



Sunny Bank Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105289
Local Authority	Bury
Inspection number	287183
Inspection dates	12–13 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Dee Brigstock

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	183
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr G Hubert
Headteacher	Mr M Green
Date of previous school inspection	20 May 2002
School address	Hathaway Road Bury Lancashire BL9 8EQ
Telephone number	0161 7662121
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Age group	5–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Sunny Bank Primary is an average sized school in a relatively prosperous area. Fewer pupils than usual are entitled to free school meals. A below average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and no pupils have a statement of special educational need. More pupils than usual come from ethnic minority backgrounds but are not at an early stage of learning English. The school admits a small number of English speaking children whose parents are seeking asylum. The school was awarded the Healthy Schools Standard in 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with some good features. It provides satisfactory value for money. Good care, guidance and support results in good personal development and well-being. Pupils' behaviour is good and older pupils are gentle with younger ones. The school promotes pupils' health, welfare and security well so pupils are very aware of how to stay fit and safe. They have good attitudes to learning and clearly enjoy coming to school.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children enter Reception with average attainment and make good progress in learning new skills in mathematics, reading and writing. Taking this good progress and a well-planned, practical curriculum into account, provision in the Foundation Stage is good. By Year 1, standards are in line with national expectations for this age. By Years 2 and 6, standards are also average, except in mathematics in Year 6, where standards are well above average. Writing is the weakest area.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory rather than good because teachers' expectations of how much pupils can achieve are inconsistent throughout the school. They are highest in Years 5 and 6, where pupils' make good progress. Teachers' assessments of what pupils know and can do are accurate and, through their marking, they tell pupils how to improve further. However, the quality of marking is inconsistent because the school has no agreed marking policy. Although teachers have a good understanding of the standards pupils are attaining, some are too generous with their use of praise, so pupils sometimes think they are doing better than they are.

The curriculum is satisfactory in Key Stages 1 and 2. It is adapted satisfactorily for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for the most capable pupils as teachers plan different learning activities for these groups. However, despite this, some work is not challenging enough for the most capable pupils. The range and scope of curriculum enrichment activities through visits and visitors is adequate but not regular enough to invigorate pupils' interests through first-hand learning experiences.

The headteacher has carried more management responsibilities than usual due to not having a deputy headteacher, although key members of staff are proactive in helping to lead the school. Leaders' identification of pupils' achievement is accurate and they clearly recognise the need to improve pupils' progress. However, their strategies to promote improvement are not rigorous enough to raise standards. Currently, the monitoring of pupils' and teachers' work does not focus tightly enough on how teachers can improve their effectiveness or on raising their expectations of what pupils can achieve. The school's plans for improvement focus more on the intent of its actions rather than how they are to be realised. The school's evaluation of its work is mostly accurate. However, teaching and learning are satisfactory rather than good because pupils' achievement could be better. Pupils' personal development is good rather than satisfactory because of their clear enjoyment of school, their increasing maturity and willingness to take on additional responsibilities.

The measures that have been implemented recently and the school's success in mathematics indicate that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve. It has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' achievement in English and science.
- Raise teachers' expectations of what pupils are to achieve in each year group.

- Sharpen the focus on monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, and follow up points for improvement rigorously.
- Establish and use a consistent marking policy.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils achieve well in mathematics in Key Stage 2 because teachers' training is up-to-date, the setting of targets is better established and teachers' expectations of how much pupils can learn are higher. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve satisfactorily because, particularly in Key Stage 1, they get some additional support for learning from well qualified teaching assistants. Children enter the Foundation Stage with good personal and social skills and most can chat lengthily with adults and with each other. This gives them a good start in learning new skills in early mathematics, reading and writing. All pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 have targets to achieve which have been formed through teachers' analyses of weaknesses in their learning. Nevertheless, some pupils could do better. Progress is quicker in Years 5 and 6 because teachers know how hard they and their pupils have to work to meet targets set at the end of Year 6. In other year groups, teachers' expectations of how much pupils can learn lack enough ambition for pupils to make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in the improving level of attendance, which is now slightly above average. Pupils say that, 'Learning is fun, teachers make us work hard but also make us laugh.' As a result, pupils enjoy their lessons. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are polite and friendly and everyone gets on well together. Older pupils are kind and considerate to younger pupils and are happy to look after them in the playground. The school council contributes well to making decisions regarding the school community and are pleased that their suggestions for a healthy tuck shop and litter bins in the playground have been taken on board. They have been involved in the plans to remodel the playground and are busy organizing a competition to create their own logo. Links with the wider community are not as strong, although pupils participate in fundraising events for charity. Pupils have a good understanding of safe and healthy life choices and are developing a good awareness of citizenship through various recycling projects. Older pupils' involvement in the weekly savings scheme equips them well for their future. Pupils leave the school with academic and personal skills that prepare them satisfactorily for later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

There is a good focus on learning through play in the Reception class. For example, after hearing the story, all children were taken on a 'Bear Hunt' through parts of the grounds. They were excited, well behaved, listened well and eagerly recited parts of the story. This outdoor learning enhanced their skills in sequencing stories well. In Key Stage 1, there has been a recent move to deliver the curriculum in a similar way. The success of this is sorely limited by the lack of a good enough variety and quality of learning resources and pupils' learning slows to satisfactory as a result. This rate of learning continues until Years 5 and 6. Here, teachers have a better

understanding of the levels of work that pupils are expected to meet and drive pupils learning forward at a quicker rate. For example, in a good Year 6 English lesson, pupils clearly enjoyed watching clips from 'Carrie's War' and using dictionaries, thesauri, and sharing their own thoughts on how the characters felt. As a result, they made good progress towards writing their own character descriptions. Leaders have decided on individual targets for pupils to achieve which all pupils and teachers know. Teachers remind pupils of these frequently. This is a recent initiative and its impact has yet to show in improved progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Teachers are beginning to link subjects such as English, history, art and information and communication technology together to make learning more meaningful and enjoyable for pupils. The school recognises that this is an area that needs developing further. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good. The varied range of activities inside and outdoors engage children's interests and contribute well to their good progress. This continuous provision is extended into the Year 1 class but it is less effective because the quality and quantity of resources are not good enough. Visits from the health services, the community and visiting sports specialists help develop pupils' good understanding of keeping safe, fit and healthy. The school has a limited programme of visits and visitors to the school to enrich pupils' learning experiences.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents agree wholeheartedly that their children are well cared for in a secure and friendly learning environment. Pupils say they feel safe in school, there are no instances of bullying and they are happy to talk about any worries or concerns because, 'Everyone understands each other.' Child protection and all other checks to safeguard pupils' health, safety and well-being meet requirements. Pupils with learning difficulties are sensitively supported by all staff and the school has good links with outside agencies, which provide further support when needed. This ensures that these pupils are fully included in all that the school has to offer. Pupils' progress is regularly monitored and teachers are now using targets well to help pupils improve their work. However, written comments in pupils' books are sometimes overly generous when assessing the quality of pupils' work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher successfully promotes pupils' personal development and this is much appreciated by the overwhelming majority of parents. The school runs smoothly. All senior staff regularly take part in monitoring the work of the school and in constructing the school's improvement plan. However, the strategies they employ are not raising standards quickly enough in English and science. This is because leaders' evaluations of the quality of teaching do not take enough account of pupils' progress. Systems to inform teachers on how to improve further, raise their expectations of what pupils can achieve and provide governors with information to measure the school's success are in place, but lack sufficient rigour to be successful. Governors recognise the need to tighten the quality of monitoring and the level of challenge they provide is much better than at the last inspection.

Leaders have successfully bid for funds to develop the school's grounds further, but indoors, parts of the building are in need of redecoration, particularly in shared areas of the school.

Annex A

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	3
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	3
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	3
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?	2

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.

Annex A**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	3
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	2
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for making us feel so welcome in your school 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 to do.

These are the things we most liked about your school.

- You enjoy coming to school.
- You have a good understanding of how to stay fit, healthy and safe, for your age.
- Your school is a friendly and pleasant place to be.
- There are good learning activities for the children in the Foundation Stage.
- Your teachers tell you how to make your work better using your targets, which you know.
- You are reaching standards in mathematics that are higher than usual.

To improve your school even more, we have asked your headteacher to:

- find ways of making you do as well in English and science as you do in mathematics
- tell teachers how to help you to learn more in lessons
- decide on how all teachers mark your work
- write down ways to measure how well the school is doing in its plans for the future.

I hope you will carry on enjoying learning and helping your teachers to make Sunny Bank Primary School a good place to learn.