

Heap Bridge Village Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105797
Local Authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	308953
Inspection dates	24–25 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Marie Cordey

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	156
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Dominic Scrivens
Headteacher	Mrs Marie Boardman
Date of previous school inspection	6 October 2003
School address	Heap Brow Heap Bridge Bury Lancashire BL9 7JP
Telephone number	0161 7645686
Fax number	0

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized school in a village location. The vast majority of the pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average and the number of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The school is being extended and building works has been taking place for the last three months. The school provides extended school provision used by pupils of the school and from neighbouring schools.

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 significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the achievement and standards of the pupils by the end of Year 6 and the quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2. While stronger than in the past, the tracking of pupils' progress by staff, pupils' awareness of how well they are doing in their work and what, precisely, they need to do to improve, are still not as effective as they should be.

Pupils' personal development and well-being is satisfactory overall. Pupils are keen to welcome visitors to their school. They are friendly, polite and articulate. Behaviour is satisfactory overall and better in classrooms than in the temporarily cramped playground. Pupils look after each other and watch out for the younger ones. Peer mentors look after younger pupils efficiently and pupils know who to turn to if they are troubled. Pupils' inadequate achievement in Years 3 to 6 means they are not as well prepared as they should be for later life and for moving on to secondary school.

The headteacher is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and has identified appropriate areas for improvement. Leaders have had to cope with a significant reduction in space because of the building programme and reduced playground area for the pupils. More importantly, staffing is now settled after some significant changes over recent years. The headteacher, in partnership with a local primary school and the local authority, has acted to establish strategies for improvement. As a result, standards have begun to improve. Involvement in the local authority Intensifying Support Programme (ISP) has led to a more rigorous focus on pupils' attainment and a clear vision for school improvement. Systems have been introduced recently to check how well pupils are doing in their work. The systematic monitoring and evaluation of the performance of the pupils is at an early stage and does not yet involve all staff. Marking is irregular and often lacks clear targets for pupils to use to help improve their work. In addition, pupils are not involved fully in assessing their own work. Standards are not high enough by the end of Year 6 and achievement is inadequate; this has been the case for the last few years. In contrast to the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 where good teaching leads to good progress, teaching in Years 3 to 6 is not consistently challenging for pupils of differing abilities or good enough to improve their performance. Consequently, teaching and learning are inadequate overall. Although the school has not moved on sufficiently since the last inspection, it has the capacity to move forward now and with far less external support.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in the Foundation Stage are well provided for and quickly settle into the Reception class. Teaching and learning are good and the children make good progress from broadly average starting points when they joined the Reception class. The enthusiastic and knowledgeable teacher works well with the teaching assistant and they make a good team. They plan a range of activities to promote literacy learning in particular and are especially good at settling new children into school. The teaching of early writing skills and recognition of number is imaginative and children engage joyfully in lessons. Activities are stimulating and well planned so that children become self-reliant and gain in confidence. Children have the opportunity to work

and play outdoors and this develops their communication skills and partnership building. There are effective systems to track children's individual progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 in order to raise standards and improve pupils' achievement.
- Track pupils' progress more closely in Years 3 to 6 in order to identify under-performance and to provide more appropriate teaching.
- Ensure that pupils are aware of how they are doing in their work and what precisely they need to do in order to improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 because good quality teaching ensures that pupils of different abilities have work that is effectively planned for them. As a result, they learn well and by the end of Year 2, standards are significantly above average. However, the good gains they make in their early learning are not sustained and their progress starts to decline in Year 3. By the end of Year 6 standards have declined to broadly average. Consequently, achievement and progress are inadequate for all pupils including those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. They do not make the progress they should because teachers' expectations are too low and work is not matched to the different needs of pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils are aware of the benefits of healthy eating and regular exercise. Spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is developed satisfactorily through assemblies where pupils reflect upon their experiences. Pupils have a keen sense of what are the right and wrong ways to behave. The school council is actively involved in school life and proud of their contribution. Pupils enjoy school and this can be seen through their above average attendance. They contribute satisfactorily to the wider community through fundraising efforts for charities and in school activities such as gardening. Enterprise activities, including managing money and running a class shop, encourage pupils' preparation for the future although this is impeded by their inadequate achievement and low standards in English. Links with a local high school helps the pupils settle down into their new school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

Good teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are based on thorough preparation, informative assessment and good planning to meet the different needs of individual pupils. However, work is not planned well enough in Years 3 to 6 and consequently, significant numbers of pupils do not make the progress they should. The lack of pride in the pupils' presentation of their work reflects the low expectations of what the pupils can achieve. Assessment information is not used well enough to provide appropriate challenge or support and as a result the good gains pupils make in Key Stage 1 are lost. Teachers' marking is inconsistent and does not help pupils to know what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum meets the needs of pupils in Years 1 and 2 well so that they make good gains in their learning. Planning is weaker for pupils in Years 3 to 6 and the abilities of different groups of pupils are not extended fully. The use of information and communication technology is effective in supporting pupils' learning in other subjects as well as in developing their skills in using computers. The curriculum is becoming more creative. For example, pupils are knowledgeable about the second World War because of visits from a governor with direct experience of air raids. Enrichment activities outside of the school day are numerous and well attended. Breakfast and after school clubs are very popular and attract pupils from other schools. Visits and visitors provide additional learning experiences that are enjoyed by the pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school provides a secure environment where pupils are looked after and cared for well. Pupils are well supervised while the current building works is taking place. Pupils say there is little bullying in the school and that they know who to turn to if they are worried. Current requirements for safeguarding the children are met. The new assessment system is showing early signs of improving pupils' achievement and is used satisfactorily to outline the support necessary for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school works with other professionals to improve pupils' education and the links with the local authority as part of the ISP are positive. This is beginning to improve how effectively work is planned for pupils particularly in Key Stage 2 although the level of challenge is still not enough for pupils to improve their work as quickly as they could.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school has faced some barriers to improvement because of the current building work and, more significantly, much staffing turbulence. Staffing is now stable and the headteacher is working closely with the local authority to improve standards. Good links with a local primary school have helped to forge a partnership which is beneficial to staff in understanding how to improve. There are signs that this is beginning to raise standards. Nevertheless, checking closely on how well the school is improving is not fully in place. This is evident in pupils' work, where there are examples of gaps in learning, insufficient marking and poor presentation of work. The governors are committed to improving the school and have become much more involved since the school became part of the ISP. They are beginning to hold the school more to account for its performance.

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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?	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
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?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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.

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	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	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?	Yes

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

On behalf of the inspection team, I wish to thank you for your help and for talking to us when we visited your school. You were very polite and welcoming. We would especially like to thank the peer mentors and members of the school council who took the time to talk to us. Children in the Reception class and in Years 1 and 2 settle down quickly and are doing well.

You are well cared for and looked after so that you feel safe and confident. Well done for your good attendance. You are community minded and do things to help others both in school and in the wider community.

We know that it has been difficult for you and your teachers because of the building work that is being carried out in your school. However, many of you are still not doing as well as you should be in Years 3 to 6 and do not know how to improve your work. Sometimes your work is not very neat. Also, the ways in which the school checks on how well each of you is progressing in your work are not as good as they could be. We think that your school should be better. We have judged that it needs a 'Notice to Improve'. This means that an inspector will visit soon to check that things are getting better.

We think that you can help by taking extra care when you do your work and asking your teacher about how you could improve it.