



Mytham Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 105190
LEA Bolton
Inspection number 277314
Inspection dates 2 November 2005 to 3 November 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs Sarah Drake CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Mytham Road
School category	Community		Little Lever
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Bolton, Lancashire BL3 1JG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01204 333556
Number on roll	345	Fax number	01204 333557
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr W Earnshaw
Date of previous inspection	18 September 2000	Headteacher	Mrs A Chadderton

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 2 November 2005 - 3 November 2005	Inspection number 277314
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Mytham is a large school situated south east of Bolton. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is smaller than is found nationally. There are below average numbers of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The percentage of pupils eligible for a free school meal is smaller than average. Children's attainment on entry to reception varies considerably from year to year, but overall is broadly average.

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 accurately judges that it is providing a good quality of education for its pupils. Its evaluation of how this is achieved is modest in relation to the quality of its leadership and the support that it provides for pupils. After a period of decline in standards, all groups of pupils now achieve well. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly average, but rising in a sustained manner. Pupils' personal development is good because staff are highly skilled at helping them to grow in self-esteem, but their spiritual development is not yet promoted sufficiently well across all subjects. Teaching and learning are mostly good, and sometimes outstanding. However, along with teachers' use of assessment, this quality is not yet consistent throughout the school. Exceptional care and support for all pupils enables them to feel safe, enjoy their learning and achieve well. Parents are very appreciative of the school's work and many support their children's learning effectively. Strong and varied links with the wider community enhance the provision. Pupils have great fun and make rapid progress in their reception year.

Since the arrival of the current headteacher three years ago the school has made good improvement. The curriculum now complies with requirements and has been greatly enriched. Information and communication technology (ICT) is now used well across all subjects. Although there is room for further improvement, work is better matched to pupils' abilities. The school provides exceptional value for money. This has been brought about by the outstanding leadership and management of senior staff, guided by the exceptional headteacher. The school has very good knowledge of its weaker areas and has excellent capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teaching and the use of assessment are of consistently good quality throughout the school.
- Promote pupils' spiritual development more systematically across all subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well throughout the school and standards at the end of Year 6 have risen

in each of the past three years. From broadly average attainment on entry, most children

reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of their reception year, and a few exceed these.

In 2004, standards at the end of Year 2 showed improvements in all areas and were average in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2005, results improved further,

particularly in writing and also in mathematics, where 100% of pupils achieved the expected level for this age group.

At the end of Year 6 in 2004 standards were average in English, mathematics and science. Analysis shows that boys and girls and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, all made equally good progress from their results at the end of Year 2.

Progress was strongest in science. In English, where pupils' writing did not match the standard of their reading, not enough higher attaining pupils gained the highest levels that they did in mathematics and science. Results improved in 2005 in all subjects and again reflect the good progress being made by pupils from the end of Year 2. The school

failed to meet its targets in writing but exceeded the challenging ones set in reading, mathematics and science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a strong sense of right and wrong. This is reflected in good standards of behaviour, the lack of problems with bullying or racism and pupils' high involvement in charity fundraising activities. Pupils' social development is good. They work and play together well and the house point system instils a strong sense of team spirit. The school council has made decisions about playground equipment and suggestions about healthy food. Pupils take on responsibilities cheerfully and carry them out sensibly. Cultural development is good. Every pupil is involved in theatrical productions for parents, and the wide range of enrichment activities includes artists in residence, dance troupes and African drumming. By contrast, pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory and the school recognises this as an important area to be strengthened.

Pupils know how to stay healthy. They play energetically, are increasingly opting for healthy food, and the girls' football team are Bolton champions. Pupils behave in a safe and responsible fashion. They greatly enjoy school and their attendance is good. They make a good contribution to the community, for example, through productions and activities for senior citizens. Pupils are well prepared for future life. They work hard independently or when collaborating with others, make good progress in basic skills, and they know how communities are organised to benefit everyone.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall, ranging from satisfactory to outstanding. In good and outstanding lessons, high expectations and very effective assessments enable pupils to progress well. Good teaching by adults who help those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities results in good progress by these pupils.

Small variations occur in the quality of teaching between subjects and within year groups. In a few lessons, teachers do not use assessment well enough to drive pupils' learning. The school has identified this through its own very effective system of quality checking. Good professional support is helping teachers to improve their teaching and pupils' learning. Rising standards demonstrate the effectiveness of the school's action but there is still more to do.

A focus on setting learning targets in writing is helping pupils to improve this aspect of their work. Pupils say, and inspectors agree, that they are becoming better writers. The school rigorously checks how well teachers are using target setting, sharing the best practice for greater impact.

The good quality of relationships is seen in pupils' positive attitudes to, and good enjoyment of, learning. Teachers show good commitment to the care of pupils as learners, helping them to grow in confidence. Pupils learn the basic skills needed for their future economic well-being from good opportunities to use literacy, numeracy and ICT in other subjects.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school that it provides a good curriculum. An outstanding curriculum review clearly identifies national curriculum objectives and demonstrates how learning opportunities can be enriched further. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements, including those to provide relationships education. It is well matched to the learning needs of all pupils. Innovation, such as providing French for all pupils, promotes good enjoyment of learning, as does extensive use of ICT across all subjects. While spiritual development is satisfactory, it does not feature as strongly as other aspects of pupils' personal development.

Improving standards confirm strengths in the curriculum for English, mathematics and science. Pupils show great enthusiasm for learning from extra curricular activities, such as in sports and the creative arts. This very good range of additional activities and numerous visitors and educational visits further enrich the curriculum. A very effective programme of personal, social and health education encourages pupils to recognise and adopt healthy lifestyles.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

All the school's work is underpinned by the staff's determination to help each pupil gain the maximum benefit from their education. Very good care is taken to ensure pupils' health and safety. Staff know the pupils very well as individuals, are alert to any changes in attitude and have a good understanding of how to ensure child protection. Very good support, including liaison with outside agencies, is provided for those with academic or behavioural difficulties and/or disabilities. The support for these pupils and all others is based on regular, very well focused monitoring of their progress, which informs the decisions about what future action to take. All staff clearly enjoy being with pupils and take the time to listen to them so pupils are confident that any problems will be swiftly sorted out and they have a clear understanding of how to improve their work. The outstanding support provided for pupils strongly underpins their enjoyment at school and the good progress that they make.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

'At Mytham, children come first.' The school's mission statement is a true reflection of its day to day activities, which are guided by exceptionally strong leadership and management. The headteacher has a very clear vision of how the school should be and also knows how she will bring this about. She has the gift of instilling this vision in her staff and empowering them to help her achieve it. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and ably fulfil their role of 'critical friend'.

Starting with highly detailed analysis of the standards and progress made by pupils, and paying good attention to the views of all staff, governors, parents and pupils, the leadership team identifies the right priorities for further development. One example is writing standards where good improvements are beginning to be seen.

Responsibilities and success criteria are crystal clear and feed into checks on lesson quality and the system of monitoring staff's performance. The same careful analysis guides all decisions. For example, this year, awareness of a number of vulnerable pupils' considerable needs led to some teachers 'moving up' with their classes to provide continuity of pastoral support. Classroom observations confirm the wisdom of this decision, which at the same time neatly supports staff development. Similarly, bold decisions to adapt the curriculum have greatly enhanced pupils' enjoyment and the quality of their learning.

Over the past three years pupils' achievement has been improved, reversing an earlier decline in standards, and their progress is now good. All the improvements have been achieved with below average levels of funding and while repaying an overspend which the headteacher inherited upon taking up her position. The leadership and management of the school are outstanding.

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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	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	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	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	2	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?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	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	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	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

Thank you for welcoming us so warmly into your school and for sharing your views with us. We realise that it is not always easy to have visitors watching what goes on in lessons and around school, and asking you questions.

Here is a list of the things that we liked about your school.

- Your teachers plan interesting things for you to do so that you really enjoy your learning.
- They explain things well so that you work hard and make good progress.
- All the staff listen to what you have to say and are very good at helping you to sort out difficulties.
- You enjoy each other's company, are helpful and behave well.
- You are good at taking on responsibility and making a difference.
- Your headteacher and other senior teachers are exceptionally skilled at seeing what needs to be improved and working with all staff to make it happen.
- You told us that it is a good school and we agree with you - it is also a happy one.

This is what we have asked your school to do now to make it even better.

- Help all your teachers to become as skilled as the very best ones.
- Help you to appreciate that every subject and activity can lift your spirits.