to pupils' good progress. Very effective behaviour management, interesting, well planned lessons and a good pace to learning are features of most lessons. In a minority of lessons, teachers did not use assessment information effectively to plan work that closely matched pupils' differing abilities, particularly when teaching the letters and sounds programme.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety and the promotion of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding features of the school. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and contributes significantly to their excellent attitudes to learning. Pupils' extremely well developed social and moral skills enable them to share their ideas and work harmoniously together so that lessons run smoothly and interruptions to learning are few. All say they feel safe in school and that bullying is very rare.
- The headteacher and staff have high expectations and are ambitious for all pupils. Senior staff know the school's strengths and weaknesses well and constantly drive improvement. Professional development opportunities and the management of performance are used effectively to improve the quality of teaching and the good curriculum. The governing body provides good levels of support and challenge.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By January 2013, improve teaching in order to accelerate progress for the small minority of pupils in the Reception class and Key Stage 1 who currently are not making as much progress as other pupils in reading and writing by:
 - ensuring that the programme for teaching letters and sounds builds pupils' knowledge and understanding in a consistent way as they move through the key stages
 - ensuring that all adults who hear pupils read provide them with input that helps them develop their reading skills
 - using assessment information more effectively to plan reading, writing and the teaching of letter sound activities that more closely match pupils' differing stages of learning
 - ensuring that teaching assistants' time is used more effectively in whole class introductions and group interventions
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length and for a variety of purposes.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Most children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills in line with those expected for their age, with a minority attaining above this. The excellent behaviour management skills of the class teacher enable most children to make outstanding progress in their social and emotional development and to develop excellent attitudes and a thirst for learning. Their speaking and listening skills are outstanding. Recent improvements in the planning and provision for children both in the classroom and outdoors, together with consistently good teaching, is leading to accelerated progress for most children. The majority now reach the goals expected by the time they start Year 1 and an increasing number exceed them.

Across Key Stage 1 the majority of pupils make good progress so that attainment, while broadly average, is rising year on year with more pupils now attaining above-average levels, especially in reading and mathematics, by the end of Year 2. Good teaching ensures that these levels of attainment are built on in Key Stage 2, so that by the end of Year 6 attainment is above average overall. As a result, the majority of pupils attain the standards expected for their age in reading and over 50% exceed them. Pupils achieve well from their earlier starting points. Pupils' outstanding oracy skills enable most to express themselves very clearly and to add flair to their writing through judicious use of vocabulary. Good quality individual support ensures that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress in lessons.

A small minority of pupils in the Reception class and Years 1 and 2, while achieving well in mathematics, make satisfactory rather than good progress in writing and reading. This is due in part to the teaching of sounds that letters make during whole class introductions not being matched closely enough to pupils' different needs. These sessions provide challenge for most pupils, but do not always cater for those at an earlier stage of learning who lack opportunities to consolidate their knowledge at these times.

Most pupils are happy to come to school and say that they learn a lot in lessons. An overwhelming majority of parents and carers who returned questionnaires say that their children make good progress and have their needs well met. Inspection evidence confirms their views. Pupils are very enthusiastic learners. For example, in one lesson pupils were required to express themselves in a variety of styles when reading poetry. This they did exceptionally well and with much enjoyment, many also using facial and hand gestures to good effect. Across the school, pupils are keen to learn, settle quickly and persevere and concentrate for long periods of time. Pupils' mature attitudes enable most to reflect on their work and to accurately access their next steps in learning. Pupils listen attentively to others, collaborate fairly and share resources and tasks equably in group activities.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is predominantly good throughout the school. Teachers have high expectations and ensure that lessons are well planned and orderly. A good range of strategies such as the use of drama and brain-storming deepen pupils' understanding and make learning interesting. Teachers promote the use of subject specific vocabulary so that pupils are able to explain their learning accurately; for example using the terms acute and obtuse when measuring angles in a mathematics lesson. In most of the lessons observed there was good challenge through insightful questioning and tasks that were well matched to pupils' different needs. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to reshape tasks to challenge higher-attaining pupils even more. Teaching assistants are used effectively to support the work of groups and individuals and are especially effective in ensuring that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs take a full and active part in lessons. However, in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2, opportunities are sometimes missed to deploy teaching assistants productively in whole class teaching sessions.

The teaching of mathematics, based on a well planned curriculum, is a positive feature of the school. The vast majority of pupils are resilient in solving mathematical problems and applying their number skills confidently in a variety of situations. Writing is taught well overall, but the overuse of worksheets in some classes together with limited opportunities to apply written skills in other subjects sometimes restricts learning. Reading is taught well overall so that the vast majority meet or exceed the levels expected for their age. However, a high focus on letters and the sounds they make sometimes results in younger pupils spelling out words laboriously rather than looking for picture and contextual clues when reading. Although a range of adults, including some volunteers, regularly hear pupils read they do not always provide specific input that helps pupils develop their skills. In pupils' questionnaires, all respond that teaching is good and one pupil mirrors the views of many when saying, 'School is a fun place where we learn a lot'. Pupils point out that teachers are friendly and really help them to succeed. As a result, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very strong. Using individual targets and comprehensive marking, teachers ensure that pupils know their next steps in learning. Parents and carers are informed about their children's targets and all agree that they have good opportunities to help with their children's learning at home.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Parents and carers have extremely positive views about the outstanding standards of behaviour at the school. Pupils live up to their teachers' high expectations. They behave in an exemplary way in lessons and around the school and are respectful and considerate to others. These high standards of behaviour have been maintained since the last inspection.

The school is a well ordered environment in which all pupils feel safe and valued. Pupils have a good awareness of the different types of bullying and say that little takes place. They trust adults to sort out problems of any kind quickly. Inspection evidence confirms that this is the case. Pupils understand and assess risks. They make an exceptional contribution to a safe working environment and are highly adept at managing their own behaviour in the classroom and in the playground. Pupils make every effort to ensure that their friends learn and are happy in an atmosphere of mutual trust and appreciation. Through the celebrations of pupils' good work and good deeds and the very positive ethos for learning in classrooms, pupils develop good self-esteem. As a result, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is particularly strong. Pupils' enjoyment of school results in attendance that is above the national average, and most arrive punctually and with great enthusiasm.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher gives a very strong steer to the school and, together with senior managers, has developed a collegiate approach to whole school development. This has resulted in a united staff team with a shared vision and commitment to improving provision further. Comprehensive, wide-ranging evaluation of provision has given leadership, including middle managers, a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses. Self-evaluation is accurate and future developments are focused on the right priorities. Consequently, some strategies are already in place to improve outcomes in writing and phonics. Good, systematic monitoring of teaching and learning and resulting action has brought about improvements in teachers' performance. Rigorous tracking of pupils' progress and the setting of challenging targets have enabled the school to maintain above-average standards and good rates of progress over time. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils' current standards are rising further. Tracking information is used strategically to provide teacher assistant-led interventions for those who are falling behind at Key Stage 2 but is used less rigorously for this purpose at Key Stage 1.

The curriculum is good because it has a positive impact on pupils' outcomes and ensures that pupils' needs are well met. There is a key focus on the teaching of basic skills but also a broad curriculum that is stimulating, caters effectively for pupils' interests and ensures depth and creativity in learning. Effective partnerships enrich provision further and particularly enhance sporting opportunities for pupils. Carefully chosen visits to museums, theatres and places of interest enliven learning and provide purposeful learning in a variety of settings. The wide range of extra-curricular activities and village and community happenings, such as The Big Draw and Elland in Bloom, contribute considerably to pupils' outstanding spiritual moral, social and cultural development.

The governing body offers good support and challenge and brings a range of skills that contribute to the effective provision. Statutory safeguarding requirements are met. Governors challenge senior managers about the achievement of pupils to ensure an improving picture in attainment and progress. The school ensures equality of opportunity for all pupils. For example, the school identifies very well disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and works diligently to ensure their individual needs are met. The pastoral care of pupils is exemplary and the school works tirelessly to ensure the best possible outcomes for those in its care. This explains why 98% of parents and carers who returned questionnaires would recommend the school to another parent.

The trend in improvement since the last inspection is good. The school's accurate self-evaluation and well-chosen priorities for the continuous raising of standards, and the positive impact they have had, give the school a good capacity to improve further.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



26 April 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bowling Green Primary School, Halifax, HX4 9HU

I would like to thank you for the very warm welcome you gave the inspectors on our recent visit to your school. We do hope that those of you who left for your residential on the second day of our visit had a great time and that you did not get too wet! This letter tells you what we found out about your school.

Yours is a good school and it has some outstanding features. I understand why you enjoy school so much. Your behaviour is excellent in lessons and around the school. Well done! You are very polite and show lots of care and concern for others. On your questionnaires you all ticked that teaching is good in your school. Inspectors agree. You learn a lot in lessons and make good progress. Your school takes excellent care of you and you feel very safe. Your attendance is good. Keep this up! Your headteacher leads your school very well and more of you are now reaching higher levels in your work.

Your headteacher, other staff and governors are improving the school well for you and they want to make it even better. To help with this I have asked them to make sure that those of you who are having problems in reading, writing and phonics work receive more help to overcome your difficulties.

I send you my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Brenda Clarke
Lead inspector

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