



Sunning Hill Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 105163
LEA Bolton
Inspection number 277308
Inspection dates 21 September 2005 to 22 September 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs Marguerite McCloy HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Goldsmith Street
School category	Community		Bolton
Age range of pupils	5 to 11		Lancashire BL3 6TR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01204 333588
Number on roll	418	Fax number	01204 333589
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr F Evans
Date of previous inspection	22 November 1999	Headteacher	Mr J Read

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an additional inspector.

Description of the school

Sunning Hill is a large primary school which serves a predominantly Asian community in an urban area of Bolton. Approximately 99% of its pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest group being Indian which accounts for 69%. The number of pupils for whom English is not their first language is very high, although a small minority come from homes where English is now considered to be their first language. More than one in four pupils is eligible for free school meals, which is above the national average, whilst the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, including those with statements of special educational need, is around the national average. The school is situated in an old building with limited outdoor space available. It is popular in the community and is oversubscribed.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Sunning Hill sees itself as a good school and the inspectors agree with this. It has a deservedly high reputation among parents and in the local area, and provides good value for money.

Most pupils enter the school with levels of skill which are below average.

Children are given a good start to their education in the reception classes, so that by the time they enter Key Stage 1 the gap between their achievements and those expected nationally has been reduced. By the time pupils leave Key Stage 2 at the age of 11, they are achieving results which are in line with the national average.

The school has particular strengths in the ways its cares for, guides and supports its pupils, and in the very inclusive ethos which nurtures learners' progress and personal development. Pupils behave very well and have a positive attitude to their learning. The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership.

The school is aware of the need to maintain its focus on providing more challenge for the higher ability pupils. Teaching is good overall, although the school needs to ensure consistency in this area.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection, and has good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

Improve the consistency in the quality of teaching and ensure good progress in learning for all groups of pupils by:

- applying more rigorously the results of the good monitoring procedures already in place, so that all teachers are fully aware of the high quality of teaching and pupil progress expected of them.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The school's 2004 published results show that by the age of 11, pupils' standards of attainment are in line with the national average. As the majority of children enter the school with below average skills, this represents good achievement and progress.

The school is working hard to raise the achievement of its most able learners. The most recent national test results (2005) show that standards are improving, particularly for more able pupils in mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2. Inspection findings confirm that this is as a result of actions the school has taken over a period of time since its last inspection.

Pupils are aware of their targets for improvement and work very hard to meet these, mostly with good success. This is less successful on occasions when insufficient use is made of what the children already know to inform the next steps in their learning. The

school is well aware of what needs to be done to improve this aspect of its provision, and recent assessment systems to inform learning are having a positive impact on results. There are no significant differences in achievement between different groups of learners.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The children bring many positive personal qualities to their education. They are very pleasant, well mannered, engaging and friendly. They work hard, want to do well and enjoy coming to school. Their spiritual, moral social and cultural development is good. The school shares some cultural and religious celebrations with other primary schools outside its own locality. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong, behave very well and are mindful of the need to take care and be responsible for their own safety and that of others around them.

The vast majority respond very well indeed to the school's expectations of them. In this, the school has the full support of the parents in the local community. Attendance at school is satisfactory and is improving due to actions taken by the school to discourage families from taking extended leave during school time.

Pupils' understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle is good and has been improved by the school's introduction of initiatives such as the provision of healthy snacks each day and working towards gaining the 'Healthy School Award'.

The children are very proud of the ways in which they have supported their school and the wider community. For example, members of the school council told an inspector ' . We had the new fences put in . and that new security camera on the wall outside . '. They have raised considerable sums for charities. Within lessons and around school, pupils are keen to take on responsibilities. As a result of these achievements, and combined with the good progress they make in the core skills, pupils are well placed to secure a positive economic future for themselves.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall with some outstanding features and as a result pupils achieve well. There are, however, a few inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, which mean that there are variations between some lessons. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities and those whose first language is not English achieve well. This is because work is pitched at the right level for them, and they receive good guidance from the learning support assistants and teachers who work with them. More able learners are being provided with further challenge as a result of effective teaching in ability groups for some lessons.

Teachers expect pupils to work hard and behave well. They plan challenging and interesting activities, and evidently good relationships ensure that pupils respond positively and develop positive attitudes towards their learning. They listen attentively and concentrate, always striving to give of their best. Good use is made of the well trained support assistants who help the pupils develop the basic skills they need to be more confident and independent in their learning.

In the best lessons, teachers explain clearly to the pupils what they are going to learn in the lesson. They ask questions which prompt children's thinking. For example, in a Year 4 English lesson the teacher asked, 'Why do you think the poet wrote it like this?' and a pupil replied, 'He is trying to paint a picture of the snow falling.' Most lessons are conducted at a brisk pace without a moment being wasted. But in a few, the pace slows and pupils sit for too long listening to the teacher so that progress suffers.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

All statutory requirements are met and the curriculum is well matched to the needs of all pupils in the school. A good balance is given to ensure that pupils learn skills as well as factual knowledge. It is well organised to enable the pupils to build on what they have already achieved, with good provision for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). The school constantly reviews its position and then changes the curriculum to meet the needs of all groups of pupils.

Visits and visitors into school help to enrich the curriculum, as does the use of specialists for drama and music. Many pupils take advantage of the opportunities provided by the school to take part in a wide range of clubs and other sporting activities. These include drama, science, music, art and football and serve to extend and develop their skills as well as adding to their enjoyment of learning. The school is aware of the shortcomings in facilities for outdoor sports and try hard to compensate for this. There is an additional indoor sports room adjacent to one of the playgrounds, which are well maintained and attractively marked out for pupils' games.

Additional features such as the school's Arts' Week further develop pupils' skills and self-esteem and are valued by pupils, staff and parents.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school judges its quality of care, guidance and support as good, whereas inspectors found this to be outstanding. The school should be very proud of its achievements in this area.

The headteacher provides inspirational leadership in this respect. He has, over many years, built an excellent relationship with the local Muslim community. Parents put their trust in the headteacher and the school to do the best for their children. They work in true partnership, and the school is very appreciative of the loyalty, hard work and support of its parents. The school building accommodates the local Madrassa which many pupils attend each evening. The teachers within the Madrassa are working

with the school in its efforts to support pupils by providing a reasonable amount of time for their school homework tasks. A team of parents provide assemblies of a broadly Islamic nature on four days a week and these are attended and supported by school staff. An alternative assembly of a broadly Christian nature is also offered, and a small number of pupils attend this. The pupils therefore know that the school and their parents are working together. In many other ways, the children know that they are very well cared for and guided. In response to an inspector's questions, one girl explained why she enjoyed school and how she knew that the teachers cared for her: 'because you can see the love in her (the teacher's) eyes when she speaks to you'.

Overall, pupils are supported very well in their learning and are guided to make further progress through effective use of target setting and assessment. Every step is taken to ensure the safety of all groups of pupils, who feel very happy and secure at Sunning Hill.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher is wholly committed to the school and its local community, who value this in return. The headteacher and his staff team have the overwhelming support of the parents, as reflected in the questionnaires returned to the inspection team. The governors of the school are kept well informed and support the management team's drive to improve the quality of education the pupils receive. Guided by the loyal and experienced chair of governors, they have a good oversight of the school's finances, buildings and curriculum. However, their committee structure is not currently providing for a more strategic role in evaluating the impact of actions taken to raise standards.

The leadership team is aware of the school's strengths and areas where it needs to improve. The judgements of the inspection team were closely matched to those of the school itself. The school's good monitoring and evaluation systems should lead to a more rigorous use of assessment information to improve outcomes for learners. Although this is already having a positive impact on pupils' achievement, the management team are aware of the need to continue pursuing this and thereby achieve greater consistency in the quality of teaching.

Inclusion in the school is excellent. The varied background, culture and skills of staff enable all pupils to be valued and included in all activities. High quality support and resources for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, at both ends of the ability spectrum, are provided. The staff and governors are committed to providing a stimulating learning environment and do their best to compensate for any difficulties arising from the limitations of the aged building and its grounds.

Skilled support staff is effectively deployed. All of these factors contribute to learners making good progress and represent good value for money.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection. Although the key areas for improvement at that time have been met satisfactorily, other developments since identified as priorities by the school itself have been achieved successfully. There is

good capacity for further improvement due to the senior leadership team's accurate knowledge and understanding of what needs to be done, and the skills and commitment to see it through.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

As you know, inspectors visited your school recently and we would like to thank you for your help and for making us feel so welcome.

We looked at all the things you do in school and enjoyed talking to you about them. We thought you behaved very well and we could tell that you and your families are proud of the school. These are some of the things that we really liked.

- All the adults in school and your parents work closely together to make sure that you are all very well cared for and that you have all the help you need to learn well. They make you feel happy and safe in your school. Some of you talked to us about this, so we know you agree!
- The teachers make lessons interesting for you, and there are lots of extra activities for you to do, like the visits and after-school clubs.
- You do well in your work because the teaching is good. Some of you are given more difficult work and you enjoy the challenge.
- You get along well with each other and with the adults in school. Some of you take on responsibilities and help to make decisions about your school. Those of you on the school council talked to us about changes that have been made, some as a result of your own ideas!

We have asked your headteacher to try to make sure that all of the teaching in school is as good as the best teaching we saw. If each of you carries on working hard and enjoying school as much as you do now, then your learning will be even better than it is already.

Thank you again for being so polite and friendly.