



Whitefield Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 105310
Local Authority Bury
Inspection number 287190
Inspection dates 21–22 February 2007
Reporting inspector Brenda McIntosh

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Victoria Avenue
School category	Community		Whitefield, Manchester
Age range of pupils	3–11		Lancashire M45 6DP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 7662852
Number on roll (school)	145	Fax number	0161 7967355
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Cllr D Boden
		Headteacher	Mrs M McGoldrick
Date of previous school inspection	12 November 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–11	21–22 February 2007	287190

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is much higher than average. About two thirds of the pupils are of White British heritage with the remainder coming from a diverse range of minority ethnic backgrounds. A higher than average number of pupils is learning English as an additional language. A significant number of pupils join and leave the school throughout each year, many of these pupils often speak little or no English at all. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average as is the number having statements of special educational need. A significant proportion of pupils are looked-after or are particularly vulnerable. A small number of pupils are from families seeking asylum. The school has received many awards to recognise various aspects of its success, including an Inclusive Schools Award, Environmental Awards and two DfES Awards for substantial improvements in pupils' results.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school because it values all pupils and gives them the confidence and support to achieve highly both in their personal and academic development. Pupils do very well here and develop into very confident, caring individuals. The success of the school stems from the excellent leadership of the headteacher who motivates and inspires everyone to do well. Together with the senior leadership team, they set a very clear direction and a shared commitment to provide the best possible opportunities for all pupils. Pupils enjoy their lessons. The very good emphasis on raising their self-esteem results in pupils approaching their learning with confidence. Pupils achieve exceptionally well from their low starting points in the Foundation Stage and make outstanding progress throughout the school to attain broadly average standards in English and mathematics, and above average standards in science by the end of Year 6. The excellent quality of teaching and learning is central to pupils' outstanding achievement. Lessons are interesting and enjoyable and keep pupils fully engrossed in their learning. The systems to check on how well pupils' progress in their work are exceptionally thorough. As a result, any pupils who might fall behind are quickly spotted and given extra support to help them catch up and boost their attainment. Teachers put in a great deal of effort when marking work to ensure pupils know how well they are doing and understand clearly what they need to do to improve. All groups of pupils, regardless of their background or ability or if they speak very little English when they arrive, do equally well because of the very effective support they receive. The curriculum is outstanding in the way that it promotes pupils' high all round achievement. It is designed effectively to give pupils a wide range of experiences and skills that will equip them for later life. Themed days and topics are imaginatively planned to add interest and enjoyment to learning. A whole-school focus on promoting pupils' speaking and listening skills across different subjects is helping to raise standards and develop pupils' self-confidence. Increased opportunities for pupils to take initiative and carry out practical investigations in science have resulted in the sharp rise in standards. Strategies to improve pupils' writing and problem solving skills in mathematics are working very well in raising achievement. Although pupils have regular information and communication technology (ICT) lessons in the computer suite, their access to computers in the classroom is limited. As a result, they have too few opportunities to use ICT readily in their everyday learning. The school draws on a wide range of resources and agencies so that pupils can work with people with a wide range of expertise. Through this, for example, pupils gain an excellent awareness of how to keep fit and healthy and how to keep themselves safe. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They cite many improvements that have taken place over recent years and appreciate how the school provides so much for their children. Care, guidance and support are outstanding: pupils feel settled in school and say they are very well cared for. In fact, pupils summed up the school as, 'Friendly and cosy'. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school and wider community. They are particularly responsible when it comes to looking after the environment and can be seen in the school garden before the start of the day busily working on their own initiative to keep the flowerbeds and pots looking neat and tidy. School councillors are proactive

in seeking the views of others and improving the school. They were instrumental in setting up the healthy tuck shop at break times to discourage pupils from eating unhealthy snacks. Attendance is satisfactory and improving because the school monitors and pursues absences rigorously. The school has developed a very good Foundation Stage Unit. Activities are effectively planned to capture children's interest and offer a good balance between adult led activities and those for pupils to select themselves. Leadership and management are outstanding. Self-evaluation is accurate albeit modest in grading its strengths. The inspector judged the school to be more effective than it judged itself because senior leaders are constantly seeking to improve and add extra value to its effectiveness. All aspects of the school's provision are continuously and rigorously monitored and evaluated to ensure they are fully effective. This is why improvement since the last inspection is excellent: standards have risen significantly and continue to do so. Governors too take a full and active part in planning for the future and making decisions. The school's proven track record of improvement means that it is exceptionally well placed to improve further the high quality of education it offers.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the access to computers so that pupils can use ICT more readily in their everyday learning in the classroom.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement is outstanding. Children enter the Foundation Stage with low levels of attainment especially in their communication, language and social skills. Here, they make very good progress developing essential early skills. The school's focus on developing speaking and listening skills is resulting in improved achievement in all aspects of children's communication and language development. In Key Stage 1, teaching is of a high quality and helps pupils build very effectively on their previous learning. In Key Stage 2, progress is consistently very good and standards are rising each year. In 2006, standards were average in English and mathematics and above average in science: this represented the best overall performance ever for the school. The school meets its challenging targets even though a significant number of pupils leave or arrive part way through their education. Often with little and no English, they do well because the school makes sure that they settle well so that they are able to learn. Consequently, all groups of pupils regardless of their background or learning difficulties and/or disabilities do equally well because their progress is rigorously tracked to ensure they are doing as well as they should.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and stems from the very inclusive, caring nature of the school. Pupils are exceptionally polite and well

mannered. As a matter of course they stand back and hold doors open for adults and each other. Pupils of all backgrounds show a high level of respect for each other. Relationships and behaviour are excellent. Pupils smile a lot and get enormous pleasure out of learning and all the school offers them. One pupil reflected the feeling of many that this is a happy school because, 'We all cooperate with each other and we are never lonely as we always have a friend.' Older pupils are kind in their approach to looking after and working with younger pupils. The 'Sevens' teams, made up of a pupil from each year group, and each led by a Year 6 pupil have a very positive impact on developing a real community spirit. Through this initiative, pupils develop extremely caring and sharing attitudes towards each other. Pupils gain an excellent awareness of healthy lifestyles, participate in a whole range of physical activities and understand how important it is for them to stay safe. Even the youngest children in the Foundation Stage know how to use the apparatus in physical education lessons safely and sensibly. Pupils gain excellent cooperative skills and good literacy and numeracy skills but they do not always have chance to get the full benefit of ICT in their everyday learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching in all lessons observed demonstrated the skills that are central to the excellent outcomes for pupils. Tasks are very well matched to pupils' ability and provide challenge to help them succeed. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very effectively. As a result, relationships are excellent and enable pupils to try out new things confidently. Interactive whiteboards are often used well to hold pupils' attention and engage them in their learning. Clear learning objectives are shared with pupils at the start of lessons so that they understand what they are going to learn. Pupils enjoy the practical investigations in science when they are given opportunity to find things out for themselves. Very good teaching in the Foundation Stage provides exciting learning experiences both in and outdoors and helps the children achieve very well. Excellent systems for tracking pupils' progress and setting challenging targets ensure that any dips in progress are noticed. Teaching assistants work effectively alongside the teachers to ensure pupils are fully involved in lessons. They are highly skilled in boosting pupils' attainment through specific support programmes when extra help is needed.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is enriched significantly with exciting learning opportunities that contribute to pupils' outstanding personal and academic achievement. The diversity of clubs during and at the beginning and end of the school day ensures equality of opportunity. For example, Breakfast Club, friendship groups and aerobics promote excellent relationships, while reading and after school booster clubs impact positively on raising standards. A very well planned programme to develop pupils' personal, health and social skills is successfully helping pupils to gain an excellent awareness of

healthy lifestyles and how to keep themselves safe. Much is done to provide exciting learning experiences through visits and the use of visitors with particular expertise. Pupils have timetabled access to use the computers in the ICT suite but they have insufficient opportunity to practise their skills more readily as part of their learning within the classroom.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Adults in school are fully committed to ensuring pupils are safe and very well cared for. Pupils say they feel happy in school. They speak warmly about their teachers and how 'they do listen and get to the bottom of problems if they arise'. All safeguarding procedures to ensure pupils health and safety and for assessing any risks are in place. There are extremely effective systems to check on pupils' progress and to provide timely support for those who might need to catch up with their work. The school's records show that support programmes and initiatives are fully effective in getting pupils' back on track and boosting their attainment. This includes the support older pupils give to younger ones in helping them develop their reading skills. Pupils have good opportunities to assess their own work and identify for themselves what they need to do to improve. Vulnerable pupils, those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those joining the school part way through their education are very effectively supported in their learning so they too achieve highly.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The leadership of the school is highly successful in developing a happy, safe learning environment where all groups of pupils are helped to do their best. The headteacher has established a very strong leadership team that contributes to this achievement. She delegates responsibility effectively and encourages a collaborative approach. As a result, each member of the team plays a significant part in monitoring teaching and learning and is fully accountable for raising standards. Indeed, the systems for monitoring the performance of all staff are highly effective because they make strong links with raising attainment and improving the school. Teachers are set high professional targets to ensure their performance is challenged and improved. Consequently, the school improvement plans are based securely upon very rigorous self-evaluation. Actions taken by the school have resulted in the significant improvement in standards since the last inspection and pupils' outstanding achievements. The governing body plays a very active part in this process. Resources are very effectively used to support learning and improve standards. Consequently, the school gives excellent value for money.

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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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

I would like to thank you all for the way in which you welcomed me into your school when I came to inspect it recently. It was lovely to receive such a warm welcome. I thought you were all very polite and you did yourselves, your teachers and families proud. I think you go to an outstanding school and you clearly think so too. It is very good to see how you all get on extremely well together and this helps you to learn in your lessons. It was pleasing to see how you behave so well and sensibly around school and when playing together. It is a delight to see how the older pupils are so kind when helping the younger ones. I was impressed by the way that all age groups are very keen to take on responsibilities and help the school to run so smoothly. The staff look after you very well and do their best to help you and your families. The school provides an excellent range of clubs for you to attend and enjoy. I think the teachers work hard to plan interesting lessons so you can learn many different things. You are doing very well with your work, trying hard and standards are improving all the time. The teachers keep a very close check on how well you are doing and all the extra help you are given with your work helps you to do very well. It was good to see how positive pupils in Year 6 were in attending the after school booster club. The headteacher, together with other staff and governors are continually looking for ways to improve things for you. At present I know they are concentrating on helping you improve further your writing and problem solving skills in mathematics. So keep up your very positive attitude to learning and this will help you reach even higher standards. To help you do even better. I have asked that you have more opportunity to use computers in your classroom so that you can see how useful they are in your everyday learning. I wish you and the school all the very best for the future.