

Baguley Hall Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105485
Local Authority	Manchester
Inspection number	308865
Inspection dates	10–11 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Derek Aitken

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	375
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs J Bostock
Headteacher	Mr John McKie
Date of previous school inspection	15 March 2004
School address	Ackworth Drive Baguley Wythenshawe Manchester Lancashire M23 1LB
Telephone number	0161 9982090
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This large school is situated to the south of the city. Pupils come from a variety of social and economic backgrounds but the surrounding area is characterised by very significant levels of social and economic need. A high proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. The vast majority of the pupils are White British. The school became a fully extended school in 2004. It holds the Eco Schools Award (Silver), the Activemark (Gold) and the National Healthy Schools Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. It works very hard to meet the very diverse pastoral needs of its pupils. This aspect of its work is closely monitored, and successful outcomes are promoted by the very effective partnerships the school has established with a wide variety of external agencies. The range of services it offers as a fully extended school are well chosen to meet the needs of its families. These services are now well established and used extensively by parents, carers and their children. The good quality of the school's arrangements to ensure pupils feel settled, secure and happy is reflected in their personal development and well-being, which are good. The school's hard work to raise standards in pupils' health has been recognised in its recent awards. Attendance, however, remains unsatisfactory. The school has adequate systems for promoting attendance, but has not been able to exploit them fully, in part due to absence of specialist staff.

By the end of Year 6 overall standards are usually below average. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, pupils make very good progress in science where they achieve average standards. One of the many reasons for pupils' better progress in science is the school's longstanding partnership with its main secondary feeder school, which provides weekly specialist teaching and activities for the more gifted pupils in mathematics and science. When pupils leave school standards in mathematics are below average and in English, well below average. Achievement in English is just adequate. The subject has not benefited from the same quality of development including external support provided for mathematics and science. School leaders recognise that improving pupils' attainment in literacy is a continuing priority and have redoubled their efforts in this area. However, it is too early to judge the impact of recent actions.

The curriculum makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' all round development. It is focused by necessity on improving pupils' basic skills. Opportunities for developing more imaginative links between subjects are currently being explored and there is a good variety of enrichment activities, especially in physical education and the performing arts. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. While some of the teaching is good, the overall quality is not consistent enough to ensure that all pupils make good, rather than satisfactory, progress. Teachers manage pupils well and work hard to sustain pupils' levels of concentration; but weaknesses in the use of assessment, including marking and the use of personal targets, hold back pupils' progress. A new tracking system has been implemented to chart pupils' progress and to identify pupils who would benefit from extra support. At this early stage its impact is satisfactory.

The school has made satisfactory improvement overall since its previous inspection. It has put in place a variety of initiatives to support pupils' physical and emotional well-being. It has successfully addressed two of the key issues raised in the previous report, but has made little headway in solving its other key issue, relating to pupils' literacy levels. School leaders have a satisfactory awareness of the main priorities for improvement but systems for monitoring, evaluating and promoting pupils' academic development are not rigorous enough to guarantee pupils will meet their targets in all subjects. This is reflected in the school's over-optimistic evaluation of its performance. The school has satisfactory capacity to improve and offers satisfactory value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

The Foundation Stage provides a satisfactory quality of education. Children join the Nursery with knowledge and skills which are very low in comparison to those expected for their age, particularly in their ability to communicate and their social skills. Children make satisfactory progress in language and mathematical development, but skills in these areas remain well below average when they join Year 1. They make good progress in some other areas of their learning. By the end of Reception their skills are close to national expectations in their personal, social, physical and creative development. Their willingness to learn and their enjoyment of school set them up well for the next stage in their learning. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Staff lead discussions and question children well, which encourages them to speak freely and develop their ideas. Teachers' planning, however, does not have a clear enough focus on the requirements of the nationally expected early learning goals. The outdoor provision is under-used, which limits the opportunities children have to widen their learning across all areas of learning. Staff care well for the children and recognise quickly when a child needs extra support. Good levels of support for children and their parents help the former settle happily in school. Staff keep useful records to chart individuals' progress but do not always use this information well enough to enable them to modify lesson plans. Leadership and management are satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement in English.
- Ensure that the quality of teaching is at least good throughout the school and in all subjects.
- Ensure greater rigour in using data from assessment and checking on the quality of lessons to identify exactly what is needed to improve pupils' progress, especially in literacy.
- Improve attendance.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils join Year 1 with standards which are well below those typically expected in literacy, numeracy and their knowledge and understanding of the world. Overall, they build satisfactorily on their earlier attainment as they progress through the school. Results at the end of Year 2 in 2007 were well below average, but showed a small improvement on the previous year. Evidence indicates that current pupils are making satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1. Progress in Key Stage 2 is stronger, linked to pupils' growing maturity. Results at the end of Year 6 are usually below average. However, this masks variable attainment and achievement between the subjects. Progress in science and, to a lesser extent, in mathematics is better than in literacy, because pupils enjoy carrying out investigative work in science and can more readily appreciate the practical problem-solving relevance of mathematical questions. Pupils make very good progress in science and sometimes make good progress in mathematics. Progress in English, especially writing, is less strong because the subject has been less effectively developed. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good. Their social and moral development is especially strong. The school is an ordered community and pupils respond well to the staff's efforts to promote their emotional well-being. This is underpinned by the good relations pupils have with their teachers and other adults. Pupils are polite, welcoming and keen to contribute to the life of the school. They behave well and mostly conduct themselves sensibly when at play. They support each other well in lessons and appreciate each other's achievements. Pupils enjoy their lessons, although this is not fully reflected in their academic achievement as several pupils have short attention spans. Attendance is unsatisfactory.

Pupils enjoy the good range of extra-curricular activities. They have a good appreciation of healthy lifestyles. Older pupils make good use of opportunities to take on responsibilities, for example, through the school council and the eco-council. Individual pupils also show initiative by raising money for charitable causes.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. It is not sufficiently consistent across subjects or year groups to ensure the continuity pupils need to make better than satisfactory progress. When teaching is good, pupils are clearly aware of lesson objectives, and interesting and challenging activities are well planned to achieve these. Pupils are fully engaged in their work and learn at a good pace. On these occasions, teaching assistants are effectively deployed to support identified pupils. Sometimes, however, pupils are unclear about the purposes of what they are learning. When this happens pupils' attention is inclined to wander and learning slows. A common strength is the quality of relationships. Teachers manage pupils well and consequently, pupils are keen to cooperate and settle quickly to work. When planning work, teachers make insufficient use of assessment and individual targets to enable pupils to move their learning on briskly. The school's marking policy is inconsistently applied. This further reduces the opportunities pupils have to take shared responsibility for their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development and well-being and satisfactorily supports their academic achievement. The school has recently adapted the timetable to include separate sessions, geared to improving pupils' knowledge of letters and sounds. Leaders, in their efforts to improve pupils' literacy skills, are developing curricular links between English and other subjects. A good example of this is in Year 6, where pupils are making good use of the opportunity to write creatively on imagined war-time experiences. Individual teaching and other personalised plans effectively support the learning of pupils with additional requirements. A good range of visits and visitors enhances pupils' enjoyment of school and widens their geographical horizons. The former not only includes residential visits for Years 5 and 6, but also opportunities for the older pupils to 'aim higher' through direct contact with students at Manchester University.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Systems to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety are good and procedures are consistently applied. Child protection and other arrangements for safeguarding pupils are in place. The school employs a wide range of strategies to ensure pupils feel secure and valued and to help them socialise with each other. As a result pupils believe that incidents of thoughtless behaviour and bullying are isolated and effectively kept in check. Relationships with the main feeder secondary school are very strong and this link has a significant impact on ensuring pupils proceed smoothly to secondary education. Arrangements, which include shared staffing and wide-ranging curricular projects with the secondary partner, effectively contribute to pupils' personal development and aspects of their achievement. The systems to promote good attendance are not fully effective. The use of targets to accelerate pupils' progress is underdeveloped.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. School leaders have coped effectively with diminishing pupil numbers and consequent reductions in funding. They have exploited the opportunities provided by the accommodation which has been freed up to develop a wide range of additional services, such as the Calm Spaces Project, which provides very effective therapeutic intervention for identified pupils. These services complement well other aspects of the school's work as an extended school by providing an extra dimension to its support for pupils' well-being. Leaders set a clear direction for the school's pastoral work in attempting to meet the many challenges the school faces in the local community. Their hopes for pupils' progress are not fully reflected in their academic outcomes. Although the school development plan offers a good platform for tackling its weaknesses, it is not effectively backed up by sharp analysis and interpretation of data. The quality of subject leadership and the monitoring of teaching and learning are uneven. Consequently, some areas of weakness, for example, the use of assessment, have not been identified and rigorously pursued. Governors support the work of the school effectively.

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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
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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	4
The behaviour of learners	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	3

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?	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.

Annex A

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

I am writing to thank you for your friendliness when my fellow inspectors and I visited your school recently and to tell you about our inspection findings. I was especially lucky to be able to have a longer conversation with some of you. I learnt that you enjoyed your lessons and the other activities the school organises for you, including the musical and sporting activities. You may remember I had the special treat of listening to the large, nearly all-girl choir who sang the hymn followed by 'Teenager in Love' so well and with such enthusiasm. Well done to the two boys who also took part! Many other boys like football a lot and I was impressed by some of their fancy footwork and ball skills.

We judge your school to be satisfactory in all parts of its work, except for your personal and social development which we judge to be good. The staff work very hard to make you feel safe and happy in school, to encourage you and boost your confidence. You repay them well by respecting them and getting on well with them.

You enjoy your work and find your lessons interesting much of the time. You do best in science and then in mathematics. Your weakest area is English. To help you make faster progress, especially in English, I have asked the staff to make sure your lessons always help you to progress as well as you can in your learning and to make better use of assessment, including marking and your personal targets. This will also give you more chances to become responsible for your own learning.

I have also asked the staff to set up a better system for making sure you make good progress in all your subjects, especially, as you will already have guessed, in English.

The main area you can help is by improving attendance levels. These are not satisfactory. Too many days are being lost by some pupils. It is really important you do not miss out on vital bits of learning.