



Bryn St Peter's CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106438
LEA Wigan
Inspection number 296224
Inspection dates 29 June 2006 to 29 June 2006
Reporting inspector Mr John Gornall HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to inspect any school in England. The inspection is to be treated as a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Downall Green Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Ashton-in-Makerfield
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Wigan, Lancashire WN4 0DL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01942 204041
Number on roll	190	Fax number	01942 204041
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Rev D Hooton
Date of previous inspection	18 October 1999	Headteacher	Mr C Calderbank

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4 to 11	29 June 2006 - 29 June 2006	296224

© 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 one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The inspector met with the headteacher, staff, pupils and the chair of governors and scrutinized a range of documentation provided by the school. Every class was visited and the work in pupils' books was scrutinised. Lunchtime was observed as were afternoon playtime and some additional activities outside lessons. The receipt of 75 questionnaires from parents assisted the writing of this report. In their response, parents were overwhelmingly supportive of the school.

Description of the school

Bryn St Peter's is a school of average size that draws the majority of its pupils from the Bryn area of Ashton-in-Makerfield near Wigan. The school serves an area of mixed socio-economic background that includes council-owned and private accommodation. The abilities of children entering the school span a wide range but, overall, are below average; a significant number of them have underdeveloped language and communication skills. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is slightly above average. The proportion with a statement for their learning difficulties is below average. The school is part of a local Primary Strategy Learning Network, has received the Eco Green Flag award for environmental work, pupil achievement, the FA Charter Status and recently secured a successful bid to become a Children's Centre. The school's accommodation is very good and this has been enhanced by improvements to outdoor play facilities and information and communication technology (ICT) equipment.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Bryn St Peter's is a good school with some particular strengths. It has improved significantly since the previous inspection by raising the expectations of what the pupils should achieve. Over the last four years, results from national tests show a positive upward trend. The school's main strength is the overall educational value it adds to the pupils' achievements; in this respect between the ages of 7 and 11 it does better than most other primary schools.

The children in Reception start from a low baseline but make good progress and they achieve well. By the time they reach Year 1 most of them have acquired the skills and knowledge typically found in most schools. In Key Stage 1, the pupils make at least satisfactory and often good progress and they reach the standards expected for their age. At Key Stage 2, the pupils achieve well and most make good progress, particularly in mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). The pupils' writing is not as strong as other aspects of their work and this has been recognised by the school as an area for improvement.

The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to outstanding; it is good overall. The staff work hard to provide lessons that are interesting and classrooms that are vibrant. Staff work well with each other, sharing ideas and helping those teachers who are less experienced. Relationships between staff and pupils are good and this allows lessons to move along purposefully. In the best lessons, the teachers help the pupils see the relevance of what they are being asked to learn. They do this by linking the current focus of learning with the pupils' previous experiences or to other subjects of the curriculum. This encourages the pupils to make connections between different aspects of their learning which, in turn, adds to their enjoyment and understanding. There are, however, some inconsistencies of approach by teachers, for example, in how the pupils' books are marked and in other aspects of their work such as handwriting.

A particularly noteworthy feature of the school is the positive ethos and friendly atmosphere permeating its daily life. The pupils behave well and show very good attitudes to their learning. They value their teachers and what school has to offer them. The school day runs smoothly and visitors are made very welcome. The pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good and their cultural development is satisfactory. The pupils clearly enjoy school. This is evident not only in their comments but in the quality of displays around school and in the work in most of their books.

The leadership and the management of the school are good. The headteacher has high expectations of what can be achieved. By demonstrating his vision, through improved learning facilities and a greater focus on raising standards, he has empowered staff, pupils and governors to do well. There are some inconsistencies between classes that indicate that middle managers are not exerting sufficient leadership by monitoring and evaluating classroom practice across the school.

The school gives good value for money. Pupils feel secure, valued and well supported. The issues for improvement from the school's previous inspection have been addressed. The school has a good capacity to continue to improve.

In order to improve further the school needs to improve the quality of pupils' writing skills and the breadth of opportunities for them to write.

The school has some good policies and agreed protocols but in practice there is some inconsistency between classes. To improve this situation those staff who have specific areas of responsibility need to exert a stronger monitoring influence across the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children's early language and communication skills when they first join school are underdeveloped. During their time in Reception, they quickly settle and are encouraged to talk frequently; they make good progress. Their language skills, although much improved, are not quite as strong as their mathematical understanding.

Standards at Key Stage 1 are similar to the national average. This represents good progress, particularly in the pupils' acquisition of speaking and listening, reading and basic writing skills.

The pupils' results in national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2005 were high and represented exceptional added value when compared to their performance four years previously at the end of Key Stage 1. The pupils achieved better than in most primary schools in mathematics and science. The pupils' English results were similar to those of most schools. Achievement in ICT is much improved because an enhanced programme is now taught and resources have been improved significantly.

Children with learning difficulties make at least satisfactory progress. Their problems are quickly identified and they receive well-directed support from staff.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils' first experiences of school in Reception are very positive and this helps them to settle quickly and make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Through the school's very positive ethos, pupils are given an effective foundation in the understanding of relationships, right and wrong and fairness.

Although the vast majority of pupils give of their best, there are a minority of pupils who produce work that is sometimes untidy or unfinished. The pupils show high levels of cooperation in lessons and other activities. This was particularly evident in the drama rehearsal for the school's summer production, 'Snow White,' where the pupils concentrated well and patiently waited for their turn to speak or sing. As well as their firm foundation in the Christian faith, the pupils gain an awareness of other religions and beliefs. The school council is well-established and its members see their roles as very important, best summarised by the comments of a Key Stage 2 pupil, 'we raise problems or ideas, the headteacher and teachers listen and we get things done together'. The pupils fully support and contribute ideas to fundraising events and this helps them to develop valuable life skills. They have a good awareness of safety issues and a good knowledge of healthy living. The pupils' attendance is good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

All lessons have good features that lead to most pupils making good progress. The teachers try to make lessons relevant and fun; older pupils commented that this was a key feature contributing to their enjoyment of school. An outstanding Year 6 ICT lesson illustrated just how far the school has come from the time of its previous inspection when the teaching of ICT was criticised. Teachers promote pupils' speaking and listening skills very well. A very effective English lesson in Year 3 developed the pupils' awareness of limericks by encouraging them to discuss and express their views in a variety of ways, including recording and playing back limericks to each other. Teachers made good use of the recently introduced interactive whiteboards to enliven their teaching. A Year 2 history lesson used this technology well to capture the interest of the children as they examined old photographs depicting Victorian dress codes. Day to day assessment and the subsequent feedback afforded to pupils shows some inconsistency between classes. Similarly, opportunities for writing are greater in some classes than others.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is matched to the needs of the pupils and meets statutory requirements. In the Foundation Stage, the curriculum is practically based to help children learn through encouraging interaction and speaking and listening. The outdoor play area is of good quality and used effectively.

An effective programme of personal, social and health education successfully develops children's knowledge of how to stay safe and be a good citizen. It helps to create the respect pupils show towards everyone. The curriculum is enriched by visits, visitors and after school clubs. Sessions with qualified sports coaches help children stay fit. There are several displays that highlight the importance of healthy lifestyles.

The school is appropriately reviewing the curriculum to incorporate new technologies, enhance the opportunities to develop the pupils' writing and promote excellence and enjoyment.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The level of care is a strong feature of the school's provision. Arrangements for child protection are robust and both parents and children express high levels of trust in staff. Health and safety procedures are very effective in ensuring that pupils are safe at all times. Risk assessment procedures are in place. There are many opportunities for children to succeed and have their achievements recognised, which builds their

confidence and self-esteem. Sensitive support is provided across the school for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The vast majority of the parents are highly supportive of the school. They know that their children are extremely well cared for. One remarked, 'good support is always given on any issue or problem that occurs'. The school has well developed links with the local authority, local primary and high schools. It actively promotes the children's health by providing good opportunities for physical exercise and encouraging healthy eating habits.

The guidance offered to pupils through assessment including marking is mostly good but there is some inconsistency across the school. For example, a very simple yet visual indicator of mixed expectations of the pupils is the emphasis, or not, that teachers place on the importance of handwriting. Some pupils at Key Stage 2 still regularly print their handwriting whilst others move between cursive and printed script. This lack of intervention and inconsistency has also been identified by some parents in their questionnaire returns.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management are good. The school's self-evaluation is detailed and accurate. The school's improvement plan builds upon this work and its identified priorities are well judged. Although much has been achieved, the headteacher acknowledges the need to focus more on specific aspects of the school's work, for example, he is re-structuring the management team to ensure their impact on the work of the whole school. Subject coordinators enjoy the challenge of leading their subjects but their influence across the school requires strengthening.

The governing body supports the school fully. The chair of governors has a very good understanding of the school and has developed an excellent relationship with the headteacher and staff. He is aware that vacancies on the governing body exist and is putting in measures to try to fill these. Attendance at governors' meetings is good. The minutes of meetings are detailed and indicate that the governors are performing their role of critical friendship well. Parents' views are sought and they are supportive of the school. They agree that the school is a happy place, and that it is well led and managed.

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
--	-----------------------	--------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for helping me to find out about your school. I enjoyed talking to you and was interested to see how you work in lessons and care for each other at break and lunchtime.

I agree with you and your parents that Bryn St Peter's is a good school. Your teachers and teaching assistants work very hard to make sure that you enjoy your lessons and make good progress. Everyone in the school gets on well together and likes being there.

Your teachers help you to behave in a considerate and friendly way at all times. They care for you very much, and you also care for each other and make sure that nobody feels lonely or upset.

I really enjoyed meeting and talking with your School Council members, who work hard on your behalf. I also enjoyed watching the older juniors in their rehearsal for their terrific musical production of 'Snow White'. Thank you also to the pupils who I had lunch with; you were very friendly and polite.

Your headteacher has good ideas about how to make St Peter's even better than it is now: making sure that your work is marked well and that you have good information as to how to improve your own work and finding ways of improving your writing skills.

Keep up the good work you are all doing at the school. I wish you every success in the future.