



Seven Stars Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119285
Local Authority Lancashire
Inspection number 291373
Inspection dates 14–15 September 2006
Reporting inspector Joe Clark

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Peacock Hall Road
School category	Community		Leyland, Lancashire
Age range of pupils	3–11		PR25 1TD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01772 422503
Number on roll (school)	170	Fax number	01772 455189
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Roger Rymer
		Headteacher	Mrs Gillian Hartley
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–11	14–15 September 2006	291373

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Seven Stars Primary School takes its pupils mainly from areas of social and economic deprivation. Almost two in five pupils are entitled to free school meals. The proportion of children with learning and/or physical difficulties is above average. All pupils speak English as their first language and there are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. When children enter the part-time Nursery their skills and knowledge are well below average. The school has Healthy School and Investors in People awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing, or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement. Standards are too low and the quality of teaching is inadequate and, although the school knows where the weaknesses are, it is unable to secure the improvements required.

The leadership and management, despite having identified accurately the weaknesses in teaching, have not been strong enough to effect improvement. Monitoring of the school's performance is not robust enough and there is insufficient accountability, either in senior or middle management, to bring about sustained improvement. Governors work hard and provide unstinting support, but have not held the school to account enough for the lack of achievement.

In the crucial area of how well pupils achieve in their academic work, they make good progress in the Foundation stage because they are well taught. Thereafter, progress is unsatisfactory and standards are too low because teaching is not strong enough to sustain their earlier good progress. By the end of Year 6, the pupils are capable of better achievement,, especially in English. The school often fails to meet its statutory targets for the tests at the end of Year 6. There are, however, some bright spots. In Years 1 and 2, standards in reading and writing are improving and in 2005, test results show that the small number of pupils who did very well, four years earlier, at the end of Year 2, maintained their good results at the end of Year 6. Provisional results in the 2006 tests at the end of Year 6 show a big improvement in science.

There are also other strengths. The school's motto, 'Children Come First' is reflected in the way pupils are given very good pastoral support. The school is successful in promoting their personal development and parents say they can see their children grow in confidence and stature as they move up through the school. Weaknesses in social skills and challenging behaviour are tackled from the outset, and by the time pupils get into the later years, their behaviour and attitudes are good.

Much has been done to encourage pupils to adopt a healthy lifestyle through good eating habits and two hours of physical education a week. At the morning breakfast club pupils were clearly enjoying their fresh strawberries, cereals and peaches. Pupils enjoy coming to school particularly for the many extra activities the school's curriculum offers. Despite the challenging personal circumstances of many pupils, overall attendance is in line with the national average. So although pupils receive good personal support, they are given insufficient guidance on how to improve their academic standards.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise pupils' achievement by improving teaching and learning through the sharing of good practice and the elimination of unsatisfactory teaching.

- Strengthen management and monitoring systems to ensure that initiatives are embedded in practice.
- Improve standards in English.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Standards are much lower than they should be and the pupils underachieve. Good progress and good teaching through the Foundation Stage enable children to improve their well below average standards on entry, to below average when they leave Reception. Because teaching in Years 1 to 6 is inadequate, pupils do not make enough progress. They underachieve by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, particularly in English. Standards in English, mathematics and science are significantly lower than the levels expected at the end of both key stages. In 2005, the test results of Year 6 pupils in English, taking into account factors such as gender, home circumstances, and pupils with learning difficulties, were in the bottom 11 per cent of schools nationally. Pupils who were entitled to free school meals did less well overall than most other groups of children. Pupils with learning and/or physical difficulties make good progress against their individual learning targets. However, these targets are not always sufficiently challenging.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also good. Much has been done since the previous inspection to improve the pupils' multicultural development, which is now satisfactory. Pupils know right from wrong and work and play harmoniously. They are friendly and courteous to visitors and enthusiastically take on a wide range of responsibilities, for example, as playground buddies or lunch-time monitors through whom they learn to be responsible members of the school community and develop leadership skills. Through the school council they learn about democracy and effective citizenship. However, the difficulties some pupils have in acquiring basic skills, especially in English, do not augur well for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good because teachers assess children's needs well and devise tasks that are interesting and fun. The children are expected to work hard and do well, and the planned tasks ensure they succeed. Teaching across the rest of the school is inadequate because its impact on pupils' learning is ineffective. Expectations of the pupils are too low and some lesson plans do not take enough

account of the needs of different groups of pupils. Information from assessment is not used sufficiently to pitch the teaching accurately according to the pupils' different abilities. Relationships with pupils are supportive and encouraging and behaviour is well managed.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils speak enthusiastically of the many after-school clubs, outside visits and visitors to the school, which enrich the curriculum and enhance their learning. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good, offering a range of practical activities that engage pupils' interest well. The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory. Curricular planning to promote the pupils' English skills is not sufficiently developed.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school provides good pastoral support. Pupils feel safe and secure in school telling inspectors that 'the teachers are always there for us'. Systems for tracking pupils' progress through regular assessments are not yet fully effective in Key Stages 1 and 2. So although their progress is tracked as they move through school, there are few regular assessments to inform teachers how well the pupils are doing and what they need to do to improve. Pupils with learning and/or physical difficulties are well supported by teaching assistants and learning mentors, enabling them to join in all activities. Child protection requirements and procedures are clear and understood by all staff. Health and safety procedures are properly underpinned by risk assessments, enabling pupils to undertake activities safely both on and off the school premises.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

Leadership and management of the school are inadequate. Although pupils' personal development has been enhanced through positive steps, the school's leaders and managers are ineffective in promoting the pupils' academic achievement. Self-evaluation is ineffective because although weaknesses are often identified, for example in the teaching, not enough is subsequently done to bring about improvement. The role of subject leaders is inadequate and they do not always monitor their subjects effectively. The school was also without a deputy headteacher from 2003–2005, which slowed the pace of improvement. Good links have been established with partner institutions. Governors also work hard in support of the school, but governance is inadequate because it has failed to hold the school to account for its weak performance. The school does not provide satisfactory value for money. Progress since the previous inspection has been unsatisfactory.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	-----------------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	4
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	4
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4

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	4

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4
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?	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

14 September 2006

Seven Stars Primary School

Peacock Hall Road

Leyland

Lancashire

PR25 1TD

Dear Pupils,

Thank you for your warm welcome when we visited you recently. We were pleased to see how much you enjoy coming to school and how hard you work in class.

The achievement assembly which we attended was a fitting tribute to how much you care about the school and the important part you willingly play in helping the school run smoothly. We saw how well behaved you were, and how you listened to the speakers with interest and respect.

We were delighted to see how much you value keeping fit by doing two hours PE a week and by eating healthy foods at the breakfast club and at lunch-times. Keep it up!

Although you work hard, we think you could do much better, especially in English. We have asked your teachers to expect much more of you in lessons, and more checks need to be made on how well your school is doing. We have made your school subject to 'special measures'. This means your school will receive extra help and inspectors will return to make sure that improvements are taking place.

You can do your bit by coming to school regularly, and trying as hard as you can. We know you can do it.

Thank once again for making us feel so welcome.

Yours sincerely,

Joe Clark

Lead Inspector