

# Boarshaw Community Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105787
<b>Local Authority</b>	Rochdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	308948
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Derek Aitken

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	203
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Mathew Carter
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Williamson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 May 2004
<b>School address</b>	Stanycliffe Lane Middleton Manchester Lancashire M24 2PB
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 6539536
<b>Fax number</b>	0161 6430473

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is an average sized school, situated to the north-east of Manchester. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average, as is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The vast majority of pupils are White British. In May 2005, the local authority designated Boarshaw as a school causing concern. The headteacher took up his post in November 2005 and since then the school has seen a significant turnover in staffing at all levels. In September 2006, the school became part of a local authority Intensive Support Programme (ISP) to raise standards and a new senior leadership team was created. The school became a fully extended school in July 2007 and gained the National Healthy School award in January 2008.

## 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. After an unsettled period, effective action taken by the senior leaders is putting the school back on track. Parents and pupils report positively on the changes made in the last two years. These are amply demonstrated in pupils' good personal development and well-being. Behaviour has improved markedly and attendance has moved from unsatisfactory to above average. Significant improvements to the security of the school site have ensured that pupils feel safe, and interior renovations and new technological equipment have enhanced their sense of pride in the school. Pupils are happy, confident and enjoy school, especially the entertaining lessons and growing variety of extra-curricular activities. The school's hard work to ensure higher standards in pupils' health has been recognised in its recent Healthy School award. An important aspect of the school's work is the building of community cohesion linked to its extended school status. The priorities the school has selected to focus on are well chosen. Initiatives, for example to improve pupils' dental health and to involve parents more closely in education through employment as teaching assistants, have been successful.

By the end of Year 6 standards are broadly average. Pupils in Years 1 to 5 achieve satisfactorily. However, a legacy of weaker teaching has resulted in some gaps in knowledge among the present Year 6 in writing, mathematics and science. School leaders have recognised this and have implemented new staffing arrangements to tackle the issue. It is too early to judge the impact of their action on standards, although Year 6 pupils do make satisfactory progress in lessons. The school is implementing a wide range of measures, including the intensive support from the local authority, to raise standards in English, mathematics and science. The original focus on literacy has been very effective in raising reading standards in all years, and has had some impact on writing. The very recent switch in emphasis to improving pupils' mathematical and scientific skills has yet to 'bed in'.

The curriculum makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' all-round development. It is focused by necessity on improving pupils' basic skills. Consequently, opportunities for developing more imaginative links between subjects are limited. There is, however, a good variety of enrichment activities, for example in physical education (PE) and specialist music provision, which pupils greatly enjoy. While some of the teaching is good, the overall quality is not yet good enough in mathematics and science to ensure that pupils make good, rather than satisfactory, progress. Teachers use a good variety of techniques in all subjects to ensure that pupils are engaged in their work, but weaknesses in the use of assessment, including marking, hold back pupils' progress in science and mathematics. Care and welfare arrangements to ensure pupils' well-being are closely monitored and of good quality. A new tracking system has been implemented to chart pupils' progress and to guide support programmes. At this early stage its impact is satisfactory.

The school has made satisfactory improvement since its previous inspection. The restructuring of the leadership has been successful in creating a greater spirit of teamwork and participation in school improvement. Staff are working with a renewed sense of optimism and vigour. There is a wide range of monitoring devices, linked to the school development plan and the ISP. Accountability for subject development and responsibility for keeping a close overview of pupils' progress is not clearly established within subjects, and this slows the effectiveness of the work being undertaken to improve standards. Partnerships with other organisations are good and the school makes satisfactory use of its resources. The school has satisfactory capacity to improve and offers satisfactory value for money.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage provides a good education for the younger children. Children join the Nursery with skills that are well below those expected for their age, particularly in their ability to communicate. They make good progress to reach levels which are, nevertheless, below those expected when they join Year 1. Children's attitudes to learning are positive and nearly all are able to work effectively in groups, pairs or individually. Children currently in Reception are already demonstrating skills that are close to those expected for their age in literacy and mathematical development. Leaders recognised that these skills were persistent areas of weakness and are successfully implementing a range of measures, including more focused work in matching sounds to letters and in calculating. High quality displays and good teaching, assisted by expert deployment of an additional adult, underpin children's learning. The curriculum is well balanced. Staff are working on short themes and using children's interests well to reinforce the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Good links with parents and regular assessments support children's progress well. The Foundation Stage is led and managed well.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement in mathematics and science.
- Ensure that the quality of teaching in all subjects is consistently good and that assessment, including marking, is used effectively in mathematics and science to improve progress.
- Improve accountability for monitoring the progress of pupils, especially in mathematics and science.

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 below those typically expected, and often well below in aspects of literacy and numeracy. They build satisfactorily on their earlier attainment as they progress through the school. Although results at the end of Year 2 are invariably below average, there was some improvement in 2007, especially in reading. Results at the end of Year 6 in 2007 were broadly average, but this masks variable achievement for this group of pupils. Pupils made very good progress in English, largely as a result of a successful emphasis on developing reading skills and the focus on writing. Their achievement in mathematics and science was less strong, in large part due to prior weaknesses in their learning. Pupils from Year 1 to 5 are currently making satisfactory progress overall. In the current Year 6 pupils are making good progress in reading, and there is some improvement in writing, but the gaps in their prior learning in science and in mathematics mean that their progress in these subjects is slower. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also make satisfactory progress.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good overall. Their social and moral development is especially strong. Pupils are polite, self-disciplined and welcoming. The older pupils confirm very eloquently the recent improvements to their sense of security, self-esteem

and well-being. Pupils behave well, and conduct themselves very sensibly in corridors and at play. They support each other well and appreciate the achievements of others. They enjoy in particular the lively lessons, the new opportunities to work with interactive whiteboards and the expanding range of extra-curricular activities. Their growing appreciation of what school has to offer is reflected in a substantial increase in their attendance. Pupils have a very good appreciation of healthy lifestyles, although some pupils do not always practise what they preach. Older pupils make very good use of opportunities to take on responsibility, for example as head boy and head girl and as prefects. Pupils are proud of these roles and perform their duties, which include helping the young children, very well. Other opportunities for pupils to demonstrate enterprise skills and creativity are at an early stage of development.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good. Teachers use a good range of methods, and information and communication technology, to ensure that pupils are interested, attentive and engaged in their learning. Pupils make good use of talking partners to share information and explore new ideas. Sometimes weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge and in planning to develop pupils' thinking skills in mathematics and science reduce opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding. Pupils are aware of their targets, but opportunities are missed in lessons to tie assessment in tightly to these targets. Occasionally, independent activities contain mundane elements which slow the pace of learning. Teachers mark to specific criteria in English, and provide useful comments to help pupils improve their work in this subject. This quality of marking does not extend to mathematics and science. Satisfactory use is made of teaching assistants to support pupils who learn more slowly.

### **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. Expanding links with local secondary schools and specialist teaching, for example in music and PE, are helping to raise standards in these subjects. German lessons add a little extra spice for Year 4 pupils. The curriculum is presently based on a tight framework of improving pupils' standards in English, mathematics and science. Staff attempt to reinforce literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects but the effectiveness of their work in this respect is variable. Whereas reading, speaking and listening skills are practised well in a number of other subjects, opportunities for reinforcing writing and numeracy are more limited. Some links are made between subjects, for example art and science, to broaden pupils' understanding, but these are isolated projects. Support programmes for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are satisfactory. Work to support gifted and talented pupils is underdeveloped. A wide range of after school clubs, including craft and 'Young Voices', enriches pupils' education.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 3

Systems and arrangements to ensure pupils' welfare and health and safety have improved substantially and are now good. A consistent approach to improving pupils' behaviour has proved to be highly successful and popular with pupils. Pupils report that bullying and harassment are rare. Pupils feel valued and confident that they can approach any of the staff if they are troubled and there are strong bonds of mutual respect between pupils and their teachers. Child protection arrangements are in place and meet current government guidelines. There are good links with outside agencies, including those established through the extended school services. Relationships with receiving secondary schools are also good, enabling Year 6 pupils to transfer more confidently. Systems for providing academic support and guidance are less well developed. Staff have better access than in the past to data on pupils' performance, but they are not yet using data to best effect for planning lessons. Tracking systems and target-setting are at an early stage in their development.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. New school leadership has developed in stages since the appointment of the headteacher two years ago. He has tackled the difficulties with enthusiasm, giving the pupils a school they are proud of. He has also helped to develop the extended services which promote pupils' well-being, and cohesion in the wider community. He has taken some tough decisions on staffing to reduce underperformance. His high hopes for pupils' progress are not yet reflected in their academic outcomes. The school's vast array of targets for pupils' progress, in addition to the targets through the ISP, lacks coherence, and this reduces their effectiveness in monitoring pupils' progress. School leaders are aware of the key strengths and weaknesses of the school and what it needs to do to improve. Actions taken have had some impact in raising standards in English, but work remains to be done to ensure that this is sustainable, especially in writing, and to improve standards in mathematics and science. Lesson observations undertaken by the headteacher are perceptive and detailed but their evaluations of quality are over-generous. Systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning within subjects lack rigour and full accountability. The reconstituted governing body supports the work of the school effectively.

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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?	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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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	2
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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 help when my colleague and I visited your school recently and to tell you about our inspection findings. The older pupils were best placed to tell us how things had moved on in the last two years. You told us how you no longer felt anxious or worried in school because of the behaviour of others or troublemakers coming onto the school grounds from outside. You told us how much you appreciated the improved facilities for play and especially the big changes to the inside of the buildings. You take really good care of your new furniture and equipment. You also told us about how much you now enjoy the growing range of interesting clubs after school. I met some of your parents and they said exactly the same things! Because of all these positive changes, which have been led well by the headteacher, we judge your school to be satisfactory and your personal development to be good.

The staff have been working hard to improve your skills in English, mathematics and science. They concentrated first on English and that has been mainly successful, especially in building your confidence and fluency in reading. The main areas you need to improve, as you well know, are mathematics and science. The school will now be concentrating on this.

You enjoy your work. You find lessons fun and are keen to answer the teachers' questions. You get on well with the staff and that also helps to keep you involved in your learning. To help you make faster progress I have asked the staff to improve teaching further and to make better use of marking in mathematics and science.

Finally, I have asked the staff to set up a better system for checking that you make good progress in all your subjects, especially, as you'll already have guessed, in mathematics and science.

You can help your teachers by continuing to work hard and by keeping up your really good attendance levels.