



# Queensbridge Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 133925  
**LEA** Bolton  
**Inspection number** 282387  
**Inspection dates** 15 February 2006 to 16 February 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mr George Crowther CfBT Lead Inspector

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	St Germain Street
<b>School category</b>	Community		Farnworth
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		Bolton, Lancashire BL4 7BL
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01204 332577
<b>Number on roll</b>	242	<b>Fax number</b>	01204 332578
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr G Firth
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable	<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Sheila Holland

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Queensbridge is an average sized primary school created in 2002 by the amalgamation of two schools. In 2004, it moved to a new building. It serves an area of considerable social disadvantage. Children's attainment when they start school is well below average and, for some, very low. The proportion of children eligible for free school meals is above average, as is the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. About a fifth of the children are from minority ethnic heritages and 38 are at the early stages of learning English. The school has a designated role to cater for children who have particular special needs.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Queensbridge is a good school, which provides a very positive environment for children's learning. It has a clear and accurate picture of its own effectiveness and is well placed to bring about further improvement. It provides good value for money.

Often from low starting points, children make good progress across the school. By Year 6, standards are broadly average. Particular strengths are the good progress children make in the nursery and reception classes and recent improvements in progress from Year 3 to Year 6. Through effective tracking of children's attainment, the school is aware of and is tackling weaknesses in progress in a few classes. The school is very successful in ensuring that children who have particular special needs are fully involved in school life and make good progress.

Children's personal development is good. They like being at school and the staff make them feel secure and valued. Children from different backgrounds get on well together. They have positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour is good. Attendance is too low.

Even though children's progress is good overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory because it varies between classes. Good teaching in many classes is interesting, challenging and encourages the children to work hard. In a few classes, the teaching lacks the pace to hold the children's interest. The curriculum is good, well planned and meets the diversity of children's needs effectively. Good provision in the Foundation Stage gives children a flying start at school.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides a strong lead for school improvement, and the staff work as a cohesive team to raise standards and encourage children's personal development.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the proportion of lessons where children's learning is good or better by adding more interest, pace and challenge to the teaching.
- Improve attendance for the small number of children who are absent too often.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

When children start school, many have weak basic skills. Progress in the nursery and reception classes is good because staff provide a rich range of activities and support each child's learning effectively. By the time children join Year 1, however, standards are still well below average. The results of the Year 2 national tests have been significantly below average for the past three years, reflecting children's low starting points. Progress from Year 3 to Year 6 has been improving steadily and, in 2005, was significantly better than for most schools. They make good progress and, by Year 6,

have done well to reach broadly average standards. Children achieve particularly well in Year 6.

This shows that the school is being successful in raising standards, despite some variation in the quality of teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2. Children reach the challenging targets set for them, particularly in English.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and the significant number learning English as an additional language, make good progress. In some lessons, their progress is exceptional. The work they do is well matched to their needs and they get very good support from teachers and teaching assistants.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

From the very beginning, the school successfully nurtures children's confidence and enthusiasm for learning. They are very proud to receive awards in their Stars of the Week assembly. The children say, 'It's fun at school because there are lots of exciting things to do', which explains why they are keen to learn. Relationships are very positive and productive. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. A rich range of experiences develops their understanding of themselves and their place in the wider world. For example, the children's models of gods, such as the listening god, remind them of important values. Despite the school's best efforts, attendance is below average because a few children are absent too often.

Children develop a good understanding of their own well-being. They know how to make healthy choices in the food they eat and the exercise they take. They say, 'We need water so we don't dehydrate. It helps us think'. Children feel safe at school and they know how to stay safe out of school. They appreciate opportunities to express their views through the school council. They like the way the staff help to put ideas into action, such as introducing healthier snacks at break time. Special responsibilities for the older children, such as being a prefect or a playground pal, give them an understanding of contributing to the community.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Even though children make good progress overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. There are weaknesses in a few classes, which the school has identified and is tackling. Lessons are planned carefully and lively whole class teaching is a feature of many. Teaching assistants support children's learning well. Where learning is good, and occasionally outstanding, teachers are very skilful at capturing and holding the children's interest. They use a good range of strategies and activities to keep the children working hard. The pace of learning is brisk and the work is challenging, as seen when Year 6 children were exploring argumentative writing. Where teaching is satisfactory, but has weaknesses, the pace of learning is too slow and children begin

to lose interest. They start tasks slowly because the teacher has not given clear enough guidance. Expectations of what children can achieve are not always high enough.

Teachers' day-to-day assessments of children's learning help them to decide what needs to be taught next. They use targets effectively to help children focus on the next step in learning. The best marking of children's work is sharply focused on what needs to improve, but this is not the case in all classes. A system of more formal assessments keeps an effective track of children's progress over time.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good and even better than the school suggested. Strong provision for learning basic skills in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) gives children a good foundation for future learning and the world of work. These subjects are well planned and adapted to children's needs. Strengths in art and physical education ensure children receive a broad education. The Foundation Stage curriculum is impressive. From the very beginning, children experience exciting activities and acquire self confidence and a strong desire to learn. The school is adept at meeting the needs of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, particularly when the needs are very special.

A wide range of visits, including residential ones, and visitors who contribute to children's enjoyment and achievement, enriches the curriculum. The variety of out of school clubs is satisfactory. Work in personal, social and health education helps children to understand their rights and responsibilities within the community, and the school's healthy eating initiatives are having a positive impact on children's well-being.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The children's view, that 'people always listen to you and try to help you', is a ringing endorsement of how well the school cares for and looks after everyone. Support for children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good, enabling most of them to meet their learning targets. The sensitive and well informed support for children who have profound special needs is outstanding. Staff implement effectively the good procedures for first aid and child protection, and are vigilant about health and safety matters.

Teachers keep good records of children's progress and regularly inform them of how well they are doing in relation to their personal targets. Children say this spurs them on to do even better. 'I look at my next target and think I could get that too.' The Bully Box gives children the confidence to report any incidences of bullying. They say bullying is unusual and always dealt with swiftly. Parents feel confident to approach the school should they have any concerns.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, supported by a good leadership team, provides a strong lead in raising standards, but enables everyone to play their part. As a result, all the staff have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the way forward. Self-evaluation is accurate, but the school does not always make clear enough links between what it does well and the impact on children's achievement. Lessons are monitored and action taken to address any weaknesses. The school has already had some success in improving the quality of teaching through peer coaching and mentoring, but recognises room for further improvement. Concerted action is successful in raising standards. For example, in 2005, a focus on improving reading skills led to all pupils in Year 6 reaching the expected level in national tests. Such successes show the school is well placed to raise standards further.

The views of parents and children are sought and most feel their opinions are valued. These views contribute to the school's self-evaluation and influence areas for development. The school is a designated Inclusive School and is very successful in ensuring that all children are fully involved in learning and school life, whatever their background, ability or particular needs. For example, provision for the children who have profound learning difficulties is very good. Governors provide considerable support and have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are not afraid to ask challenging questions about the school's performance. They acknowledge, however, that difficulties in recruiting a full governing body are hampering their work with the school.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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	2	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	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	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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**

We visited your school last week to find out if it is giving you the education you should receive. Thank you for making us feel so welcome and for being so helpful when we asked you questions. We enjoyed talking with you, looking at your work and finding out about the things you like doing. The Stars of the Week assembly was particularly enjoyable.

We think there are lots of good things about your school, but we also discovered two ways in which we think your learning could be even better. The things we particularly like are:

- everyone is very friendly and you all get on very well together
- your new school is very bright and attractive with lots of your good work on the walls
- you said you enjoy school because there are lots of interesting things to do
- the children in the nursery and reception classes really enjoy their learning
- you do well with your work for most of the time, which helps you to make good progress
- you know your learning targets and you try hard to reach them
- the older children enjoy doing lots of special jobs around the school
- you are helping to make your school a healthier place to be
- your gods displayed in the entrance hall - they really made us think
- the school cares for everyone and makes sure you are safe.

We would like you to work with your teachers to improve the way you learn.

- We have asked your teachers to make all lessons as interesting as possible, to make sure that you work quickly, and to help you get a lot done. We want them to expect more from you so that you make even better progress with your work
- You must try to be at school every day so that you can learn as much as possible.

Thank you for helping us so much with the inspection of your school. Please share this letter with the other children. We both hope you will carry on enjoying learning and helping your teachers to make Queensbridge School a good place to be.