

Bolton Brow Junior Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107515
Local Authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	309420
Inspection date	5 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Kathleen McArthur

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	239
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Normanton
Headteacher	Mr Jonathan Longstaff
Date of previous school inspection	19 January 2004
School address	Bolton Brow Sowerby Bridge West Yorkshire HX6 2BA
Telephone number	01422 831031
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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: provision in the Foundation Stage, the school's actions to raise standards in writing at Key Stage 1, and the contribution of middle leaders with responsibility for subjects and other aspects of the school. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation, national published assessment data, lesson observations and pupils' books. Discussions were held with staff, pupils and governors, and parents' questionnaires were scrutinised. 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, given in its self-evaluation, were not justified. These have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is an average sized school. The proportion of pupils receiving free school meals is similar to the national average. The great majority of the pupils are of White British heritage and nearly all speak English as their first language. About twice the national average have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The Nursery class is housed on a separate site next to the main school. The headteacher was unavoidably absent during the inspection and the deputy headteacher was the acting headteacher.

The school has Investors in People and Investors in Pupils status, and has gained Healthy Schools, Information and communication technology, Quality and Activemark awards.

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 with outstanding features. Inspired leadership by the headteacher, fully supported by the skilled deputy headteacher and strong team of staff and governors ensures the school aim 'to motivate, to educate, to nurture' is successfully achieved. The school has gained a good reputation and places are much in demand. Staff go to great lengths to welcome parents as partners in the education of their children. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive and say staff are open and approachable and that the school is 'fantastic'. Since the previous inspection, rigorous actions have raised standards, particularly in science and provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved dramatically.

Achievement is good. Children's attainment when they start school varies from year to year. Overall, it is a little below that typically seen, particularly in language skills. Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage and reach the levels expected for their age. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards are broadly average but they have been lower in writing than in other areas. Rigorous actions to tackle this are having a positive impact. Pupils really respond to the varied and well planned writing activities and oral work is helping them use a wider vocabulary and organise their ideas. Progress accelerates through Key Stage 2, and, when pupils leave, standards are above average. In 2007, pupils did particularly well and their progress put them in the top 2% of all schools nationally for English and in the top 8% for mathematics. The individual needs of those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well provided for, ensuring they make good progress.

Teaching is good throughout the school so pupils really enjoy their lessons and progress well. A typical comment from pupils is, 'We do exciting things and learn new things in lessons.' They are keen to tackle the challenges presented to them. Good relationships and behaviour ensure that lessons proceed well. Teachers ensure pupils are very clear about what they will learn and plan activities to meet and challenge the different abilities in each class. A typical parental comment was, 'The staff always think of new and exciting ways for children to gain enjoyment from their lessons.' Teaching assistants provide very skilled support, especially for pupils with additional learning needs.

Personal development is good. Pupils are well behaved, polite and friendly, eager to find out about the world around them and considerate and caring towards others. They have an excellent understanding of how to be healthy and are proud of their Healthy School Award. They feel safe in school and trust the staff to help with any problems. Pupils' contribution to the community is first-rate; they are mature, reliable befrienders, school councillors and sensible junior wardens in Sowerby Bridge. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. An excellent range of partnerships with local schools and organisations, and international links extend learning way beyond the classroom, giving pupils a global perspective of other cultures and ways of life. Good academic standards and personal skills prepare pupils well for their future lives.

The good curriculum is suitably adapted to meet the needs of all pupils and basic subjects are covered well. The curriculum is currently being reviewed to link subjects and make greater use of ICT. Excellent enrichment greatly enhances pupils' academic and social experiences. Pupils report that they enjoy the good variety of after-school activities; sports clubs are especially popular. Visits include residential opportunities. Pupils learn a foreign language, promoted through international links. Specialist music tuition enables a large number of pupils to learn

the clarinet, and local high schools provide specialist teaching in mathematics, sports, language and ICT. Pastoral care is outstanding and many parents commented on the high level of care shown to their children. Strong relationships between staff, pupils and parents feature strongly. All support agencies are used well to benefit pupils and, where appropriate, their families. Good, informative assessment systems enable staff to check progress carefully and quickly direct extra help where needed. Pupils know how to check how well they are doing. Most know what to do to improve their work and in some classes, they assess each other's work.

The school knows itself extremely well and has a clear vision of how to improve provision further. Every pupil is valued and inclusion is excellent. Although unavoidably absent during the inspection, the headteachers' positive influence is very apparent. Parents, pupils and staff hold him in high regard. The deputy headteacher is providing good leadership during the headteacher's absence, with skilled support from senior staff and the governors who all share the leadership's enthusiasm and commitment to improvement. The contribution of subject leaders has helped raise standards, and provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is skilfully and knowledgeably led and managed. Governors provide good support and challenge to the school and ensure that it gives good value for money. They are evaluating the effectiveness of their actions to strengthen governance. The improvement made by the school already demonstrates that it has excellent capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. High levels of care and effective, imaginative teaching ensure children feel happy and secure. Well planned activities capitalise on their natural inquisitiveness so they quickly gain confidence and make good progress in all areas of learning. Children get off to a good start in the Nursery. For example, they loved lining up as a train and counting out pretend pennies for their tickets; innovative teaching made learning fun whilst linking mathematics, imaginative play and language activities very effectively. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes enjoy learning outside. This is despite some limitations to space and, hence, the range of activities available for Reception children. The school is working to compensate for this. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is good. Systems to track and monitor children's progress closely and effectively are at an early stage of development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Build on the assessment systems in the Foundation Stage to provide more detailed information about how each child is progressing.

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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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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?	2

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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
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

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

Thank you for giving me such a warm welcome when I visited your school. You were all very polite and friendly and helpful so I really enjoyed my day. I promised the school council I would tell you my judgements about your school.

I was very impressed with all the jobs you do to help the school and the community. The litter pickers work very hard to tidy the school field, for example. You did a good job designing the playground; not many schools have mountains for children to climb at playtimes! Your parents are pleased with the school because you are very happy there.

Bolton Brow is a good school. Your headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior staff lead your school very well and your teachers teach you effectively. You told me you enjoy learning very much because your lessons are interesting and exciting. Children make a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes. You work hard and make good progress and when you leave, you reach higher standards than most children of your age. Well done! You certainly know how to be healthy and really enjoy sports and games. Your parents can be proud that you behave well and act responsibly. You are very well cared for and, in turn, you really try to help care for others when you can.

As well as your lessons, the school gives you many extra things to do; visits, clubs, sports, music, learning a foreign language and I know you enjoy video conferences with other schools in England and abroad. You learn lots about different cultures. I saw the letters and pictures from the school in Sri Lanka, and I heard that you recently welcomed some teachers from other countries.

You work hard to reach your targets, check your work carefully and know how to improve it. I have asked the staff to make sure they know exactly how well the children in the Foundation Stage are progressing.

I am sure you will want to help your school get even better! Keep on working hard, taking care of each other and enjoying everything you do at Bolton Brow.