



Brimrod Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 105764
LEA Rochdale
Inspection number 277402
Inspection dates 27 March 2006 to 28 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Steve Isherwood CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Holborn Street
School category	Community		Rochdale
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Lancashire OL11 4NB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01706 647 146
Number on roll	240	Fax number	01706 651 854
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs S Money Penny
Date of previous inspection	17 May 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Sandra Hartley

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized primary school serving a socially disadvantaged area. There are 240 pupils on roll aged 3-11. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and who speak English as an additional language is very high. The levels of authorised and unauthorised absence are above the national average, as is the movement of pupils in and out of the school. There are above average numbers of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is high. Pupils enter school with standards well below those expected of children this age. The Foundation Stage unit is recognised by the local authority as a centre of excellence.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good, rapidly developing school with some outstanding features. Although standards are below average by the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils make good progress in their work. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection, when serious weaknesses were identified in standards and achievement. Inspectors agree with the school's evaluation of its effectiveness and judge that it provides good value for money. It has strong capacity to improve because self-evaluation is used very effectively to guide improvement. The school provides a good curriculum designed to ensure that all pupils receive appropriate experiences. Parents and pupils think very highly of the school and pupils describe it as a safe place where everyone is kind and friendly. Pupils are given outstanding care in a structured, nurturing environment where children feel secure and are valued. The strong emphasis on personal development and well-being leads to high standards of behaviour and promotes positive attitudes to learning.

Outstanding provision in the Foundation Stage gives children a good start to school. Consequently, they achieve well from a low starting point. Pupils make good progress from Years 1 to 6 as a result of strong teaching and the effective targeting of individual needs. Pupils respond well to the high quality support they receive and enjoy school because staff are skilled in developing their self-esteem and making them feel safe.

The headteacher provides particularly good leadership and has had a strong impact on raising standards. She is well supported by senior staff and subject leaders. Governance has improved significantly from the last inspection, when it was judged to be unsatisfactory. It is now good and the Governors are becoming increasingly effective in its work.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve children's fluency in speaking and listening in order to raise standards further in writing.
- Continue to work with parents to improve attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement and standards are good. Whilst standards of attainment are below average by the end of Years 2 and 6, the progress pupils make in relation to their capabilities is strong. A high proportion of pupils enter the school with skills which are well below average, particularly in language development and communication. They get off to a flying start due to outstanding teaching in the early years. This ensures that pupils achieve well and make good gains in their learning as they enter Year 1. In 2005, standards at the end of Year 2 were well below average in maths and writing, but there has been a steady upward trend in achievement since the last inspection. Standards

in reading have improved rapidly from 2004 and are now close to the national average, which represents good achievement.

In Key Stage 2, results in the national tests in English and science were well below average, particularly so in writing, where too few boys reached the higher levels. Standards in maths, although below average, improved steadily and pupils made good progress. Standards for higher achieving pupils in all subjects are well below average. However, assessment data indicates that pupils achieve well overall in comparison to their performance at Year 2. They make good progress as a result of high quality learning opportunities and consistently strong teaching.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress, benefiting from effective additional support from teachers and their assistants.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children's personal development and their well-being are good. A healthy lifestyle is promoted vigorously and the school council is always watchful to ensure healthy choices appear on the lunch menu. The extensive range of sports in addition to physical education (PE) lessons is fully appreciated, not least the after school clubs for girls, which encourage even more participation. Children know about the possible dangers associated with drugs and other substances and develop good understanding of the importance of secure relationships.

Children describe their school as 'exciting and brilliant'. They enjoy lessons and behave very well. All agree that the rules are fair. Children try hard to be invited to the headteacher's lunch and not to lose Golden Time at the end of the week. Every effort is made to encourage attendance and punctuality, which are improving steadily, but the large number of lengthy family visits taken during term time means that attendance does not meet the national average.

Through the activities of the school council, charity fundraising and links with a local special school, children learn the skills needed to contribute to life in a community. Their good achievement in basic literacy, numeracy and information communication technology (ICT) means they are well placed to secure their economic well-being.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Positive social skills are nurtured in the Foundation Stage. Children are respectful and willing to listen to other's views. They reflect on faith cultures other than their own and have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. Good opportunities in art, music and physical education enable children to enjoy the creativity of learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good, with pockets of outstanding provision seen in some classes, particularly in the Foundation Stage.

Throughout the school, teachers use assessments to very good effect in order to plan children's work, which, when marked, contains clear guidance on how it can be improved. There is good pace to learning and skilful questioning keeps children on their toes. Work is planned well to match children's varying abilities and there is always the expectation that children will achieve as well as they can in the lesson. Teachers use a good range of methods to bring lessons to life. For example, one child dressed up as 'Pirate Pete' while the rest of the Year 1 class learned to separate tens from units by counting his treasure. The qualities and skills of teaching assistants who work very effectively alongside teachers contribute significantly to children's progress, especially those who have learning difficulties. Relationships are excellent, reflecting the whole caring ethos of the school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The quality of the curriculum is now good. Since the previous inspection, the breadth of learning opportunities has improved and there is a better balance of time spent on different subjects. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is outstanding. The school meets statutory requirements for the curriculum and thoughtful use of national guidance means that it is planned creatively, so that children achieve well. For example, structured play has been introduced into every classroom, so all children can rehearse real life situations. There is continuous emphasis on good speaking and listening skills from the moment children start in the nursery. This means the school deals effectively with the needs of the many children for whom English is an additional language. Children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are also supported well and, consequently, make good progress. Good provision for personal, social, health education and citizenship ensures children form sensible lifestyles and develop a strong sense of responsibility towards their community. The extensive programme of visits and visitors greatly enriches children's first hand experiences. The residential weekend in Grasmere, for example, is keenly anticipated by Year 6 children. The school is striving to encourage more parents to actively support their children, by offering them the chance to participate in family literacy and after school clubs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Children are exceptionally well cared for from the moment they start school.

All staff know the children and their parents and carers very well and deal sensitively with their various needs. The school has won the overwhelming confidence of the parents because of the welcome shown to them and their children. The safeguarding of children is of paramount importance, and consequently health and safety arrangements are very robust. The school checks the suitability of all adults to work with children and child protection procedures are in place. Systems for monitoring children's academic progress and setting challenging targets for them are outstanding. Termly meetings involving parent, child and subject leader enable productive discussion about achievement and the chance to reaffirm individual learning plans. Assessment information is used very effectively by teachers to make sure each child gets the level of support best suited their needs. Those who are most vulnerable have access to high quality support from mentors, who help them focus more readily on their achievements and relationships with others.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Since the time of the last inspection, rapid improvements have been made to pupils' achievement and standards. Highly effective leadership by the headteacher has successfully harnessed the skills of the staff, setting the school on an upward trend in performance. The school is rigorous in identifying its progress and taking effective action to tackle weaknesses. For example, the school correctly identified that the achievement of pupils in writing, particularly that of boys, requires some improvement. Incisive action has already been taken. The effective response to potential underachievement is a strength of the leadership team. They are determined to raise standards further and are committed to ensuring that all pupils do equally well.

Improvements to assessment procedures, pupil tracking and the quality of teaching and learning have ensured that standards of achievement are rising. Inspectors are confident that this improvement can be sustained and agree with the school's judgement that there is good capacity to improve.

Monitoring and evaluation of performance is of a high quality. Leadership is not complacent and there is a perceptive knowledge of what needs to be improved further. Staff and governors are fully involved in the school's evaluation of its work and in the drive to raise standards.

The rigour with which teaching quality has been evaluated has resulted in consistently strong learning with some outstanding features. Leadership has a good understanding of where the teaching is strong and the action required to bring about further improvements. The governing body are extremely committed, discharge their duties well and offer good support to the headteacher in shaping the school's direction and holding it to account.

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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	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?	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	4	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?	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	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	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

Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking to you and seeing how much you enjoy your work. We want to share with you what we thought about your school.

We are delighted that you work hard in lessons. We liked the way that you get along with one another and were impressed with your good behaviour. Your teachers are good at making your work interesting and helping you to feel confident. We are pleased that you are finding that learning is often fun.

We are pleased that you are taught well, so that you make good progress in your learning. Mrs Hartley and all the staff and governors work very hard to make the school as good as it can be and we are sure that it will continue to improve.

We have asked them to do some things, which will help with this. These are:

- to continue to help you improve your writing
- to continue to work with your parents and carers to avoid, whenever possible, taking you on holidays in school time.

We appreciated talking to you and watching you learn. We wish you well for the future.