

Audley Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119136
Local Authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	313195
Inspection dates	7–8 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Sue Sharkey

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	293
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Abdul Mulla
Headteacher	Mrs Susan Grimshaw
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2004
School address	Queen's Park Road Blackburn Lancashire BB1 1SE
Telephone number	01254 52065
Fax number	01254 690124

Age group	4–7
Inspection dates	7–8 November 2007
Inspection number	313195

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large school in an area of high economic and social deprivation. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above the national average. The proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds is very high at 97% and almost all these pupils start school with little English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Audley Infant School provides a good quality of education and gives good value for money. The school is a vibrant community providing a purposeful, caring environment in which pupils say that they enjoy learning. The headteacher and senior staff have a clear picture of what the school does well and what needs to be improved. Pupils behave very well and all are friendly and polite to each other and to adults. Most parents are positive in their praise, summed up by one parent in, 'My children enjoy going to a good school'.

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Children's attainment on entry to the Reception class is very low compared to that which is typical for their age, particularly in language skills. Throughout the year they make good progress, particularly in personal development and English. They enter Year 1 having reached levels that are improved but well below those expected for their age. By the end of Year 2 good progress has been made, although standards are still below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and or/disabilities make good progress.

Pupil's personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. The school provides a wide range of activities for pupils to learn successfully about the importance of healthy lifestyles, which pupils say they enjoy. The school is fortunate in having the community sports and art facilities as part of its building. Links with the community, including minority ethnic groups, are good and pupils have opportunities to raise funds and provide support through various local projects. An example of this is an invitation the school had to involve the pupils in designing the playground of their local park. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average and is improving.

Teaching and learning are good with some outstanding features. This includes some good support from teaching assistants who work with pupils of all abilities, including good bi-lingual support. Enthusiastic teachers deliver creative lessons that capture the imagination of pupils so that they are interested and engaged. The quality of marking is not yet consistent throughout the school and this leads to missed opportunities to extend learning. The curriculum is good and is exemplified through the wide range of pupils' work on display. There is good provision for information and communication technology (ICT). Care, guidance and support are good. Systems for tracking pupils' progress are in place, but these are not yet fully established in order to monitor rigorously the progress of different groups of pupils.

Leadership and management are also good. The school's leaders are very caring and foster an ethos in which pupils achieve well. The senior leadership team is very effective and all members are committed to raising academic standards. Governors work efficiently with the school team but their monitoring is not effective enough to challenge the school about issues such as standards. The school has a clear view of its own effectiveness, knows its strengths and areas for development and has good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the Foundation Stage with levels of basic skills that are very low for their age. Good induction procedures help them settle quickly and make good progress, especially in their personal development. Despite this good achievement, significant numbers of children leave the Foundation Stage with well below expected skills, particularly in writing. They learn to share

and work together and are encouraged to become independent and to make choices. The children behave very well. The enjoyment of learning is given a high priority through a rich and varied curriculum, a stimulating environment and high quality teaching. Children are regularly assessed and through careful tracking of each child's progress, support is quickly put in place if needed. Parents are encouraged to support children's learning through language activities that are sent home regularly. Well planned and purposeful activities underpin future learning both indoors and in the 'outdoor' classroom.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in the basic skills of numeracy and literacy.
- Track all pupils' progress rigorously to ensure that all achieve as well as they can.
- Ensure the quality of marking is consistent throughout the school and helps the pupils to improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. Children begin school with skills and abilities that are very low. They make good progress throughout Reception but do not reach the levels expected for their age as they enter Year 1. Good assessment identifies what pupils need to learn and staff provide the right activities to help them make this good progress. In Years 1 and 2, pupils continue to make good progress although standards are below average when they transfer to the junior school.

Good teaching throughout Reception and Key Stage 1 ensures that pupils improve their basic skills well, but numeracy and literacy skills are still below average. Girls achieve better than boys. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because they receive well-focused support, including good help from teaching assistants.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. This is a happy school where pupils feel safe and secure. They enjoy good relationships with adults and with other pupils. They actively try to keep themselves healthy through regular exercise and through healthy eating. Pupils contribute well to their school community through caring for each other and joining in activities willingly. Attendance has improved considerably and is now broadly in line with the national average. The school continually works hard to ensure that parents are aware of the importance of good attendance and punctuality. Many pupils act as playtime helpers to ensure that no one feels lonely. Pupils contribute to the wider community through their support of local and national charities. School council members, from Years 1 and 2, are elected. Pupils feel their views are heard through the school council and are pleased to see their suggestions being implemented. All work and play hard, and are keen to do well. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of their development are very good, and contribute to pupils' tolerance and understanding of different cultures and faiths. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Overall pupils are soundly prepared for the junior school. Their good personal development gives them a firm foundation for future learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good, leading to good progress. Teachers are enthusiastic, knowledgeable and caring. There is a real feeling that everyone works together as a team to maximise the quality of experience for the pupils. Through good assessment and by setting challenging targets, the school strives effectively to raise levels of pupils' achievement. However, the marking of pupils' work is not consistent enough in helping them to improve. Good features of lessons include excellent planning, exciting delivery and good resources with links between subjects, all providing pupils with the opportunity to choose and make decisions.

In every class, teachers establish orderly routines and know their pupils well so that relationships are good. These features support and encourage pupils' good behaviour. There is high quality bi-lingual support which has a positive effect on teaching and learning and pupils' ability to access the wider curriculum. Those with learning difficulties are supported well by staff and outside agencies and make good progress towards clear targets.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school's curriculum is good. It meets all statutory requirements and is enhanced by well-chosen visiting speakers and educational trips. Teachers have a new programme for teaching literacy to promote writing skills and this is helping pupils to make good progress. There is a strong emphasis on literacy skills throughout the curriculum, which meets pupils' needs well. There are extension lessons for higher attaining pupils in numeracy, literacy and science, which ensure that they are challenged effectively. Provision for ICT is good and this technology is used enthusiastically across the curriculum. The school provides well for pupils' personal development through teaching them how to keep healthy and safe. The Breakfast Club and after-school activities, including martial arts, football, hockey and computing are well attended. The school provides excellent opportunities for pupils to gain first hand experience of different faiths and cultures.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good, but stronger in personal than in academic support and guidance. The school's welcoming atmosphere encourages positive relationships with parents and carers. Pupils are looked after very well and careful attention is paid to health and safety issues. Child protection and safeguarding procedures are in place. There are good links with parents from the different ethnic communities and a range of support agencies that safeguard the needs of the most vulnerable pupils, including those with learning difficulties. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support pupils' learning needs. Staff are committed to a marking plan to support even the youngest children, by informing them of what they need to do to improve. This is in place but not yet used consistently throughout the school. The school has good strategies in place to improve pupil attendance and punctuality.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has a strong focus on raising standards in pupils' academic development. She is well supported by her senior leadership team, staff and governors who are determined that pupils have opportunities to enjoy and achieve. Leaders ensure that pupils are well cared for as well as setting high expectations for their academic achievement. Their thorough and accurate self-evaluation ensures that planning is directed to raising standards and providing a nurturing environment in which pupils grow and thrive. The school has satisfactory systems in place to monitor and evaluate its work. However, these are not yet sufficiently rigorous to track the progress of different groups of pupils effectively enough. Governance is satisfactory, but governors are at the early stages of monitoring the school's work. They are nonetheless closely involved in ensuring that the budget is well managed. Most parents have positive views, saying how much their children enjoy school. Progress since the last inspection has been good.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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	3
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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
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?	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	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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

9 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Audley Infant School, Blackburn with Darwen, BB1 1SE

I am writing to thank you for making us feel really welcome when we came to visit you in school. We enjoyed our discussions with you and we all felt as if you enjoyed talking to us as well! We watched you in school as well as at playtime and dinner time and it was lovely to see you being so friendly to each other and to the adults teaching and working with you. You were so well behaved all the time that sometimes we didn't hear you and wondered if you were creeping around!! It was lovely to see you enjoying school and lots of you told us that this was because there are so many interesting things to do. I had to ask what Little Dragons were because I had not heard of these before in Blackburn, but when you told me I realised how lucky you were to have all these different clubs after school.

It is really important to enjoy school and join in with lots of different things. In lessons, it is important to continue to work hard and take the reading activities home with you to help you improve your reading and writing. Your headteacher and all the teachers and other adults work very hard to help you improve. They are going to try different ways to help you with reading, writing and maths.

You all have lots of celebrations at the moment so I hope you enjoy joining in, eating lovely healthy food and wearing special clothes. Thank you for helping us find out about your school and for being such good pupils.

Best wishes

Sue Sharkey

Lead inspector