



Spindle Point Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 105196
Local Authority Bolton
Inspection number 287151
Inspection dates 11–12 September 2006
Reporting inspector Michael Onyon

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Moss Lane
School category	Community		Kearsley, Bolton
Age range of pupils	3–11		Lancashire BL4 8SE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01204 333458
Number on roll (school)	221	Fax number	01204 333459
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	
		Headteacher	Mrs Susan Johnson
Date of previous school inspection	27 January 2003		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–11	11–12 September 2006	287151

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Spindle Point Primary School is of average size. Almost all pupils are of White British origin. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also below average and an average number have a statement of special educational need. The school holds the Healthy Schools and Investors in People Awards and is part of a local network learning community.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This satisfactory and improving school has some good features. Inspectors agree with the school's own evaluation, except in relation to care, guidance and support, which the school judged to be better than did the inspection. Standards at the end of Year 6 had declined in 2004 and 2005 but, as a result of the school's clear focus, have risen in 2006. A reason for the good pace of recent improvement is the headteacher's effective drive to improve teaching and learning, assessment and subject leadership, working effectively with the local authority through an intensive programme of support. Parents and pupils speak well of the school, one parent stating, 'Teachers do their best for the pupils and I am happy with the progress of my children.'

Children enter the Nursery with standards below those expected and make good progress through the Foundation Stage. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are good. As a result of recent improvements, pupils make satisfactory progress from Year 1 and reach broadly average standards by Year 6. Their achievement is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 to 6, with a strong focus on developing pupils' basic skills. However, assessment information is not used consistently to plan lessons to ensure that all pupils have work set at the right level. In particular, more pupils should reach the higher National Curriculum levels in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils are not always told what they need to do to improve their work and there is altogether too much variation in the approaches used by different teachers.

Pupils' personal development is good and there are good elements in the care and support provided for them. Pupils say that they feel safe and secure in their school. The programme to maintain its Healthy School status helps pupils to understand healthy living; they are active and enjoy learning. Focused support for pupils' emotional development is beginning to have a positive impact on their academic performance. The academic guidance offered is weaker and slows pupils' progress. As a result, the aspect of their personal development that prepares them for future economic well-being is satisfactory, rather than good. The curriculum is enhanced by an extensive programme of clubs and visits, but it needs to be enriched further in order to provide greater stimulus for learning. Pupils like coming to school; they behave well, feel supported, and enjoy their lessons and other activities.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The intensive support programme has helped to put in place satisfactory procedures for monitoring the quality and impact of the school's work. The school has recently introduced effective systems to track pupils' progress so that those who need extra support are identified quickly. Subject leaders are beginning to use this information to identify strengths and weaknesses in their subjects, but it is too early for the impact of this to be reflected in pupils' achievement. The headteacher has created a shared direction and vision for the school among staff and governors so that it is in a good position to move forward. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use assessment information more consistently to give all pupils the information they need to know how to improve their work.
- Make sure the same information is used effectively to ensure that lessons meet the needs of all pupils, especially the most able.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, agreeing approaches and sharing and adopting good practice.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

By the end of the Foundation Stage, children have made good progress and an average proportion reach the expected goals for children of their age. During Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress and are generally working at average levels by the end of Year 2 in writing, reading and mathematics. Standards by the end of Key Stage 2 were below average in 2004 and 2005, and pupils did not make enough progress in Years 3 to 6. However, the school's tracking, the results of standardised tests, and samples of the pupils' work indicate that progress in Years 3 to 6 has undergone significant improvement recently and is now satisfactory. Standards are beginning to rise accordingly. In 2006, the school reached its demanding targets for Year 6 in English and science and came close to the mathematics target, although the most-able pupils are still not doing as well as they should. Most pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and they develop a good sense of right and wrong. The pupils get off to a good start in their personal development in the Foundation Stage, where they quickly learn to work and play together harmoniously. Behaviour in lessons and around school is generally good; pupils are invariably polite and welcoming. They work well together in pairs and groups and are respectful to each other and to adults. They enjoy coming to school and attendance levels are above average. 'I love it; the teachers really help you and look after you', was one pupil's opinion. Pupils work in a safe and secure environment and are confident that teachers will deal with any problems promptly. They understand the importance of healthy living; the school encourages healthy eating and provision for sporting activities on the timetable and through enrichment activities is good. Pupils play an active role in the community through the school council, which has been instrumental in bringing about improvements to the playground facilities. Good links exist with the wider local community, with elderly people being invited to school productions, for example.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In the Foundation Stage good, creative teaching enables children to learn well. Teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory with some examples of good practice. Most teaching is well organised and good use is made of resources including the interactive whiteboards. Too often, lessons lack variety of activity and pace, with the result that pupils are not fully engaged in their learning all the time and therefore make no better than satisfactory progress. Pupils correctly make the point that 'teachers sometimes talk too much and we have to listen rather than get on with our learning'. In the Foundation Stage, teaching assistants make a good contribution to children's learning, but in other years their skills are not always used to the full.

Teachers mark pupils work regularly but their comments do not consistently give pupils a clear indication of how they could make their work better. The school gathers sufficient assessment information to analyse its performance accurately and it is starting to track pupils' progress towards identified targets. Much remains to be done to make the process consistently effective so that all pupils have work set at the right level and that pupils know clearly what is expected of them, how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school accurately judges its curriculum as satisfactory. It meets statutory requirements and the needs of most learners, although the most able are not always given work that stretches them. The personal, social and health education programme is good and particularly successful in raising pupils' self-esteem and helping them to stay safe and healthy. Although it provides satisfactory provision for literacy, numeracy and other subjects, the curriculum does not include elements such as 'themed weeks' to add extra interest and help engage pupils further in their learning. The taught curriculum is firmly subject based and as such it is sound but unexciting, as the school itself recognises.

Pupils are enthusiastic about the good range of activities on offer outside lessons, in sports and the arts, for example. They appreciate the range of trips out, including the Year 6 residential, and the opportunity to learn a modern foreign language during Key Stage 2.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care, guidance and support provided are satisfactory but were judged by the school to be good. The care given to the pupils is good; as a result, they know that they are

safe and feel confident they can always ask for help and advice. Staff know the pupils well and have a strong commitment to ensuring the school is safe, secure and well maintained. Child protection procedures are firmly in place and staff are fully aware of these. Risk assessments are carried out regularly both within the school and for visits. Academic guidance is less secure. Although assessment procedures have improved, they are not sufficiently robust to ensure that pupils have enough information about how to improve their work. Some pupils have individual targets but they are unable to recall the detail. Support for pupils identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is satisfactory.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has a realistic view of the school's strengths and areas for development and driving the school forward. She is working closely and effectively with the local authority's intensive support team, tracking pupils' performance and making regular checks on the quality of teaching and learning. Suitable plans to bring about identified improvements have been introduced. However, there are not enough agreed approaches to teaching and learning and the good practice in some classes is not shared widely enough. Governance is sound. Governors understand the main issues influencing the school's performance and provide support and challenge for the headteacher.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

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

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for making us welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed coming to some of your lessons and talking to you about your work. We are pleased to tell you that your school provides a satisfactory education for you.

What we particularly liked about your school:

- the good quality of teaching and learning for children in the Nursery and Reception classes means that the children get a good start to their education
- you all enjoy school and have good attitudes to learning
- you behave well and are willing to take responsibility and help others
- you attend school regularly
- the adults in your school look after you well.

We have asked your school to help you understand how well you are doing and how you can do even better. The teachers can then make sure that you all have work that is hard enough, so you can reach higher standards. We would like your teachers to agree about the best ways to help you learn. You can help them by doing your best in every lesson.

The inspection team wishes you well and good luck for the future.