

# Red Lane Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105200
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bolton
<b>Inspection number</b>	324180
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Peter Jones

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	458
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	588
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr P Brown
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss H Underwood
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 November 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Red Lane Bolton Lancashire BL2 5HP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01204 333580
<b>Fax number</b>	01204 333579

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 October 2008
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This large primary school serves a residential area with signs of significant deprivation. It provides childcare for children aged 0 to 3 years in its Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The great majority of the school's pupils are White British, although the school admits a small but growing number of pupils from asylum seeker and refugee families. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high and an above average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has Healthy Schools status and holds a number of other awards including the Artsmark Gold, Investors in People and the Bronze Eco-School Award.

## 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. The recently appointed headteacher has already begun to justify the faith shown in her by the governing body to raise standards and achievement. Her ambition and vision for the school are matched by her organisational abilities and the effectiveness of the strategies she has rapidly implemented to improve the school's work. Following her appointment, standards and achievement began to rise immediately, and continue to improve. The provisional results in 2008 national tests at both key stages indicate that standards and achievement have recovered after the dip they experienced after the last inspection. Current achievement and standards in the EYFS and in the rest of the school are good. Much has already been built upon the school's previous effective work, and as a result the school provides good value for money and has made a good improvement since the last inspection. The school's leadership realise the importance of setting the pupils targets and tracking their progress. At present, although data is collected effectively, it is not accurately analysed, and as a result the targets set are sometimes too high for pupils to achieve. The school's evaluation of its performance is accurate, although it does overestimate the quality of pupils' personal development. In view of its current performance and its clear determination to improve all areas of its effectiveness, the school has good capacity for future improvement.

Pupils are very friendly and welcoming to visitors. The school council takes its role very seriously and has improved the school playgrounds. Prefects and peer mentors provide invaluable support to staff and pupils. Pupils say that they feel safe, and that the decreasing instances of bullying are dealt with effectively by the staff. The school's new behaviour policy has made a strong impact on pupils' attitudes and motivation. Staff use praise well, and effort and thoughtfulness are rewarded and celebrated. This has raised pupils' confidence and self-esteem and has directly improved their achievement. Pupils say, 'Teachers always give you lots of chances to do well.' Parents and carers are very supportive of the school's efforts and a number have commented on the improvement in their children's work. Pupils understand the need to eat healthily and exercise, and the school has improved the quality of its meals. Its Healthy Schools status is a fitting endorsement of its success in this area. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to make a contribution to the community. As standards remain consistently below national averages, pupils' preparation for their future success is satisfactory rather than good.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. This, together with recent positive changes to the curriculum, has led to improvements in pupils' achievement and personal development. The school has completely overhauled its approach to the teaching of literacy and numeracy. This has been a great success with staff and pupils alike. Pace, challenge and high expectations are central to its effectiveness. At times, there can be a little too much pace and challenge in some classes while some staff continue to refine their teaching skills.

The school's pastoral care is good, and its commitment to providing extended care for its pupils is exceptional. It offers Top Tots childcare for the youngest children and before- and after-school provision for older pupils. This means that good quality childcare is available to cover the entire 0 to 11 years age range. The academic guidance pupils receive is only satisfactory. Although they are given learning targets these are not generally well understood. Pupils' work is marked conscientiously and they receive praise, but they are not always given the advice they need to take the next steps in their learning and this impedes their progress.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

The school provides extended childcare for children aged 0 to 3 years through its Top Tots Day Care. This provides good quality childcare. Children's language development benefits as a result, and this is greatly appreciated by parents.

Children enter the school's Nursery class with skills and abilities that are well below those expected nationally. They receive good care, guidance and teaching and make good progress, although by the start of Year 1 most children are still working at below expected levels. Achievement in communication and calculation skills remains particularly low. The school works hard to establish good links with parents, and this helps children to settle quickly into school. The weekly bulletin sent home each Friday keeps parents informed of their children's activities and involves them in children's learning. Children soon learn to follow established routines and begin to understand the importance of behaving well and respecting others. The skilled and sensitive staff are careful to ensure that every child is involved and included in the well planned activities. They build good speaking and listening opportunities into every child's learning experience. The personal and social development of all children is significantly improved as a result, and their confidence as learners is enhanced. The EYFS is well led and managed. The school is aware of the need to improve the quality of its outdoor play areas and to integrate fully into its lesson planning opportunities for all children to play and learn.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils are given the information and advice they need to improve their work further so they can make the best possible progress.
- Ensure that the school's data analysis is accurate enough for it to reliably set and check realistic and challenging targets to raise achievement and standards.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Achievement overall is good. Pupils maintain the good start they make in the EYFS. Following the last inspection, a lack of continuity and consistency in teaching led to a decline in standards generally in Key Stage 1 and in English standards in Key Stage 2. Provisional results in 2008 national tests show this decline has been arrested. The recent improvements in the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning have resulted in a sharp rise in standards across the school. The school's current pupils are working at just below average levels in Year 6, and given their very low starting points, this represents good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress in line with their classmates thanks to the well focused and skilled support they receive.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral and social development, is good. Their enjoyment of school is good and has increased as a result of the improved teaching and learning and curriculum. They are proud of their school, and their behaviour is good. They have increasingly good relationships with staff. Attendance is consistently in line with national averages, and this reflects the school's strenuous efforts to work with parents and pupils to maintain this standard. Pupils make good use of the

opportunities to participate in the wide variety of clubs and activities the school provides for them. Pupils understand how to keep safe and realise the importance of a healthy diet and regular exercise. Pupils develop an understanding of the need to protect the environment and many are involved in the Green Team initiative. The school has recently gained the Bronze Eco-School Award. Pupils learn about different religions and cultures in lessons and assemblies but do not have good awareness or knowledge about living as part of a wider community. Their involvement in initiatives such as the Personal Finance Education Group gives pupils a flavour of the worlds of work and money. As long as the standards pupils attain remain below national averages, their preparation for success in their future lives is only satisfactory.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils say that they enjoy literacy and numeracy lessons far more now that the work is so closely matched to their abilities. Pupils work in small groups with others of equivalent ability, often from other year groups in their key stage. Teaching in these subjects is characterised by good pace and high expectations of work and behaviour. In the best teaching, pupils of all abilities are stretched and work hard; they thrive in the busy, stimulating atmosphere. Good use is made of a range of resources, including computers and electronic whiteboards, to make lessons interesting and varied. Regular review means that pupils are moved on to higher ability groups at the appropriate time to maintain their rapid progress. The work of the highly effective team of teaching assistants has been crucial to the school's success. The strategies are already impacting on standards very positively. In some lessons, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills and their exploratory and independent learning abilities. In these lessons, the pace of teaching is too fast, and the level of challenge is too high. As a result, the progress of these pupils is hindered.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school's good quality curriculum takes increasing account of the needs of its individual pupils. As a result, pupils are better motivated and enjoy their learning. They grow increasingly confident and as a result their aspirations regarding future employment and education are higher. The school has continued to develop the good links between subjects described at the last inspection. More enrichment opportunities have been introduced and the school ensures that a visit and/or a visitor is included in the planning of all its topics and themes. This further adds to pupils' enjoyment, and widens their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. The school has developed good links with local schools and these enhance pupils' abilities and opportunities in art and sport. The school makes good use of its excellent facilities for performing arts and music to create high quality dramatic productions.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school takes really good care of its pupils. Its pastoral support systems are well developed and the school makes effective use of strong partnerships with outside agencies to cater for the needs of individual pupils. Teaching assistants receive training that is used to improve the achievement and personal development of those pupils with learning difficulties and/or

disabilities. Parents greatly appreciate the childcare offered by the Top Tots as well as the breakfast and after-school clubs for older pupils. Staff are positive, caring and encouraging. Pupils say, 'Everyone gets enough attention and help.' They have confidence in staff and the procedures for dealing with their concerns. Arrangements to safeguard pupils and ensure their safety are in place. The guidance given to pupils to improve their work is not always clear and consistent enough. Also, although pupils have individual learning targets, they are not sufficiently aware of the targets' meaning and importance. As a result of these shortcomings, all pupils do not make the best possible progress.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The recently appointed headteacher, well supported by the deputy headteacher, has made a measurable impact on the central aim of raising standards and achievement throughout the school. Teamwork is strong and morale is high, and all staff have a sense of shared responsibility, well illustrated by their enthusiasm for the new initiatives to improve the quality of teaching and learning. A well focused programme of professional development continues to improve staff skills and expertise for the good of all pupils. The school has a good range of strategies for evaluating what it does well and where it needs to improve. The school development plan now has a secure overview on raising standards and achievement. The school sets targets for pupils' achievement, but these are sometimes too challenging, particularly for its older pupils. This is because, although based on reliable information about pupils' performance, the school's interpretation of this data is not always accurate. A strength of the school is its contribution to local community cohesion. For example, the good childcare it provides not only benefits the children, it has enabled many parents to take up life-changing opportunities in employment and further education. The school knows that pupils' understanding of the diversity and culture in this country and beyond is not sufficiently well developed. The school's dedicated governing body is well informed about what happens in school and offers a good level of support and challenge to help it improve 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?	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 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?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
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?	2
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?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	2

<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	3
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?	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	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**

Inspection of Red Lane Primary School, Bolton, BL2 5HP

I am writing to thank you for being friendly and helpful when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our visit very much. I would like to share with you what we found out.

You go to a good school. You have worked very hard in your lessons, particularly over the last six months, and your progress is improving as a result. You told us that you feel safe, and are enjoying school even more now that most of the work you do is matched to your ability. We were pleased with your behaviour and the way you get on with each other and your teachers. Members of your school council have helped to improve the playgrounds and the prefects are helpful to staff and pupils. You like to take part in the growing number of clubs and activities your school provides. We know about your stunning school drama productions and your enthusiasm for sport, art and music.

We would like you to do even better with your work and so we have suggested two things that will help. We feel that the ways in which the school sets your learning targets and checks your progress could be better. Also, we would like your teachers to make sure that you really understand your targets and give you the clear advice you need about how to improve your work. You can help by always trying your best and thinking about how you can improve even more. Everyone at Red Lane wants the best for you and for you to do as well as you can.