



Peel Brow School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 105368
Local Authority Bury
Inspection number 287212
Inspection dates 27–28 February 2007
Reporting inspector Marie Cordey

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Fir Street
School category	Foundation		Ramsbottom, Bury
Age range of pupils	3–11		Lancashire BL0 0BJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01706 823204
Number on roll (school)	228	Fax number	01706 823204
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr S Berrisford
		Headteacher	Mr G Duce
Date of previous school inspection	5 March 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized school set in attractive large grounds in a small town near Bury. The vast majority of the pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are eligible for free school meals, is below average. The school has gone through an unsettled period because of significant changes in staffing.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Peel Brow is a caring and popular school. It provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good and they are caring and responsible individuals. The headteacher leads the school with vision and a strong commitment to the care of the pupils. This example is followed by all staff and consequently, 'each child is valued, respected and praised.' just as it says in the school prospectus. Parents overwhelmingly support and value the school.

The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are good. Children settle in well and make good progress. Pupils enter Year 1 with above average standards and make steady progress throughout the school and leave Year 6 with above average standards overall. Standards are not as good in science and writing because not all pupils make the progress expected of them. The school recognises that the systems for monitoring and evaluating pupils' progress are not rigorous enough to raise pupils' achievement. This includes the setting of more aspirational targets for the pupils to ensure they attain the standards of which they are capable.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Nevertheless, pupils' contributions to their own learning are limited except on the occasions where lessons are good or outstanding. Here, the pupils are excited, proud of their learning and keen to do more because they are actively involved. Overall, pupils are insufficiently involved in their learning and they are not sure how well they are doing or exactly how to improve their work. The tracking of pupils' performance is in its early stages and does not give a clear picture of their progress as they move through the school to check if they are achieving well enough.

The curriculum is good overall. It provides a wide range of learning experiences to promote pupils' good personal development and prepare them well for the challenges they may face now and in later life. Extra activities from judo to classes to boost attainment are enjoyed and appreciated by pupils. The 'One World, One Future' project promotes awareness of other cultures and pupils participate in a considerable number of fundraising activities. Pupils behave well, respect one another and are praised for their behaviour and attitudes on out of school visits. Good progress is being made to improve pupils' writing skills through additional support.

There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection and the school provides satisfactory value for money. A more settled staffing and the improvements seen so far in raising standards in writing demonstrate a sound capacity to improve further. The school knows where its strengths and areas for improvement are. The evaluations of the pupils' personal development and well-being and the curriculum are accurate. Too generous judgements on the quality of the other aspects of provision and pupils' achievement have led the school to judging its effectiveness to be better than it is. Governors are very involved and supportive of the school. They are committed to providing a high quality of care for pupils. Although they act as critical friends, they have not been involved enough in strategies to raise achievement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use tracking systems to identify individual and group performance to ensure all pupils do as well as they should.
- Raise achievement in science and writing especially for higher attaining pupils.
- Make sure pupils take a more active part in lessons and in the assessment of their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children enter the school with differing levels of ability, but overall, their attainment is average. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress because they are well taught and carefully monitored so that learning is matched well to their needs. From an above average starting point in Year 1, pupils make satisfactory progress to attain above average standards by Year 6. This represents a decline in standards and achievement, however, that the school is keen to halt. The more able pupils do not always make the progress they are capable of and this is most marked in science and writing. Reading is a comparative strength in all year groups. The school is starting to use assessment information more effectively to set aspirational targets and to monitor progress in order to raise achievement and standards.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good.

Behaviour is good both in lessons and around school and pupils treat each other with respect. Opportunities are missed, however, to engage pupils more practically in their lessons. Attendance is consistently better than the national average and pupils enjoy being at school. Pupils adopt a healthy lifestyle and take part in the many active sports on offer to them. Pupils regularly invite their parents into school to share their lunchtime meal and work with the catering staff to design a healthy menu for the occasion. The school council has made a difference to the school by suggesting changes to the playground and improvements to the pupils' toilets. Charities, both local and national, benefit from the pupils' generosity. Pupils' standards in basic skills coupled with the school's good business links prepare pupils well for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Good teaching in the Foundation Stage provides children with a secure base from which to grow in confidence and independence. Elsewhere in the school, satisfactory teaching and learning enable pupils to make satisfactory progress. Pupils show positive

attitudes to learning especially when they are actively involved in the lesson. Teachers are beginning to plan work that is matched more closely to pupils' individual needs. In some cases, however, higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged in order to attain the high standards they are capable of. In the best lessons, high expectations result in pupils who are thrilled and highly motivated because they take a full and active part in their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Themed weeks in science, art and history make learning more interesting and enjoyable. Specialist teaching in music and sport increases pupils' skills and is very popular. Pupils' learning benefits from a wide range of outside visits and visitors to school include poets, writers and artists. Improved provision and support for pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities have resulted in a bespoke curriculum that is sensitively managed. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. The environment is bright and stimulating, inviting all pupils to participate and follow their interests in all the areas of learning. Provision for outside play is good and allows for pupils to learn in the fresh air, regardless of the weather.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care, guidance and support of pupils are satisfactory and include good features. Pupils are very well cared for by a highly committed staff who make pupils feel safe and secure in school. Appropriate risk assessments are in place and the safeguarding of children meets current government guidelines.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make the same satisfactory progress as their classmates because they are thoughtfully supported in their learning. Their individual education plans are detailed but sometimes contain too many targets for them to focus on effectively. Pupils' work is regularly marked but does not give enough information about what the pupils have done well and what they need to do next in order to improve. The system for tracking pupils' performance does not highlight underachievement or dips in their progress quickly enough to get them back on track as soon as possible.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Leaders are most successful when promoting good personal development and well-being for the pupils. There have been significant changes in staffing in recent years, but staffing is now stable and all work with a common sense of purpose. A detailed school improvement plan identifies key priorities, mainly in raising standards and achievement. These are in the early stages and have not had time to lead to significant improvement except in English. Last years'

decline is being tackled and standards are beginning to rise. For example, the school's priority to improve writing has begun to take effect and standards in English are now above average. The character of the school is formed by the example of its leaders who model care and respect for others.

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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?	2
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	2
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	2

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?	2
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	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	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 for the warm welcome you gave to us when we came to your school. You were very friendly and keen to talk to us. We think that your school provides you with a satisfactory education. You develop into caring and responsible young people and your school involves your parents and people in the community. You have the chance to go on lots of visits where you are praised for your behaviour. Your standards are above average overall and your writing is improving. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes settle into school well and make a good beginning. Your headteacher and school staff work very hard to make your school happy and enjoyable.

You make a difference by representing your classmates and improving the school. The playground and toilets are better because of your suggestions. We think that this shows how capable you are and so we would like you to be more actively involved in your lessons. We also think that you can reach even higher standards in your work, particularly in science and writing, and so you might be given more difficult work! The school is going to check very carefully on how you are doing in your work so that you can reach the standards of which you are capable.