



Butterstile Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 105297
LEA Bury
Inspection number 277332
Inspection dates 26 September 2005 to 27 September 2005
Reporting inspector Mr John Heap CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	School Grove
School category	Community		Prestwich
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Manchester, Lancashire M25 9RJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 798 5680
Number on roll	376	Fax number	0161 798 7351
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Susan Wallworth
Date of previous inspection	6 November 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Katherine O'Doherty

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large school in a socially disadvantaged area. A higher than average number of pupils have English as an additional language. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with national averages as is the number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children's skills on entry to the school are below average, particularly in language and communication. The school has experienced a large turnover in staff over the last two years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school that it continues to be a good place to learn. Almost all evidence collected points to strong improvements in most areas of school business. All pupils benefit equally from the effective leadership and management. The headteacher, staff and governors work very hard to ensure that effective work is going on in the Foundation Stage, reading, mathematics, science, the arts and information and communications technology (ICT). Morale is very high, pupils feel safe and secure, but no one in the school is complacent. They know that writing; particularly the basic skills of handwriting, spelling, grammar and punctuation are not good enough. The school has been working hard on this with only slow development. It now has good plans to seek improvement again. Value for money is good and the drive, capacity and will to improve further are clear for all to see.

The senior management team is effective. Governors are clearly supportive and probing. As a result, subject management, teaching and learning and pupils' personal development are good. Pupils work hard, enjoy their lessons and make good progress overall. Their needs are mostly met. Those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those from minority ethnic backgrounds benefit from the outstanding links and partnerships with outside agencies.

What the school should do to improve further

The school should improve standards and progress in writing by:

- developing from an early age strong and fluent writing skills that promote high standards of handwriting, spelling, grammar and punctuation
- making the target-setting and marking of written work more consistent in order to promote good progress
- continuing to monitor diligently the work of teachers and learners so that inconsistencies in practice and progress are removed.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school that overall standards in 2004 were above average. Early indications from the 2005 results show above average standards in reading, mathematics and science, but below average standards in writing. The school rightly prides itself in developing pupils' basic skills in reading and mathematics, but basic writing skills lag behind. However, the content of pupils' writing is average because of the wide range of opportunities that are provided.

Children make good progress in the nursery and reception years from a starting point that is a little below average. As a result, they achieve average standards by the time they enter Year 1. Progress through Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Over time, pupils' standards at the end of Year 2 are a little above average. Progress from Year 2 to Year 6 is good in reading, mathematics and science. Progress in writing is barely average.

The school has correctly emphasised the need to develop writing and recognises that standards and progress are less than in other subjects. The content of writing is varied and usually interesting, but the basic skills of handwriting, spelling and punctuation are immature, particularly in Year 6. Greater vigilance in demanding the highest possible standards is necessary for improvement.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, those learning English as an additional language and those from ethnic minority heritages make good progress because of the support they receive.

Owing to the school making great efforts to broaden the curriculum, music has become a strength. Pupils benefit from being taught by the specialist teacher. This has added to the strengths identified in the last report in the arts and physical education and further enabled pupils to become more rounded learners.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural

development is good. Pupils come happily into school in the morning and thoroughly enjoy all aspects of school life. They say without hesitation this school is a nice place to be in. They speak with enthusiasm about their work and take great pleasure in telling visitors about their achievements. They clearly enjoy taking part in the many performances and feel they are good at dancing and acting. One pupil said she enjoys school so much she would like to stay all night. Pupils are well behaved in lessons and throughout school. Pupils' good sense and good supervision by staff combine to make school a safe place. They have a good understanding of their school and class rules and the reasons for them. Rewards and praise encourage them to give their best. They are not afraid to make mistakes because they say their teachers are nice and gentle. Relationships throughout the school are very good and this helps to create a happy learning environment. Bullying is not a problem and the prefects are said to be helpful when it comes to sorting out minor squabbles. Pupils have a mature understanding that being part of a community brings rights and responsibilities. They take their role as councillors seriously and contribute to the development of the school very well. Pupils learn about healthy lifestyles and are encouraged to eat healthily and understand why they should do so. However, some do not always practise what they have learned and choose to bring less healthy snacks to eat at school. The school works hard to promote attendance and follows up absences rigorously. Attendance levels at the school, although satisfactory, are affected by a small number of pupils.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school evaluates the quality of teaching and learning to be good and this was confirmed during the inspection. This enables pupils of all abilities to make good

progress. In the Foundation Stage, teaching is characterised by a strong and rigorous focus on the development of language and social skills. Throughout the school, teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach and lessons are planned well. Teachers use a range of methods to stimulate pupils' interest and make learning enjoyable. Pupils say they like school because teachers make learning fun. There is good emphasis on the teaching of basic skills in reading, mathematics and ICT, but there are shortcomings in the teaching of basic writing skills. Over the last two years, there has been an unavoidably large turnover of teaching staff and with that there have been some inconsistencies in the teaching of writing. The school is currently employing useful strategies to improve the quality of pupils' writing to match the good standards attained in reading.

The school welcomes all pupils whatever their needs and includes them fully in the life and work of the school. Teaching of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language is good. As a result, they progress in line with their capabilities. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the learning of the pupils they support.

Most teachers are good in helping pupils to behave well. Potentially challenging pupils are very well managed so they take a full and active part in lessons and do not interrupt the learning of others. Throughout the school, relationships between adults and pupils are very good. In most subjects, teachers are good at assessing pupils' attainment, setting targets for their future learning and planning work to match their abilities. Pupils know their targets and how they need to improve. This is particularly so when the marking of their work is linked to their targets. The exception is the inconsistent practices in writing.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school that it provides a broad, rich and stimulating curriculum, which interests and motivates pupils well. All legal requirements are met. It is planned with emphasis on enjoyment and strongly promotes pupils' creativity particularly through music and the very many and varied successful performances. There are good opportunities for pupils to use their basic skills in other subjects across the curriculum. There is strong provision for pupils' personal development and the school is active in encouraging healthy and safe lifestyles. Pupils appreciate the extensive range of extra-curricular activities that cater for a wide range of interests including sport, music, dancing, French and lace making. They speak with enthusiasm about visits, visitors into school and themed days, which clearly make learning exciting and memorable for them. For example, a poet provided a stimulus for pupils to help develop their writing skills. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as a second language is very good. The Foundation Stage provides a stimulating environment for the children, which supports their personal and social development very well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school's judgement that care, guidance and support are good. The school as a whole is committed and competent when promoting, for instance: healthy lifestyles, through sensible eating and exercise; and safety, through well-defined measuring of risk. From the earliest age, children are monitored carefully and their achievements are conscientiously recorded and tracked. This has been very important in raising standards and progress. Moreover, the school has used the information to correctly identify shortcomings in specific areas such as writing. The school has strong procedures for identifying vulnerable pupils and these are carried out very soon after they arrive in the school. This is particularly important given the high levels of pupils coming in and out of the school. The information and support provided by various local authority officers are helpful in informing these matters and providing specialist help. Child protection procedures are good, staff are aware that the headteacher is the named person and regular training takes place for all teaching and non-teaching personnel. The school has adequate first-aiders.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school that leadership and management are good. The headteacher, senior leadership team and governors all play a big part in making this a successful school. At the core of these successes are:

- the clear direction set out by the leaders and managers. This ensures that staff at all levels, parents and pupils have an important say in what goes on. Successes and challenges are shared openly and, consequently, morale is very high
- the school recognises its strengths and weaknesses and works very hard to resolve them. This is because in almost all cases procedures for monitoring and evaluation are effective. For example, improving provision for the Foundation Stage and developing well the role of the subject coordinators
- the outstanding links forged with a range of partner agencies that ensure that pupils are safe and secure.

Inspectors agree with staff, parents and local authority officers that it is clear the school has been going forward for the last few years. This is mirrored in the rising standards and improving performance in inspections. The budget has been prudently managed and, so:

- resources have increased to a good level
- the governors have been able to support the increases in teaching assistant hours
- the good accommodation has been refurbished. Moreover, the Early Years Unit has been transformed into an outstanding base for the very young learners.

There are regular reviews of the quality of teaching and learning. This important work is carried out conscientiously by the headteacher, senior leadership team, other subject leaders, governors and officers of the local authority. In most respects, this work has

enabled standards to rise. However, in writing, results have stubbornly refused to keep up. The school is clearly not satisfied with this situation. This is the reason why it is well placed to improve further. The coordinator for English will receive a lot of helpful support as she diligently pursues improvement in pupils' core writing skills.

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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	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	3	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?	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?	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	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	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

It has been a privilege and pleasure for my colleagues and I to spend a few busy days in your school. We were all very impressed by the welcome you gave us and the courtesy you showed at all times. Many thanks for contributing to the inspection in so many ways.

The main strengths of your school:

- the way that all people in the school work closely together to make it better and better
- the strong emphasis on good behaviour, working hard and being sensible, safe and healthy
- the increasing quality of your work is brought about by the good teaching and very good relationships that you told us about
- the many opportunities for you to learn, both inside and outside the school
- your performances on stage and in sports give the people who visit the school a clear picture of your pride and commitment
- the tireless efforts of the headteacher, staff and governors.

What we have asked your teachers to improve:

- the quality of the written work in your books
- they must work closely with you to make sure that you always do your best work.

Best of luck in the future.