



Walmsley CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 105232
LEA Bolton
Inspection number 277322
Inspection dates 13 September 2005 to 14 September 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs Anna Dawson CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Blackburn Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Egerton
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Bolton, Lancashire BL7 9SA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01204 332650
Number on roll	315	Fax number	01204 332651
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Anthony Slack
Date of previous inspection	12 September 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Debra Carr

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 13 September 2005 - 14 September 2005	Inspection number 277322
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large and popular school situated in a favourable social context on the outskirts of Bolton. It has a relatively stable population and is oversubscribed and very well supported by the parents of children who attend. Pupils enter the school with above average skills. The percentage of pupils entitled to a free school meal is very low. The vast majority of pupils are from white British backgrounds and all speak English as a first language. A below average percentage of pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities. Of these pupils, a below average number have a statement of special educational needs. These statements are mainly for physical disabilities.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is a very good school with outstanding features. It provides a high quality Christian education for its pupils and gives very good value for money. Inspectors feel that the school has underestimated its performance in some aspects. Teaching and learning overall is very good and outstanding in science. Provision for children in the reception classes is extremely good. Children make rapid progress and attain or exceed the national targets that are set for them by the end of their reception year. Throughout the school, those with learning difficulties or disabilities make exceptionally good progress. Pupils from Years 1 to 6 make very good progress overall. In Years 3 to 6, they make extremely good progress in science and very good progress in English and mathematics. However, the development of writing, other than story writing, for some higher attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6 could be improved. Pupils' personal development is exemplary. The pupils enjoy school because it takes exceptionally good care of each and every one of them and provides an exciting and challenging curriculum. One pupil said, 'the school is brilliant because the teachers help you achieve and give you confidence'. Leadership and management are very strong. The school management team has planned to develop further the monitoring of teaching and learning in lessons. There were no issues for improvement from the last inspection in 2000. Since then the school has maintained its high standards and continued to improve the quality of its provision. There is very good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to raise the attainment of the higher attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6 in writing.
- Further develop the procedures for monitoring lessons.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

The school judges pupils' standards and achievement as outstanding and the inspectors agree. The school takes pride in the very good, and at times exceptional, achievement of the pupils which has been maintained since the last inspection. The pupils' attainments on entry to school cover the full range of abilities. However, the majority of pupils start school with above average speaking, social and mathematical skills. From starting school to the end of Year 2, the pupils make very good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 2 nearly all attain the expected national standards and a significant number exceed them. Pupils continue to make similar high quality progress in Years 3 to 6. Progress tends to accelerate more rapidly in Years 5 and 6 as pupils approach the national tests. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities also make very good progress.

Nearly all pupils attain high standards in English and mathematics. In English, although standards are significantly above average, some of the higher attaining pupils could do better in some aspects of writing which accounts for a slight dip in standards last

year. This is a current focus for improvement. As a result of action taken, standards are rising but there is still room for further improvement. Pupils' achieve exceptionally high standards in science with over three quarters of them attaining above nationally expected levels for their age. Targets set for standards in English, mathematics and science are realistic, challenging and for the most part are achieved.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The inspectors agree with the school's evaluation of the pupils' personal development. Pupils' attitudes to work and school are exemplary. In lessons, they work very hard and productively, either individually or with a 'learning partner'. Their behaviour is outstanding. Pupils love coming to school and are keen to take part lessons or in the many activities organised for them outside lessons. Attendance is much higher than in most schools and nearly all pupils arrive on time - and with a smile!

The school makes very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Its Christian ethos is very evident in the shared values that permeate its work. These can be seen in the considerate way pupils treat each other and the respect they show to those younger than themselves. For example, when a small group of pupils from different age groups were talking about their views on school, the youngest kept quiet for a while. When he decided to express his views, the others listened carefully and respectfully to what he said.

The school is very successful in developing pupils' personal and social qualities and in helping them to understand and appreciate their own cultural heritage and those of other ethnic groups. Teachers ensure pupils are aware of the importance of being part of a community. Pupils' basic skills are developed well to help them prepare for future life. They are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles, for example through making healthy choices from the lunchtime menu. Physical exercise is promoted through the school's very successful physical education curriculum. Overall, the school achieves great success in promoting pupils' good health and well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The inspectors judge that the quality of teaching and learning is higher than the school suggests because of the very high standards that the pupils achieve overall. Teaching is very successful in helping pupils to learn well and to make very good progress. It is especially strong in mathematics and exceptional in science. Teaching is also very effective in reading, helping pupils to develop their skills and their enjoyment of books. Teaching of writing is mostly successful although it does not always help the most able pupils to achieve as well as they should. The school has recognised this issue and is taking steps to deal with it.

The bedrock of success in teaching is the excellent relationships that exist in all classes. The very good atmosphere for learning that this generates is also a key element. Teachers get the best out of all pupils, providing well planned work that challenges pupils without daunting them. They have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and motivate them to work hard and productively. Pupils with learning difficulties are given very good support by capable teaching assistants and make extremely good progress as a result. Learning difficulties are identified early and strategies are implemented to remedy these. Teachers make very good use of information about pupils' progress so that they can plan future work to meet learning needs. Written work is marked conscientiously and with comments that help pupils improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum meets statutory requirements and very strongly promotes pupils' learning of basic literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. There is also very effective provision for pupils' personal development, science, music and for those pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. The curriculum is greatly enhanced by a very good range of highly popular clubs and activities in and beyond the normal school day. These involve the pupils in sports and cultural experiences that greatly extend their learning and personal development and contribute enormously to their enjoyment of school. Pupils speak with great enthusiasm about all the interesting and exciting activities offered to them. Pupils delight in participating in community activities and concerts. Younger pupils eagerly demonstrated their new found skills in speaking French. Parents are particularly pleased with the way the school broadens learning beyond the basic skills and how it places great emphasis on nurturing their children's creativity through music. Pupils talk knowledgeably about wider world issues. However their understanding of the world of work is not as strong as it could be. The school also offers French to its pupils. It has achieved the Activemark Gold Award for excellence in physical education. This shows the commitment the school has to pupils' physical development by encouraging them to take regular exercise and keep fit and healthy. There are many occasions when the curriculum extends to the outdoors where pupils can appreciate the environment and the wonders of nature.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The inspectors feel the quality of care and guidance in the school is stronger than the school self-evaluation suggests. The school shows outstanding care for all its pupils. The pupils find their teachers kind, helpful and fair and feel they are looked after very well. As a result they are happy and enjoy learning. Parents feel the school is wonderful and a happy place for their children to be. They appreciate the many new initiatives put into place which support pupils' health, safety and well being. Parents were amazed at how quickly their children had settled into the reception class. The school is always ready to listen to pupils and offer very good personal support. Pupils feel secure and

know there is always someone to whom they can turn for help. Around school and at playtimes the older pupils take good care of the younger ones. Very successful initiatives such as the Peer Mediators help pupils to sort out minor conflicts. Bullying is not perceived to be a problem. The assessing and monitoring of pupils' work contributes to the very good progress they make in reaching high academic standards. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are supported very well and make extremely good progress. Child protection procedures are in place and well understood by staff. The school works very well with a range of external agencies to ensure that pupils and their families are well supported.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The inspectors feel that the leadership of the headteacher and senior staff is stronger than the school's self-evaluation suggests. Although the headteacher is relatively new to this post, within a year she has gained the confidence of the staff and the school community and made a very good start to leading the school. Parents are very supportive of the headteacher and say they are involved in school life. One parent commented, 'the headteacher has brought a warm and friendly approach to leadership and maintained high standards'. The governing body are knowledgeable and very supportive of the school. They fulfil their statutory duties very well.

The school's self-evaluation procedures are generally very strong and accurately identify any areas for improvement. There is consistent and thorough monitoring of pupils' achievements. Test results in English, mathematics and science are carefully analysed for weaknesses and detailed action plans are prepared for improvement. The staff are a skilled workforce and committed to maintaining high standards. The continuing professional development for teachers is well established. As a result they keep abreast of new initiatives and use these to enhance their teaching skills very well. This is demonstrated, for example, by the exceptional teamwork of the staff. The monitoring of teaching is carried out thoroughly by the headteacher and deputy headteacher and helps to improve pupils' performance. However, the school recognises that further work needs to be done to develop skills in observing and monitoring lessons to ensure learning remains consistently high.

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	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?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	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	1	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 to find out if the school is giving you the education you should receive.

First of all, thank you very much for welcoming us to your school so well. We enjoyed talking to you about your work and finding out about the things you like doing.

I am pleased to say that the school has many strengths and some outstanding features as well as some things for improvement. The things that we particularly felt were good were:

- your school is a happy and exciting place where you enjoy learning in lessons and taking part in out of school activities
- your school has strong leadership and management and you benefit from very good teaching
- you hard work to achieve high standards in English, mathematics and science
- you care for one another extremely well and your behaviour is exemplary
- your school makes sure that it cares for you all equally well and you become confident learners.

We have asked your teachers to improve some things to make your school even better. These things are:

- we would like the children in Years 3 to 6 to continue to improve their skills in writing
- we would like the teachers to improve their already very good teaching skills by observing and monitoring more lessons.

Thank you for helping us with the inspection of the school. We hope that you will carry on enjoying lessons and continue to help your teachers to make Walmsley CE Primary School an exciting and happy place to learn.