

Greenhill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105290
Local Authority	Bury
Inspection number	308820
Inspection date	7 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Jeffery Plumb

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	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	241
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs J Butterworth
Headteacher	Mr M Pilling
Date of previous school inspection	8 March 2004
School address	Mile Lane Bury Lancashire BL8 2JH
Telephone number	0161 7647298
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards, teaching and learning and the curriculum, the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) and leadership and management. The inspector gathered evidence from lesson observations, examination of pupils' work, assessment data, discussions and documents. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is an average sized primary school. It is a popular school: there are more applications for places than the school can provide. The pupils on roll are drawn mainly from the immediate area but this is beginning to change, with more pupils coming from further away. Classes are mostly organised according to age, but there are two mixed-age classes in Key Stage 1. Pupils are mainly from White British backgrounds. There are few minority ethnic pupils and none are at an early stage of learning to speak English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities has increased in recent years, and is broadly in line with the national average. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools Award, the Sports Activemark Award and the Basic Skills Award. It is a member of the Specialist Schools Trust.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. It has some outstanding features. The care, guidance and support the school provides are outstanding as is pupils' personal development. Parents say, 'This is a very caring and nurturing school.' Through an energetic school council pupils have a meaningful say in how their school is run. They are actively involved in shaping the school's behaviour policy. Behaviour is outstanding as a result. Pupils support each other exceptionally well. This is seen in the play leader scheme whereby older pupils help younger pupils to engage with creative play during break-times, and in the way in which Year 5 pupils help younger pupils learn to read. For their age, pupils have a mature grasp of their responsibilities as good citizens, as well as their rights.

Achievement is good. On entry to Year 1 standards are above the national average for pupils of this age. They make good progress as they move through the school. By Year 6, pupils attain well above national average standards in English, mathematics and science. The progress higher achievers make in mathematics is not as rapid as the gains they make in writing, reading and in their knowledge and understanding in science. By Year 6, pupils' creative writing is a particular strength. Investigative and research science skills are developed well through innovative and interesting projects such as making periscopes. Teaching and learning are consistently good. Lessons are lively and relevant. Consequently, pupils are very well engaged in and enthusiastic about their learning. Teaching is characterised by brisk pace and good subject knowledge. High expectations often result in pupils making breakthroughs in their learning and surprising themselves by what they achieve. Teaching assistants very effectively support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and so they make good progress, particularly with their reading. The well planned curriculum develops pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills successfully through their study of interesting projects. Pupils are overwhelmingly positive about the work they do, saying, 'We love learning about the Titanic and volcanoes around the world because our lessons are fun and we never get bored.'

Attendance is outstanding because pupils really want to come to school. Pupils say, 'We love coming to school' and speak with pride about their school. They have an outstanding understanding of cultural diversity. This is enhanced through their support of a child in a school in Zimbabwe and their study of French. Exciting enterprise projects, such as running a healthy tuck shop, develop pupils' work-related skills exceptionally well. Pupils show maturity in the way in which they care for those less fortunate than themselves in the world, as evidenced by the charities they choose to support. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school is very successful in enabling pupils to develop a healthy and safe lifestyle. Dinners are nutritious and the dynamic physical education programme makes a valuable contribution to pupils' fitness. The development of pupils' emotional health lies at the heart of this successful school. As pupils make rapid gains in confidence and self-esteem, their excitement increases the pace of their learning. Pupils say, 'We feel safe at school and can talk to our teachers at any time'. Child protection procedures are robust and meet government guidelines.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has skilfully and effectively managed change since the last inspection and this has raised achievement. He has successfully matched teachers' skills and expertise to best meet pupils' needs. This has accelerated pupils' learning at the start of their journey in Key Stage 2. Self-evaluation based on analysis of pupils' performance is good. Decisive actions taken this academic year, based on good analysis of data,

have raised standards in Key Stage 1. Tracking of pupils' progress over time and the involvement of pupils in setting challenging targets to improve their achievement is central to this successful school. Subject leadership is developing well, but the headteacher recognises the need to develop the role of subject leaders in driving up standards. The school is now poised to develop further the role of subject leaders with a clear vision to raise achievement. There is a plan to ensure that subject leaders will have the time to be involved in supporting curriculum development and modelling good practice in their subjects across the school. Governors constructively challenge and support the headteacher. Capacity for further improvement is good. The school provides good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

When they join Reception, children's skills are broadly in line with those typical for their age. Throughout the Foundation Stage children make good progress because of the good quality teaching they receive. By the end of Reception, overall standards in the areas of learning are above those expected of children of this age. Their literacy skills come on apace because of the rapid gains they make in linking sounds to letters. Since the last inspection the school has invested in improving the outdoor environment, and there is a plan to develop it further. The curriculum is tailored to meet the needs of the children. Opportunities and activities outdoors make a very valuable contribution to children's language, mathematical and physical development. For example, children have fun hunting and finding the miniature toy bugs, placed by their teacher, in the beautiful seed gardens outside their classroom. Personal, social and emotional development is good as children learn to support and help each other, such as during the making of a dungeon castle. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. Children are exceptionally well cared for and as their parents say, 'Our children really look forward to coming to school and we are thrilled with the first rung on the ladder of education they have started to climb.'

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement and standards in mathematics, particularly for the more able pupils.

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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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

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

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	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?	2
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?	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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Inspection of Greenhill Primary School, Bury, BL8 2JH

Thank you for the lovely welcome you gave me as a visitor to your school. I so enjoyed talking with you and your enthusiasm for learning made a real impression on me. The care the school takes of you is excellent, as is the care you show to one another. Your behaviour is outstanding. Your support to others less fortunate than yourselves is great. Through the school council you are given opportunities to improve the way in which your school is run.

Your school is a good school. Some features are outstanding. You make good progress and reach above national average standards in English, mathematics and science. However, the gains some of you make in mathematics are not as rapid as in reading, writing and your knowledge and understanding in science, so I have asked your school to work hard to improve achievement and standards in mathematics even more. Your curriculum is good and helps you to develop good problem-solving skills. Sport activities, clubs, trips and outward bound activities contribute well to your fun in learning and to your physical fitness. Your headteacher leads and manages your school well and he is well supported by the staff and governors.

I believe that with your help and support your school can improve further.