



Ashbury Meadow Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 133770
LEA Manchester
Inspection number 282377
Inspection dates 14 November 2005 to 15 November 2005
Reporting inspector Mr Graham Martin CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Rylance Street
School category	Community		Beswick
Age range of pupils	5 to 11		Manchester M11 3NA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 2231271
Number on roll	199	Fax number	0161 2312619
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr S Edwards
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mrs Lorna Rushton

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

An average sized new primary school in an area of urban regeneration, this school is in one of the two per cent most deprived communities in the country. Formed in 2003 from amalgamating two schools, it moved to a new building in September 2004. This is its first inspection. It shares premises with a Sure Start Children's Centre, due to be registered in December 2005. The majority of pupils are White British but about 20% are from minority ethnic backgrounds, including nearly 15% Chinese pupils. The number of pupils claiming free school meals is very high. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. A third of these pupils have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is very low.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

After its first full year of opening, this school provides a satisfactory education and gives satisfactory value for money. Inspectors agree with the school's evaluation of its work. There are good features in the quality of care, personal and health education and in learning opportunities outside lessons. Pupils' progress is satisfactory from very low attainment on entry. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, sometimes good, but teaching and assessment are not yet consistently good enough to raise standards more quickly. Attendance remains below average but is improving. Pupils' attitudes are satisfactory but routines for rewarding good behaviour are not used consistently well. Good local partnerships support improvement. Provision in the nursery and Reception classes is satisfactory. Staff work hard, successfully, to improve children's personal, social, language and number skills, which are weak when starting school. Determination by the headteacher has led the school successfully through a difficult period of disruption and change. The headteacher's good work, supported positively by all staff, is achieving the vision of better learning and higher standards. Overall, leadership is satisfactory because recently appointed middle leaders have not had time to influence improvement. Effective teamwork and satisfactory governance ensure efficient day-to-day management. Having laid the foundations, staff and governors have a clear focus on improving learning and standards, giving the school good capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Build on the good start made in the new school by increasing the focus on raising standards.
- Improve the whole-school effectiveness of teaching, learning and behaviour management.
- Use information about standards more effectively to improve year-on-year learning.
- Improve attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory. Many children join the nursery with very weak skills in personal, social and language development. All make steady progress in the nursery and Reception classes but, by the time they join Year 1, standards are still much lower than expected. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress but standards seen in their work and the results of national tests at Year 2 and Year 6 are well below average. Recent staffing and organisational changes have hindered the school's bid to raise standards.

Measures of pupils' progress from Year 2 to Year 6, based on national test results, show it has been significantly lower than for most schools. However, evidence from lessons and the school's own data about progress show that children are now doing better, as the new school gets into its stride. Pupils are responding to improving

teaching and higher expectations about being good learners. In 2005, challenging targets for Year 6 English test results were met but, despite some improvement on the previous year, the school fell short of its mathematics targets.

Children with learning difficulties and the few learning English as an additional language make steady progress. Work in lessons is generally well matched to these pupils' needs and they get good support from teachers and teaching assistants.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Pupils' personal and social skills steadily improve as they get older. Good work by the school has improved attendance but it remains below average. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are satisfactory. Rewarding and praising the 'always' pupils, who behave and respond well, reinforces positive attitudes. Relationships are good, bullying and racism are rare and pupils agree that, when they do occur, they are dealt with quickly. Positive relationships among adults and pupils are reflected in the pupils' improving attitudes to learning. Pupils say, 'Our teachers are good because they listen to our problems and look after us all properly'.

Whole-school rules of the week, such as one to 'keep hands, feet and objects to yourselves' are followed up well. Pupils say they feel proud that they are trusted to contribute to the school community. Prefects and 'Buddies' set good role models in the way that they take tasks seriously, helping them to understand their responsibility to others. The well-established school council also learn important responsibilities, such as by being involved in interviewing and selecting the new deputy headteacher.

Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. A focus on moral and social development, through the good programme for personal development, is improving attitudes to learning. The school is working effectively to nurture a positive learning climate by celebrating and rewarding achievement. Because healthy eating, daily exercise and awareness of risks have a high profile in the curriculum, pupils learn well how to live healthy and safe lifestyles.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and sometimes good. The focus on setting pupils writing and number targets for English and mathematics is helping them to learn better and starting to raise standards. Teachers track learning carefully but not all are using assessment well enough to set learning targets that raise standards more quickly. The best learning is seen when pupils see a purpose to their lessons and when teachers sustain their expectations of learning even when behaviour is challenging. As many children have behaviour difficulties, the need for consistent

approaches to dealing with inappropriate behaviour is high, but at present it is not consistent enough to improve learning in some classes.

Parents value the teachers' work and the great majority believe that the teaching is helping their child to learn effectively and achieve well. Good links with education service partners are helping to spread good practice in teaching and improve the quality of learning. Adults who help pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities show a good level of care for these pupils and help them to achieve as well as they should.

Satisfactory teaching of basic skills helps pupils to make steady progress throughout the school, preparing them for their future economic well-being by teaching the use of literacy and numeracy skills across other subject areas.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and improving quickly. It meets statutory requirements and is carefully planned and organised, which helps all the pupils, whatever their needs, to build their skills and knowledge steadily. A focus on literacy and numeracy is being broadened all the time because the school is finding ways to make learning more relevant and motivating. For example, older pupils' recent attendance at a 'Super Learning Day' at the City of Manchester Stadium helped to improve learning skills. Pupils say they enjoy lessons, particularly 'Golden Time' when 'There's lots of interesting things to do'. Activities outside lessons are good in range and quality, well attended, and much appreciated by the pupils. A good personal, social and health education programme supports other aspects of pupils' learning well.

The curriculum meets the needs of pupils with learning difficulties. Very clear plans for these pupils' learning, a good range of programmes to help them, and skilled support from staff all contribute to the progress they make. The curriculum also caters for children with particular gifts and talents and the few children learning English as an additional language.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Levels of care are good, enhanced by links with the Children's Centre. Although some staff are fairly new, all work hard to ensure each child is safe, happy and ready to learn. Lunchtime play leaders make a good contribution. Pupils say they feel safe and cared for in school because 'there's lots of adults and they help you if you need them'. This feeling of confidence in the care provided makes a strong contribution to personal development. Good procedures for first aid and child protection are implemented effectively. Staff are vigilant about health and safety checks.

Support and guidance for learning are satisfactory. Staff are aware of individual pupil's needs and provide sound guidance to help them improve, both orally and through marking of work. Support for pupils with learning difficulties is effective. The school has satisfactory systems for setting targets to help pupils improve their work, but these have yet to be evaluated to ensure that they are consistently effective.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school judges its leadership and management as satisfactory and inspectors agree. The headteacher has led the school well through a difficult period of disruption and change. Her vision to establish a good climate for learning is on target, effectively supported by staff. Equality of opportunity is good and every child matters in this school.

The difficult move to a new building and changes to staffing delayed the pace of improvement but the focus on raising standards remains a priority. The school checks its work satisfactorily but is at an early stage of sharing best practice to make teaching consistently good. The school improvement plan has been necessarily focused on managing significant change and on how teaching, attitudes to learning and standards will improve. Checks on the school's work are beginning, effectively, to improve learning and standards. Good teamwork leads to good day-to-day management of routines, making the school orderly and calm. Pupils feel safe and well cared for, even though many find following school rules and routines difficult. Satisfactory use of resources enables the school to work effectively towards improvement commitments.

There are good relationships with parents and a strong emphasis on involving them in making the school a focal point of the community. Staff respond well to suggestions for improvement. Parents and pupils overwhelmingly hold the school in good regard. They are suitably consulted, such as over the new school uniform and in the way that discussions with pupils led to improved opportunities for lunchtime activities.

This is a school that has laid a firm foundation for future improvement. It has good capacity to improve through determination to raise standards by focusing on developing the leadership of staff and improving teaching and learning.

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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?	3	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	NA	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	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	3	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?	3	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	3	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	3	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

Two inspectors from the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) recently visited your school. Our job was to find out how well your school is working for you, your family and your community. Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave to the inspectors and for helping us to find out about the work that you do together.

Your school gives you a satisfactory education, with some good features.

These are the things that we thought were good.

- You are all helped to learn as well as each other.
- The adults care for you well and help you if you have problems.
- The school has good friends who will help you and your teachers to make your school better.
- Your school teaches you well to live healthy and safe lives.

We have suggested a few things that will improve your school. Here they are:

- we would like you to work hard with your teachers to make your english, mathematics and science better
- we think that the teaching and your behaviour should be good in every class all the time
- we think the teachers should check that you are learning as well as you can all the time
- we think that some of you could be better at coming to school when you are supposed to.

We enjoyed our visit to your school and wish you well for the future.