

Queensbridge Primary School

St Germain Street, Farnworth, Bolton, Lancashire BL4 7BL

Inspection dates

5–6 June 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The new senior leadership team has worked successfully with governors, staff, parents and carers to create a purposeful learning community where pupils enjoy learning, are safe and are taught well.
- Together with governors, senior leaders have ensured that pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching have improved since the previous inspection.
- Governors are committed to ensuring that the school continues to improve. However, not all have a precise understanding of how pupils' performance compares with that of other pupils nationally.
- At the end of Year 6 in 2017, pupils' progress was good in reading and mathematics. Their progress in writing was in the top 20% of all schools nationally.
- In 2017, pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 1 were not strong. However, current pupils are making strong progress in English and mathematics in all year groups. Their attainment is rapidly improving.
- Pupils benefit from a stimulating curriculum which captures their interests, broadens their experiences and develops their interests in areas such as music, art, science and world cultures.
- Pupils in the school's resource base, the Smart Room, are exceptionally well cared for by specialist staff. As a result, pupils thoroughly enjoy learning and make good progress.
- The quality of teaching, including in phonics, is good. Most teachers' and teaching assistants work well together to meet the individual needs of pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Teachers have created a 'buzz' of excitement and fostered great interest in reading. However, pupils do not always realise their potential in all subjects, because they are not consistently challenged in their learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are becoming increasingly resilient and are attentive in lessons. However, too many pupils are persistently absent from school.
- Leaders are effective in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, as well as their appreciation of British values.
- Most parents and carers are highly complimentary about the school. They are of the view that their children are happy, safe and making good progress.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years and make strong progress in all areas of learning. However, procedures to monitor children's learning are not sufficiently rigorous.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to raise levels of attainment, especially in reading and mathematics, by consistently challenging pupils to achieve their best.
- Improve the quality of governance, by ensuring that all governors have a precise understanding of how pupils' performance compares with that of other pupils nationally.
- Improve the quality of the leadership and management of the early years provision by ensuring that children's learning is monitored with greater rigour.
- Improve pupils' attendance by devising new strategies to encourage all parents to make sure their children attend school regularly.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- There have been many changes at Queensbridge Primary School since the previous inspection, particularly in the last two years. In this period, the senior leadership team has been reorganised, to include a new headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- A recently appointed key stage 1 leader works alongside the key stage 2 leader, to strengthen senior leaders' work on improving standards. The governing body has been reorganised, with the addition of three new governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- The school is highly respected within the local group of schools, the Farnworth Collaborative, and by the local authority for its support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, the number of pupils with education, health and care plans or statements is well above average.
- Subject leaders, including those responsible for English and mathematics, play a vital role in improving the quality of teaching. Their close focus on reading and improving pupils' calculation and problem-solving skills has boosted pupils' progress and renewed their interest in learning.
- Specialists responsible for subjects such as music, physical education, humanities and science also help to raise standards. They do this by checking the quality of work in pupils' books and keeping staff abreast of developments in all subjects. In addition, teachers invite professional sports coaches and musicians into the school to share their skills and knowledge.
- Well-established systems are in place to monitor the performance of all staff. Challenging targets are set for teachers, all of which are linked to raising achievement, improving attendance and strengthening leadership and management. Senior leaders and governors closely check the progress that staff make towards achieving their targets.
- Additional funding, including the pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils, is spent effectively to ensure that all pupils can participate in all aspects of school life, including educational trips and visits. Tailored support is helping to develop pupils' reading, writing and mathematics skills and is diminishing the differences between the attainment of disadvantaged children and that of others nationally.
- English and mathematics are promoted well across the curriculum. Work in pupils' books, including their 'challenge' books (history, geography, science and religious education) is often cross-curricular. For example, science books contain biographical work on the lives of famous inventors and history books contain facts and information on cultures that use geometric patterns in art.
- The school works effectively to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and enhance their appreciation of British values. Pupils understand the importance of fair play. They ensure that their school is harmonious and have respectful attitudes towards each other and staff. Pupils love music. All have access to music tuition, given by professional musicians, and many are members of the school's brass band.

- Pupils enjoy the theatre, singing, visiting museums and exploring local places of interest. They learn about the major world faiths and engage in project work to deepen their understanding of diverse cultures. Pupils are active citizens who selflessly raise money for worthy causes through poppy sales, wearing 'spotty' clothes and 'standing up for cancer'. Recently they sponsored staff, who completed a 10-kilometre run and a 40-kilometre bike journey.
- Additional funding for primary school sport is used very effectively to encourage participation in a wider range of sports including rugby, martial arts and ice-skating. Sports such as boccia (similar to bowling) are adapted to include pupils from the Smart Room. Pupils also participate in various inter-school tournaments in football, cricket and multi-skills. Professional coaches work with staff to develop their skills in teaching different sports and physical activities, including gymnastics.
- Parents are very complimentary about the school. Typical comments to inspectors were, 'My child is suitably challenged and making good progress', 'The school is a fantastic environment for my children' and 'Children are safe and well looked after at the school.' Parents are positive about the school's work with pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The school has a productive relationship with its local authority school improvement partner. Most recently, support has been given to ensure that procedures for assessing the standards attained by pupils are robust and accurate. The school also works closely with a local outstanding school, St Peter's in Farnworth. Initially, the headteacher provided coaching and mentoring support to the new headteacher of Queensbridge. More recently, other leaders from St Peter's have worked with the school's subject leaders and helped to improve phonics teaching.
- Pupils' attendance is below average and persistent absence is high. Given the relationship between poor attendance and poor achievement, it is critical that the school addresses these matters and seeks new ways to encourage families, especially those with children who are persistently absent, to send their children to school regularly.

Governance of the school

- Governors know the school well. They know that the quality of teaching is good, because they visit the school regularly and spend time talking to pupils about their learning.
- Governors know how additional funding is spent. This includes the pupil premium funding the school receives for disadvantaged pupils. They are aware that funding is successfully diminishing the differences between the achievement of this group of pupils and others nationally.
- Recently, governors took the initiative to review the pupil premium spending, giving them an even greater insight into the effectiveness of funding in supporting pupils' personal, social, emotional and academic development.
- Governors have a clear overview of the school's appraisal system. They manage the appraisal of the headteacher's work well. However, not all governors have the precise understanding of pupils' performance and how it compares to others nationally, necessary to enable them to ask crucial questions about the school's data.

- Governors are trained well and keep abreast of developments in education. Recently they participated in training to raise their awareness of special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and safeguarding training. All newly appointed governors have undertaken the national governor induction training programme.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school has an up-to-date safeguarding policy published on its website.
- All staff are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. Designated safeguarding leads have had the appropriate training. They have the necessary knowledge and understanding to carry out their duties effectively.
- All staff are familiar with the latest government guidance on keeping children safe in education. Their strong and trusted relationships with pupils ensure that pupils have the confidence to disclose any concerns they may have.
- A sizable portion of pupils are vulnerable. Staff understand the potential dangers that such pupils face. All are familiar with the comprehensive risk assessments, which are in place to ensure that pupils are safe while on the school premises and during educational visits.
- Governors check the school's safeguarding practices and procedures to ensure that the school fulfils all statutory safeguarding requirements. They are trained well to execute their duties diligently. All governors and staff have had Prevent training. This helps to minimise pupils' risk of and exposure to radicalisation and exploitation.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- This is a rapidly improving school. Staff morale is high. Almost all teachers and teaching assistants say that teaching has improved since the previous inspection and indicate that they enjoy the camaraderie they have with colleagues.
- Those new to the profession, including newly qualified teachers, benefit from mentoring and support, delivered by experienced teachers. Teachers indicate that regular professional development and training helps to improve their teaching, hone their management skills and enhance their specialist knowledge.
- All teachers adhere to the school's feedback and assessment policy. As such, they indicate to pupils what they can do to improve their learning and check to see if pupils heed their advice and develop their English and mathematics skills as a result.
- Teaching assistants are trained well. They support pupils of different abilities, including the most able and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teaching assistants in the Smart Room have various specialist skills, including in sign-language, which helps to ensure that pupils who have complex learning difficulties make good progress from their very low starting points.
- Most teachers have high expectations of pupils. They make learning interesting and provide opportunities for pupils to practise their reading, writing and mathematical skills across the curriculum. This is evident in pupils' history books, which include well-written biographies of little-known historical figures, such as Walter Tull, World War

One hero, and one of the first African Caribbean footballers in the country.

- Teachers have secure subject knowledge and skilfully use effective questioning to tease out pupils' understanding. This was exemplified in a Year 6 class, where pupils were asked to write a summary of a chapter from their class reader. In response to questions, all pupils agreed that a summary should include key points and be written well, using the correct grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- In mathematics, teachers insist that pupils always show their working out, as they did in a Year 5 class. While some pupils deducted known angles from a semi-circle and worked out the size of remaining angles, others found percentages of three- and four-digit numbers. Though few pupils found their calculation activities difficult, most found explaining how they had arrived at their conclusions challenging.
- Good teaching in key stage 1 and in lower key stage two is helping to develop pupils' confidence and accelerate their progress in a range of subjects. This was evident in a Year 1 class where pupils sensibly discussed how they could improve their learning and become leaders. In a Year 2 science class, pupils were challenged to create their own food chains. They placed various plants and animals in the correct order in the chains and explained their reasoning with great authority. Similarly, in a Year 3 geography class, pupils showed great levels of concentration as they studied a map of the world and identified oceans, mountain ranges and the United Kingdom.
- Staff in the Smart Room have high expectations of pupils. This was evident in a mixed-age class, where pupils were engaged in different activities linked to the theme of the farmyard. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed joining in with the farmyard song while others developed their fine motor skills as they washed model cows, sheep and chickens. Teachers persevered with the most able, encouraging them to describe and, where possible, write the names of different animals.
- Most teachers understand pupils' strengths and weaknesses and tailor activities to meet their specific educational needs. However, work given to pupils is not always difficult enough. Quite correctly, pupils told inspectors that work is sometimes too easy. Pupils' books reveal that work is not always as challenging as it needs to be to ensure that all pupils achieve their best.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are keen to learn. They strive to deepen their knowledge and understanding in English, mathematics, science and a range of other subjects. As a result, pupils are becoming increasingly resilient, able to learn from their mistakes and prepared to experiment with different ways of learning.
- Pupils know that it is important to eat healthily and engage in regular exercise. Sports coaches come into school regularly to encourage pupils to participate in sports and playground games.
- Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe through the personal, social, health, citizenship and emotional aspects of the curriculum (PSHCE) and assemblies. They

know how to stay safe when using the internet. Older pupils who spoke with inspectors advised that, 'you should never share confidential information with strangers when online' or join social networking sites which are not age-appropriate.

- Pupils say that they feel safe at school. They know that they can express any concerns to staff, confident in the knowledge that they will always be taken seriously. In addition, the pastoral team runs a 'worry box' which they check regularly. All concerns are pursued and outcomes recorded.
- Effective transition arrangements are in place. This helps to ensure the seamless move from the Reception class to Year 1, and from Year 2 to key stage 2. Well-established transition arrangements are in place to ensure that pupils know exactly what to expect when they enter Year 7 after the summer break. Extended transition arrangements are in place for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Pupils are active citizens; as such, they like to have their say. For example, the school council recently met to consider how best to incentivise their peers to regularly attend school. Senior leaders intend to implement the council's suggestion of an 'own clothes day' for the class with the highest attendance.
- Many pupils regularly attend the breakfast club. Here they can eat a healthy breakfast, play with building blocks and engage in physical activities such as 'twister'. Pupils are well supervised. Older pupils enjoy reading, leading games and looking after their younger peers.
- Pupils learn about dangers and risks as well as safe and unsafe situations from the many specialist visitors that come to the school to address assemblies and participate in anti-bullying week. This includes visitors from the police and fire services, Childline and a children's charity.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are of the view that behaviour is good most of the time. Queensbridge School is a purposeful place where pupils enjoy finding out new things. Their behaviour is almost always good in class.
- Pupils take care of their school. They ensure that the school grounds are well looked after and free of litter. Handwriting sessions and the introduction of the weekly 'handwriting hero' award have greatly improved the presentation of pupils' work, which is typically neat and tidy. Pupils wear their uniforms with pride and are effective ambassadors for the school. They behave sensibly and safely during break and lunch times and move around the school with consideration for others.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare. They understand that intolerant behaviour, including racism and homophobic bullying, is wrong and describe such behaviour as 'unacceptable'. Pupils have a deep empathy with one another, regardless of differences, and agree that all pupils are 'part of our school'. Such attitudes help to make Queensbridge the harmonious, inclusive school that it is.
- All parents who met with inspectors were highly positive about all aspects of the school. They are of the view that the school's discipline and reward system is effective and say that staff handle minor disputes well. Teachers, governors and representatives

from the local authority are also of this view. Inspection evidence, including a scrutiny of the school's behaviour records, indicates that pupils' behaviour is good over time.

- Staff are adept at managing the behaviour of pupils who find it difficult to express their feelings and emotions. In the Smart Room, pupils can become frustrated when they find it difficult to indicate their needs. Staff invariably notice this. They know that a hand gesture, articulated toy or the sound of music can immediately ease a pupil's stress.
- Pupils' attendance is below average. This is partly because of the substantial number of pupils who have regular medical appointments. However, the school acknowledges that a small core of families does not ensure that their children attend school regularly. Senior leaders are aware that new strategies must to be devised to tackle this long-standing problem.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- National data on pupils' achievement must be treated with caution given the high number of pupils included who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Inspection evidence indicates that all groups of pupils make strong progress, often from very low starting points.
- At the end of Year 6 in 2017, pupils' progress improved in all subjects when compared to the previous year. Their progress in writing and mathematics was especially strong. Pupils' attainment also improved, especially in writing, where the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard was above the national average.
- Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 in 2017 was not good enough. However, senior leaders have taken swift and effective action to improve the quality of teaching. As a result, current pupils are making rapid and sustained progress, especially in Year 2, and are attaining better than previously.
- The school's own data and work in pupils' books indicate that all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who speak English as an additional language, are making good progress in a wide range of subjects.
- The school's new approach to reading is reaping significant benefits. All pupils read for pleasure every day. In addition, staff listen to pupils read regularly. Parents are encouraged to support their children in reading at home.
- After several years of improvement, the proportion of pupils passing the national screening check in 2017 dipped. However, the proportion of pupils currently with secure knowledge is broadly in line with the national average. Pupils love to read; many are avid readers. Some in lower key stage 2 are very capable and read challenging texts which are read by older pupils. Pupils use their phonics skills well to sound out and read unfamiliar words. They are skilled at reviewing books and interpreting poetry.
- Because of the school's systematic approach to teaching mathematics, pupils' achievement in this subject at the end of key stage 2 improved in 2017. Teachers' emphasis on encouraging pupils to use and apply their mathematics skills has generated a sense of excitement and enhanced pupils' interest in problem-solving activities. Good teaching in mathematics ensures that pupils make strong progress in

this subject across all year-groups.

- Opportunities available for pupils to practise and refine their writing skills across the curriculum are helping to boost their progress. Work in pupils' books reveals good quality writing in science, geography and topics such as Islamic culture and history.
- At the end of key stage 2 in 2017, pupils' spelling score was above average; their attainment in grammar and punctuation was average. Pupils' writing at the expected standard was above average and broadly average at greater depth. Performance was not as good as this at the end of key stage 1. However, progress in writing is currently strong in most year groups.
- At the end of Year 6 in 2017, disadvantaged pupils made good progress in reading and mathematics and were in the top 15% of all schools in writing. Their attainment in writing was above that of other pupils nationally and in line in grammar and punctuation. Pupils' attainment was below in all other subjects. However, differences in performance are rapidly diminishing. Currently, disadvantaged pupils' progress is good across the school. In some classes, their progress is better than that of their peers.
- Pupils in the Smart Room make strong and sustained progress because staff are exceptionally caring and have high expectations of them. In addition, the specialist training that staff receive enables them to communicate with pupils using sign language and other forms of non-verbal communication when necessary.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because their learning is well coordinated by a qualified special educational needs coordinator who works closely with teachers, teaching assistants, various specialist services and parents to ensure that pupils get the tailored support they need.
- At the end of key stages 1 and 2 in 2017, a below-average proportion of pupils attained at greater depth in reading and mathematics. Writing was close to average at the end of key stage 2. Though attainment is improving, teachers are inconsistent in their practice when it comes to challenging pupils to achieve their best.
- Improved teaching has accelerated pupils' progress this year. As a result, and coupled with good transition arrangements, most pupils in Year 6 are well prepared for their learning in Year 7.

Early years provision

Good

- Most aspects of the leadership and management of the early years provision, including teaching, children's behaviour and safeguarding procedures, are very strong. Outcomes at the end of the Reception Year have improved each year for at least the last three years and are rapidly improving this year.
- Most children enter the Nursery class with weak skills in almost all areas of learning. Their language, communication and mathematics skills are especially weak. However, children get off to an exceptionally good start in the Nursery and make strong progress. At the end of the Reception Year in 2017, relatively few children attained a good level of development. However, this year most children are already equipped with the skills necessary for them to be successful learners in Year 1.
- Disadvantaged children are targeted, to ensure that they make the same good progress as their peers, as are those who have special educational needs and/or

disabilities. In the early years, as in key stages 1 and 2, staff have made reading a prime area for development. This has had a positive impact on children's interest in books, as well as their progress. Current data indicates that boys' performance in all areas of learning is at least as good as girls'. This represents a significant improvement on last years' outcomes.

- Teaching is good. This was evident in the Nursery class where children were making cakes using modelling clay. Children were encouraged to discuss their activities, explain how they were using various utensils and identify the distinct colours of the clay. Children were then encouraged to make snakes and use words such as 'longer' and 'shorter' to describe the snakes' different lengths.
- Nursery children are well behaved and can concentrate for extended periods. This was demonstrated in the library where children showed their sustained concentration as they studied pictures and turned pages appropriately.
- Children enjoy playing in their extensive outdoor learning and play area, which has been transformed since the previous inspection to include a large covered area and various equipment. More recently, additional equipment and facilities were made available to children. These include a sandpit, mud kitchen, workshop, sheds for mathematics activities, balls, bats, ropes, hoops and extra storage, all of which have helped to enhance children's interest in learning.
- All children follow instructions carefully. This was shown in the outdoor play area where children were taking turns on their balancing bikes. They demonstrated control of the bikes and followed the teacher's careful instructions as they used brakes, rather than their feet, to stop their bikes safely.
- Staff make phonics interesting, supporting the development of children's reading and writing skills well. This was evident in the Reception class where children enjoyed using the 'tricky word truck' to sound out and read words such as 'see' and 'week', while other children practised their cursive handwriting, which was demonstrated well by a teacher. The most able children were encouraged to write sentences, which were then linked to their forthcoming visit to a farm.
- Parents are encouraged to participate in their children's learning in school. They take advantage of 'stay and play' events, Easter egg hunts, reading challenges and various celebration activities. Parents who spoke with inspectors indicated that they are happy with their children's progress. They also stated that they are confident that their children are safe and looked after well.
- Children's work books document their achievements in various areas of learning. Books record children's writing and calculation skills and illustrate their ability to cooperate with their peers, engage in creative activities and investigate the world around them. This information is shared with parents, who are encouraged to sign and comment on their children's work. However, procedures used to assess children's skills do not always accurately indicate gaps in their learning. Because such gaps, in reading and writing for example, are not consistently picked up, opportunities are sometimes missed to intervene early and provide appropriate support.
- Children's safety and welfare is given high priority by all staff. Staff adhere to stringent risk assessments to ensure that children are safe.

School details

Unique reference number	133925
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10042492

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	243
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Carol Burrows
Headteacher	Karen Fox
Telephone number	01204 332577
Website	www.queensbridgeprimary.com/
Email address	foxk@queensbridge.bolton.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17–18 December 2013

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, several members of staff have been appointed, including two newly qualified teachers. A new headteacher and deputy headteacher have been appointed. Three new governors have joined the governing body, including the chair of the governing body.
- Extensive refurbishments have taken place in the early years provision. This includes a large covered outdoor learning and play area.
- Queensbridge Primary School is designated by the local authority as an inclusive school. The school a specialist resource base for pupils who have complex disabilities and/or special educational needs, known as the 'Smart Room'. Seven pupils currently use this room. In addition, two children from the Nursery access this provision.
- The school is well known in Bolton for its work with children who have emotional and/or behavioural problems and admits such pupils at various times during the academic year.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is

average. However, some year groups have high proportions of such pupils.

- Currently, 15 pupils have education, health and care plans, which is well above average. Education, health and care plans are for a range of needs including profound and multiple learning disabilities, severe learning difficulties and physical disabilities.
- Queensbridge School is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school. Almost half of all pupils are disadvantaged and in receipt of support through the pupil premium funding.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. An average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- Children under five attend the Nursery on a part-time basis. All children in the Reception class attend full time.
- The school runs a breakfast club, which is managed by the governing body. This provision was inspected.
- At the time of the inspection, two pupils were attending a pupil referral unit, Youth Challenge, on a part-time basis. These pupils are on the school roll.
- Staff from a local outstanding school, St Peter's in Farnworth, provided support to Queensbridge staff.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons in all year groups, as well as the teaching of small groups of pupils and sessions aimed at helping pupils learn to read. Two observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher. Teaching was also observed in the Smart Room.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and held discussions with pupils from across the school. Pupils' work in books was scrutinised in class and separately with the headteacher.
- Inspectors read nine text responses submitted by parents during the inspection and met informally with parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors met formally with a small group of parents and scrutinised the school's own surveys of parents' views. There were too few responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, to consider. Responses to the inspection questionnaires completed by 21 members of staff were also considered.
- A meeting was held with three governors, including the chair of the governing body. In addition, a telephone conversation took place with the vice chair of the governing body.
- Meetings were held with various leaders and subject specialists, including those responsible for English, mathematics, science, music, humanities and physical education. Meetings were also held with leaders responsible for assessing pupils' learning and progress, the early years provision and provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Meetings were held with pastoral staff and those responsible for attendance and safeguarding.
- A meeting was held with a school improvement representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents. These included the school's checks on the quality of teaching and reviews of its own performance, information about pupils' progress, development plans, records of pupils' attendance and behaviour and safeguarding documentation.

Inspection team

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