



Ladybridge Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 105169
LEA Bolton
Inspection number 277309
Inspection dates 29 November 2005 to 30 November 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	Broadford Road
School category	Community		Bolton
Age range of pupils	5 to 11		Lancashire BL3 4NB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01204 333646
Number on roll	211	Fax number	01204 333647
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Councillor Kay
Date of previous inspection	5 June 2000	Headteacher	Mr Colin Watson

Age group 5 to 11	Inspection dates 29 November 2005 - 30 November 2005	Inspection number 277309
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

Ladybridge is an average sized primary school situated in Deane, an area of Bolton in Lancashire. Pupils attend from a wide catchment area and a range of socio-economic backgrounds, making the school's intake broadly average.

Fewer than 10% of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds at 40%, is above the national average. About a third of the pupils do not have English as their first language, with approximately one-third of these being at an early stage of language acquisition. On admission to the Reception class, some children's skills are not as well developed as might be expected for this age group. Despite this, the range of ability across the class is average overall.

The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than average, due to the school's additionally resourced provision for pupils with physical difficulties and its reputation for good special needs provision. The school is committed to inclusion and these pupils are fully involved in all classes and activities. There are currently four pupils for whom the school receives funding, due to financial reductions in recent years and as pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are integrated into all mainstream schools.

The school recently re-qualified for the Investors in People Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school judges its overall effectiveness as good and inspectors agree.

Standards overall are above average by the end of Key Stage 2. Children are given a sound start in the Foundation Stage and make good progress in their learning in Key Stages 1 and 2. The school has successfully taken action to improve Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment in writing and mathematics since the last inspection.

The personal development and well-being of pupils is good. They enjoy their education and benefit from the high quality of care and support and the very positive relationships which exist in the school. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities continues to be a strength of the school.

The school's monitoring systems do not focus strongly enough on evaluating the impact of measures taken to improve the quality of teaching and pupil progress. Although there are strengths in the teaching, the overall quality is satisfactory.

The school has good capacity to improve due to the dedication and vision of the headteacher and leadership team and the whole staff commitment to reviewing and improving the education provided for all pupils.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve assessment procedures to enable more rigorous tracking and evaluation of pupil progress and target setting for improvement.
- Further develop the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The school's self-evaluation is accurate in judging that pupils' achievement is good overall. Children enter the school with a broadly average range of ability, although a number of pupils have below average skills in social development and language. During their time in the Foundation Stage most make satisfactory progress from their starting points, but a higher than average proportion fail to meet the standards expected of them by the end of the year.

Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1. Test results for Year 2 pupils in 2005 show an increase in the proportion achieving at or above expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents an improvement over the previous two years and continues the school trend of above average numbers of pupils achieving the higher level in writing. The number achieving the higher level in mathematics improved in 2005 and is also now above the national average.

Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 2. By the age of 11, their standards of attainment are generally above the national average. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level in science and mathematics in 2005 was above average, whilst the number achieving this in English was below average, a decrease from the

previous year. However, teacher assessments were accurate enough to show that there was no drop in the number of pupils capable of achieving the higher level in English.

Most groups of learners achieve well, although some boys do not achieve as well as the girls, particularly in English. The school is aware of this and has plans to remedy the situation. Children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. The attention given to these children and the effectiveness of their support is a strength of the school, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Children who learn English as an additional language are represented amongst the highest achieving, as well as amongst those who are given extra support to improve their English skills.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal development and well-being of pupils is promoted well.

Provision for spiritual, social and cultural education is good and is underpinned by visits to local places of worship. Assemblies provide time for pupils to reflect. Moral education is well provided for through agreed class rules and weekly assembly themes.

Pupils enjoy school and attendance is above average. Pupils are courteous and polite and behaviour in and around school is generally good. The school actively promotes health initiatives for its pupils, such as the National Fruit Project for younger pupils and wholesome snacks for older children. Racial harmony is evident and pupils feel safe in school. The school takes sensible, active steps to prevent accidents such as adapting games equipment during playtimes. Bullying is rare; pupils are confident that they have adults to turn to in the event of any such incidents and that these would be dealt with quickly. Pupils take part in local sports competitions and are beginning to make positive contributions to the wider community, such as raising funds for the Tsunami appeal.

Older pupils have opportunities to take on responsibilities around the school, for example through the play leader scheme or as librarians. The elected school council meets weekly and is beginning to become proactive in proposing ways to improve the school, such as their decision to request the purchase of additional playground toys and games.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The school judges the quality of teaching and learning to be good. Inspectors found it to be satisfactory overall, with some strengths and no inadequate teaching was observed. Children enjoy school, have positive attitudes to learning, and are supported well by their families. This, alongside good personal development, positive relationships and good provision of extra support where needed, leads to good pupil progress even when the teaching is not consistently good.

Teachers have secure knowledge of their subjects and plan lessons appropriately, often making use of exemplar plans for the national strategies in literacy and numeracy. Good use is made of interactive whiteboards with a range of software and internet-based resources to stimulate pupils' interest.

In the satisfactory lessons, teaching does not always move along at a sufficiently brisk pace. Teachers' use of questioning and discussion is not strong enough to challenge pupils' thinking and ensure effective learning. Learning objectives are usually shared with pupils but not always reviewed later in order to check how well they have been achieved.

When the teaching is good, it is brisk, lively and imaginative. Pupils are well focused and enthused. A range of interesting and varied activities is provided which are well planned to match individual pupils' needs, keep them actively involved and ensure that concentration is maintained. Teachers give clear explanations and guidance so that pupils' understanding is secure. Good support is given by adults working with pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and higher achieving pupils are challenged with extended tasks.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school judges its curriculum as good, whereas inspectors found it to be satisfactory overall with strong provision for literacy and numeracy. Curriculum evenings have recently been introduced to explain developments to parents. Themed weeks are held, such as the recent Arts Week, and there are plans to make these a more regular event. More able pupils in a number of classes benefit from a new initiative whereby they receive additional challenge in mathematics. The curriculum is beginning to reflect the changing pupil profile and there are plans to further promote multi-cultural understanding.

An appropriate amount of homework is set. There is an extensive programme of educational visits and a good range of extra-curricular activities such as music and sports clubs which are popular with pupils. These and the formal enrichment sessions, such as French and sports coaching, enhance the experiences of pupils. Pupils in Year 6 benefit from an annual residential visit. However, there is a heavy emphasis on enrichment activities in school time. This, along with additional literacy and language activities such as silent reading sessions in some classes, restricts the time available for other subjects. Insufficient use is made of opportunities to teach literacy through these other subjects, such as history. The school is in the process of reviewing its curriculum to increase flexibility and improve links between subjects and planned changes have been agreed in consultation with governors.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good care, guidance and support for its pupils. Child protection and health and safety procedures are in place and understood by all staff. Vulnerable

pupils are particularly well cared for and the school is responsive to their needs. Pupils with learning difficulties and the small number of pupils with physical disabilities are very well supported and integrated into school life.

Pupils are well supervised outside at break and lunchtimes. In addition, they are able to access a privately run club before and after school, which provides a safe and welcoming environment.

There are effective induction arrangements for new pupils and good links exist with local secondary schools. Links with parents and outside agencies are effectively promoted in order to support all pupils. Information on their child's progress is shared with parents at two meetings each year, in addition to the general curriculum evening.

Guidance for pupils in their academic progress is satisfactory. Whilst older pupils are aware of their general level of achievement they are not as clear about what they have to do in order to move up to the next level. Present assessment and marking systems do not always help pupils understand how they can improve.

Staff pay good attention to developing pupils' confidence and self-esteem so that they feel comfortable to ask for help and support. Pupils' efforts and achievements are praised by staff and celebrated in weekly school assemblies.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Inspectors found leadership and management to be satisfactory overall with some particularly positive features, ensuring the school's continuing capacity to improve further. The school's self-evaluation judged leadership and management as good, but this does not take into account the fact that newly-introduced changes have not yet had time to fully impact on the quality of teaching and learning and the tracking of pupil progress. The recently appointed headteacher is well supported by staff and parents and has quickly secured a strong ethos of teamwork in the school. Senior leaders work together well and are committed to the school's continuing improvement.

Systems to monitor and improve the school's performance are in place and parents and pupils are consulted. Pupils spoke to inspectors about how much they like their school, and the equally positive views of parents were reflected in the questionnaires returned to the inspection team. Senior and middle managers contribute to school improvement through their monitoring of children's work and teachers' planning, and by sharing information from subject training and development opportunities.

The senior leadership team's monitoring of teaching and learning through lesson observations has not been rigorous enough to fully identify where improvements are necessary. This has led to the over-generous view that teaching and learning are consistently good. The school accepts that recent training and development in this area is not yet securely in place across the school, and further work is planned.

The school's improvement plan would benefit from increased clarity in emphasising the key priorities of the school in aiming to improve achievement. Not all action plans are clearly focused on the details of what needs to be done to improve learning outcomes for pupils.

The school maintains a range of data on pupils' standards and progress. This is beginning to be used more effectively across the school as the leadership team has identified the need to set more specific improvement targets for different groups and individual pupils. This is being planned to enable more regular evaluation of progress and swift action where underachievement of individual pupils is identified. This will also allow managers to review the impact of any whole school initiatives or staff development which has taken place.

Governors are involved in the life of the school and are very supportive of the headteacher and his staff. They are aware of the school's strengths and some of the areas for improvement. Despite the costs per pupil being in the upper range, when taking into account the school's quality of provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the good achievement of all pupils, it gives good value for money.

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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?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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	2	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	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	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	3	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?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	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?	3	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	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	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, two inspectors visited your school recently. We liked joining your lessons and were very interested to hear about all the things you do and what you thought about your school.

There are a lot of good things in your school. Some of the best things we found were:

- your behaviour is good in and around school
- you try hard in lessons and work well
- your teachers and other adults in school work very hard as a team to look after you and help you to learn and become responsible young people
- you care about others, for instance when older children work as play leaders to help younger children on the playground
- you have a good range of clubs to choose from and you particularly enjoy the enrichment activities.
- the school arranges lots of visits which you enjoy.

To improve your learning, we have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to:

- make sure that your work is marked and checked in such a way that you are really clear about your targets for improvement and how you can achieve these
- continue improving the teaching so that it is good or better all of the time.

Thank you for being so polite and friendly.