

Masefield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105193
Local Authority	Bolton
Inspection number	324179
Inspection dates	21–22 October 2008
Reporting inspector	David Halford

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	326
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Alison Mancini
Headteacher	Mrs Claire Holt
Date of previous school inspection	19 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Masefield Road Little Lever Bolton Lancashire BL3 1NG
Telephone number	01204 333714
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average sized primary school with Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision serves an area of mixed housing in Little Lever, Bolton. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic heritages is well below average and very few are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Both the headteacher and deputy headteacher have been appointed since the last inspection. An after-school club, which is not managed by the governing body, operates on the site. It was not included in this inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory education with a number of good aspects. Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. However, pupils lack a wide-ranging awareness of the lifestyles and beliefs of cultures other than their own. They enjoy learning and their behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. They develop a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and know how to keep safe. This is because the school provides a good level of care, guidance and support. The school is at the heart of its community. Almost all parents are supportive of the school in all aspects of its work. Typically, parents find the school, 'very warm, welcoming and friendly; they would recommend it to anyone'.

From a low starting point in the EYFS, pupils achieve satisfactorily. Recent improvements indicate that by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 standards are rising and show some improvement over the past year. By the end of Year 6, inspection evidence shows that standards are broadly average in English, mathematics and science. Standards in English and mathematics are still not high enough, but the school has made some good improvements lately. In English, achievement in reading is better than in writing because fewer pupils reach above average levels in writing. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are above average because pupils use computers frequently and well, for example, to find things out and present their work.

Pupils' satisfactory achievement reflects the impact of satisfactory teaching over time. Currently, some good teaching exists alongside the satisfactory work, but the better lessons have not had time to make a significant influence on pupils' progress. Good relationships and high expectations of behaviour, and good deployment of teaching assistants are particularly strong features in these lessons. There is a satisfactory curriculum, which has good aspects in the form of a range of enrichment activities.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has quickly established a strong leadership team, which is driving improvement well. It has been responsible for the good teaching of late and the recent improvement in standards. Pupils' satisfactory achievement bears the hallmark of the good leadership and management which produced it. However, there is still more to be done to improve achievement, standards in English and mathematics, and the quality of teaching. There are new systems to assess the pupils' progress in the long term and day-to-day. It is too soon to judge the impact of these positive advances. Good teamwork is established and staff morale is high. Governors are well led and currently engaged on strengthening their monitoring role. The school provides satisfactory value for money, but taking into account the progress which has been made recently, demonstrates a good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Most children enter the Nursery with weak skills in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, and personal and social education. Effective teaching enables children to make satisfactory progress in all the areas of learning. By the end of Reception, children are still below expected levels, but have made some good advances in their weakest areas of learning. This is because good leadership and management, of late, have a positive

effect on children's learning. Relationships are good and promote good levels of enjoyment in children's learning. There is a broad curriculum, which encourages children to want to learn. Planning is detailed and thorough and enables positive, independent learning. Links with parents are good. The information given to them is detailed and many parents are pleased with the information they receive.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise pupils' standards in English, particularly writing, and in mathematics.
- Improve the satisfactory teaching to good or better to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress.
- Widen pupils' awareness of cultures and lifestyles which are different from their own.

A small proportion of 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

There was a decline in standards in recent years at the end of Year 2, but this has been arrested. Inspection evidence shows that standards in Year 2 rose in 2008 to an average level. Similarly, standards at the end of Year 6 have risen steadily in recent years and are now broadly average. This is largely the result of consistently good teaching in Years 5 and 6 and the influence of good leadership and management. Pupils' achievement, including that of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language, is satisfactory overall. Pupils' progress is better in reading than in writing and mathematics. There has been some good improvement in pupils' skills in ICT as a result of good teaching in this subject. For example, in one lesson pupils in Year 6 used a search engine adeptly to generate curriculum vitae for a job application. They worked with confidence and skill and readily shared their work with each other. Standards in ICT are now above average.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' enjoyment of school is clear and contributes strongly to their good behaviour. Their attendance remains satisfactory despite the school's best efforts to improve it. Pupils feel safe in school and know how to keep themselves healthy. They are encouraged to think of others and are engaged in purposeful charitable work. While they develop their basic academic skills satisfactorily, their personal development is advanced well. They learn to be part of the school community, by acting as play leaders and monitors for younger pupils and by working as librarians. The school has a high profile within the local community in links with other schools, churches and other agencies. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall but awareness of other cultures lacks breadth. The positive work undertaken in this caring school contributes much to the pupils' positive relationships and good attitudes between all who work and learn in it. This is reinforced by the overwhelming support of parents.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Owing to the current satisfactory quality of teaching, pupils make adequate progress. However, there are clear signs of improvement with a significant number of good lessons observed during the inspection. This improvement in the quality of teaching is beginning to ensure greater consistency in learning but there has not been time for the full effect to be seen. There are common strengths across all year groups. Relationships, classroom management and high expectations of behaviour are particularly strong in many classrooms. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for the small number of pupils who have English as an additional language. This support enables these pupils to be fully included and make similar progress to their classmates. Interactive whiteboards are used well in most lessons. The satisfactory teaching causes progress at a reasonable rate but does not always ensure that pupils are challenged to do their very best. Some good information from assessment is available but only the best teaching uses it productively to cause rapid advances in pupils' achievement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is broad and balanced and places appropriate emphasis on developing basic skills in English and mathematics. Enrichment through music, the inclusion of French, sport, and visits and visitors across all year groups, make a good contribution to pupils' love of school and their personal and social development. Equally, there is good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and this ensures that the curriculum is accessible to all. The curriculum has a strong community dimension and includes many activities that involve pupils in the local area, but at a wider level pupils' understanding of cultural diversity is not yet developed sufficiently well. Some rigorous planning in basic skills enables pupils to enjoy the curriculum through other subjects, for example in learning tables through dance. Effective use is made of interactive whiteboards in providing pupils with visual aspects to their learning. Good use is made of ICT, which is impacting well on pupils' standards in this subject.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good levels of care and pastoral support for pupils. Staff know their pupils well and provide a supportive and encouraging atmosphere in which pupils know they are safe. This contributes well to pupils' personal development and well-being. Procedures for assessing risk and keeping pupils safe meet current requirements. Parents are confident that pupils are well looked after and value the support the school provides. Pupils have group targets, which are good. They help pupils with their learning, but the use of individual targets, designed to give each pupil a more precise idea of what to do next, is still developing. Overall, marking is used effectively to inform pupils about how to improve their work. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the small number for whom English is an additional language is detailed and thorough and there are good links with outside agencies when they are required.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has assembled an enthusiastic and capable group of senior leaders who have a clear and collective vision for the improvement of the school and high aspirations for pupils. With purposeful support from the local authority there has been a sustained effort to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning. The school has evaluated its performance with credible accuracy. Leaders and managers are now setting challenging targets and beginning to track pupils' progress with precision in the quest to raise standards. It is the initial impact from well devised initiatives, which cause good leadership and management to have had a positive effect on pupils' standards and achievement in a short space of time. Governors are led by a knowledgeable and hard-working chairperson. They support the school well, are beginning to develop their effectiveness in monitoring the school's work and are well placed to extend their capacity to hold the school to account. The school is at the early stages of developing the pupils' understanding of the diverse nature of its wider community.

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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?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which 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 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?	2

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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**

Inspection of Masefield Primary School, Bolton, BL3 1NG

My colleagues and I really enjoyed our recent inspection of your school. Thank you very much for your very warm welcome and for looking after us so well. You were very helpful in lessons when we asked you to explain what you were doing and also very friendly around the school. Particular thanks should go to everyone who spoke with us and who helped us to understand why it is that you enjoy your school so much.

We judge that Masefield Primary School is a satisfactory school, with some good features. The staff care for you well and provide interesting things for you to do in school and out. Teachers are tracking your progress very carefully and we think that should help you to know what to do to improve your work.

We saw quite a lot of good teaching and we have asked the school to bring as many lessons as possible up to the standard of the best ones. We believe that this will assist you to improve the standards of your work in English and mathematics. You can help by continuing to do your best. We have also asked the school to do more to help you learn about people whose lifestyles and beliefs are different from your own.

Thank you once again for all your help when we made our visit to you. We send you all our very best wishes for the future. We do hope that you continue to enjoy learning as much as you do at the moment.