

Britannia Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119189
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	313214
Inspection date	30 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Joseph Clark

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	185
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Kathleen Holt
Headteacher	Mr Peter Morley
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2004
School address	Rochdale Road Bacup Lancashire OL13 9TS
Telephone number	01706 874447
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Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: how well pupils who left the school in 2007 at the end of Key Stage 2 had achieved; how well pupils in all stages are currently progressing; whether pupils and parents are now more involved in the life of the school, and how pupils' awareness of other cultures has improved since the previous inspection. 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, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate. Evidence was gathered from discussions with senior leaders, teachers and other adults, pupils and governors. Parents' views as reflected in the Ofsted questionnaire were considered. Lessons were sampled and documentation was scrutinised.

Description of the school

Britannia Community School is slightly smaller than most primary schools. It draws its pupils from an increasingly wide geographical area. Girls significantly outnumber boys. Most pupils who join the school in the Reception year have benefited from Nursery education. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. All the children are from White British backgrounds and all have English as their first language. Pupils come from a fairly even mix of advantaged and disadvantaged backgrounds though with significant pockets of social deprivation. There has been a significant influx of pupils joining the school in recent years. Over 40% of pupils currently in Key Stage 2 joined the school after Year 2.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school where, as one parent put it and echoing the sentiments of many: 'Simply the best! Britannia school maintains a fantastic achievement record. Children are enthusiastic, well behaved and happy. Truly outstanding.' The response from parents to the Ofsted questionnaire was exceptional in the number of written comments received praising the school. This confidence is not misplaced, for the school gives excellent value for money.

When pupils join the school in Reception, their levels of attainment are broadly typical for their age. When they leave at the end of Year 6, their standards are significantly above average. Pupils' achievement, as measured by the Key Stage 2 test results over the last three years, has been consistently above average. In the 2007 national tests at the end of Year 6, the school achieved its best ever results. Standards were significantly above average in English and mathematics, where the proportion of pupils who achieved the higher Level 5 scores was much higher than average, and above average in science. In teachers' assessments at the end of Year 2, standards were also significantly above average. Pupils are currently making outstanding progress and achieving standards generally that are well above average. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are making excellent progress against the targets set out in their individual education plans. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are average overall but weaker in data handling and control than in other aspects.

Pupils achieve and learn so well because of the excellent teaching they receive and the outstanding attitudes they bring to their work. Teachers work effectively as a team, sharing with colleagues methods of teaching that they find work best with Britannia pupils. Planning is very effective in identifying the next steps for learning, both for individuals and for different ability groups in the class. Marking is clear in identifying what needs to be improved. Teaching assistants offer good support and are well deployed. Pupils are encouraged to think for themselves. Above all, however, teachers are enthusiastic and energetic. They teach at a brisk pace using methods that pupils find absorbing and motivating. The work they set is very challenging. The outstanding curriculum the school provides effectively supports teachers in finding the best methods to help pupils learn. The work currently being done in association with Creative Partnerships in Year 1, for example, is an excellent example of pupils learning, through practical activities, to explore for themselves and be more creative and imaginative in what they do. The introduction of French has proved popular with pupils.

Teachers and pupils make a good partnership. Teaching is able to flourish because pupils want to learn. They enjoy coming to school, and their attendance is above average. They throw themselves wholeheartedly into the life of the school, taking full advantage of the excellent range of extra-curricular activities the school provides, especially in sport but also in residential visits. Their attitudes and behaviour are excellent both in and out of lessons. Exclusions are practically unheard of. Children understand and strive to achieve the school's five simple rules known as the 'Britannia Bees', particularly the first: 'Be kind and respectful to everyone'. They make an outstanding contribution to the school and local community, through for example, the Britannia Residents Union and their willingness to take on responsibility as school councillors or playtime buddies. They talk knowledgeably about the benefits of healthy eating and taking regular exercise. They know why the school achieved its Active School Award. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education, leaving school with very high standards in English and mathematics though only average standards in ICT. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They get on well together and look out for each other on the yard

at break and lunchtimes where playground buddies provide a sense of reassurance. They say there is no bullying, and that they feel safe in school. This is not surprising given the exceptionally high quality of pastoral care they receive. Each and every one of them is known personally to the headteacher who is accessible at the school gate at the beginning and end of each school day to provide reassurance and a sense of belonging. All staff have had child protection training and safeguarding procedures comply fully with recent legislation.

The outstanding leadership and management of the school are the key to its success. The headteacher provides the inspiration. Since his appointment, the school has gone from strength to strength and has excellent capacity to improve still further. There is a relentless focus on ensuring pupils achieve the highest possible standards, both academically and personally. Systems for tracking pupils' progress are robust. Targets are set as early as Year 1 and pupils' progress against them is measured at suitable intervals. The test results at the end of each key stage are analysed for each individual pupil to ensure that they achieved their full potential as well as to identify any common areas of underperformance. The issues from the previous inspection have been vigorously and successfully tackled. Parents and pupils are now fully and actively involved in the life of the school, and pupils' knowledge of cultures other than their own is now good and well supported by the Button Box project. The headteacher is assisted by a strong leadership team, who have proved their collective capacity to manage during periods of absence, and governors who are supportive and well informed. The school knows itself well and is quick to identify areas that could be improved still further through effective monitoring systems at all levels. Partnerships with other providers, for example, Fearn Community Sports College, Rossendale Groundwork and the Local Community Network, are excellent.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The Foundation Stage provides an excellent start to pupils' formal education, awakening children's curiosity in wanting to learn, and forming good habits, both in learning and in personal development. Parents were very clear what it is they like about the Reception class. 'My daughter has flourished in intelligence and self-confidence since joining Britannia. It is a joy to see her come home from school and proudly tell of what she has learnt or what fun she has had that day', was a sentiment expressed by many parents and carers. Children join Reception with levels of attainment broadly in line for their age. They make excellent progress and more often than not, leave with standards significantly above national expectations. This is due to inspirational teaching which encourages children to see learning as exciting and enjoyable. Good foundations in developing skills in reading, writing and listening as well as problem-solving are laid down right from the start. The lack of a designated outdoor play area, currently being built, places huge demands on teachers in providing suitable indoor play activities to help pupils learn. However, the outstanding leadership and management of the Foundation Stage ensure that play activities are provided and that children continue to make excellent progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Give an equal focus to raising standards in ICT as in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.

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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?	1
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	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
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	1
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

31 January 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Britannia Community Primary School, Bacup, Lancashire, OL13 9TS

Thank you so much for the very warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school recently. I really appreciated the help you gave me and the interesting and exciting things you told me about your school. It was a pleasure to talk to you both in the warmth of your classrooms and when dodging the worst of the wind on the yard!

You are very lucky to be pupils at this excellent school. So much of what it does is outstanding, it's hard to know where to begin my report. Let's start with the most important people in the school - yourselves. I think you have proved yourselves to be exceptionally polite and pleasant children. You have superb attitudes to your work, enjoy your lessons and are making excellent progress. You told me there was no bullying in school and how well everyone got on together. It is good to see that your attendance is above that of most other schools.

You are doing so well because you have exceptional teachers who work hard to make the lessons interesting and enjoyable. You know how well you are doing and what you have to do to improve. You are set very high targets and your results at the end of Year 6 are much better than in most other schools. Your achievement is excellent.

Of course, none of this would be possible were it not for the excellent way the school is organised. You told me Mr Morley is brilliant and knows every one of you personally. Together with the other teachers and adults he takes excellent care of you.

So well done and keep up the good work. Maintain those exceptionally high standards in English and mathematics but don't forget how important ICT is to your future success. I think you could achieve higher standards in ICT and have asked the school to help you to do this.

Thank you once again for all your help and good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Joe Clark

Lead inspector