

Butterstile Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105297
Local Authority	Bury
Inspection number	324196
Inspection dates	25–26 November 2008
Reporting inspector	John Dunne

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)	375
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 Susan Wallworth
Headteacher	Mrs Katherine O'Doherty
Date of previous school inspection	26 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	School Grove Prestwich Manchester Lancashire M25 9RJ
Telephone number	0161 798 5680
Fax number	0161 798 7351

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Pupils at this large school come from a wide range of social backgrounds, including a significant number from disadvantaged areas. The proportion of pupils coming from minority ethnic groups is slightly higher than average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is higher than the national average as is the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than average. There is Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision in the Nursery and Reception classes. The school has just opened an integrated children's centre which provides day care for the local community. The school has received a number of awards including: Healthy Living Status, Activemark for Sport, Show Racism the Red Card and the School Travel Plan Certificate of Achievement.

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 that is improving. Good leadership and management and good teaching have enabled the school to tackle recent weaknesses in attainment effectively. Pupils' excellent attitudes to learning, exemplary behaviour and an outstandingly rich and interesting curriculum promote high levels of enjoyment in the overwhelming majority of lessons. The happiness of the pupils is a strong feature of the school and is a significant factor contributing to the good progress they make. One parent summed up the views of the vast majority, 'My daughter jumps out of bed eager to go to school.'

After two successful years in 2005 and 2006 when standards were above average, they dipped to below average in 2007. The main reason was the significant number of pupils who joined the school during Years 5 and 6 and had gaps in their learning. Teachers worked hard to identify effective strategies to remedy the legacy of underachievement for these pupils, many of whom had learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Despite their best efforts, this situation impacted negatively on the Key Stage 2 results in 2007. This pattern of instability continued into 2008. However, leaders had developed their ability to identify gaps in learning and put effective measures in place. As a result, standards rose in 2008 to broadly average in English and science. However, they remained below average in mathematics. Progress at the end of the academic year in 2008, as shown by Key Stage 2 test results, was therefore satisfactory overall. Leaders and managers now have good systems for monitoring teaching and learning. They quickly identify pupils at risk of underachieving and put effective measures in place to bring about improvement. Because of this, standards have risen recently, particularly in mathematics, and are now broadly average in most areas but significantly higher than average in writing. This represents good progress given pupils' lower than average starting points. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those at an early stage of learning English, all receive excellent support in this outstandingly caring school and so their progress is also good.

The overwhelming majority of teaching is at least good and many lessons are outstanding. This is because these lessons include tasks which are not only enjoyable for pupils, but are effectively planned so that learners of all abilities are challenged. In a minority of lessons activities do not engage pupils well and the level of challenge is less well focused. In these lessons the pace slows and pupils' progress is not as good.

The extensive and varied enrichment activities provided are highly appreciated by pupils and parents and participation rates are very high. These and the many opportunities for pupils to take on positions of responsibility contribute significantly to their outstanding personal development. The quality of provision and standards in music, in the curriculum and beyond, are outstanding. In an after-school choir performance, pupils performed a technically difficult song accurately and beautifully.

The effectiveness of the school's communication with parents is reflected by one parent who wrote, 'The school encourages the children and involves the parents in everything they do.' The overwhelming majority of the parents hold the school in high regard.

The effective leadership and vision from the headteacher, deputy headteacher and newly appointed Early Years Foundation Stage manager are at the heart of recent improvements and hence the school has a good capacity to improve further. These senior leaders are beginning to involve more middle leaders in the monitoring of teaching and learning, but the school recognises that this is at an early stage and needs developing further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

In the EYFS setting, which houses Nursery and Reception children together, the provision for learning and development is securely good and improving. The provision for welfare is outstanding. Most children start Nursery with skills below those typical for their age, notably in language and social skills. A significant minority start with little or no understanding of English. Because of the good quality of teaching and high levels of care, all children make good progress in all areas, but notably in their personal, social and emotional development and in their development of communication, language and literacy. By the end of their time in Reception, children are working within the standards expected nationally for children of this age. The staff are very caring and excellent relationships between the adults and children enable children to develop very positive attitudes and excellent behaviour.

Children are helped to understand their feelings, for example when they discuss the 'Billy the Bully' picture book. Adults work well as a team to assess children's progress and plan tasks effectively to enable children to progress to the next stages of learning.

Leadership and management are good and improving. Effective use is made of a wide range of appropriate outside agencies and parents are kept well informed about children's learning. The newly appointed knowledgeable and highly experienced coordinator has achieved a great deal in a short time and is very clear about how to improve things further, for example by involving parents even more in their children's development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the contribution of middle leaders' monitoring and evaluation in self-review and improvement planning.
- Improve teaching so that it is all at least good or better, particularly in relation to pace and the level of challenge provided.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well in relation to their starting points. Their progress is good in the EYFS and this continues in Years 1 to 6.

By the end of the Key Stage 1 in 2008, pupils' standards were broadly average and showed an improvement on 2007 figures. Since they started with attainment lower than national expectations, this represents good progress given their starting points.

Over the last year, in Key Stage 2, there have been improvements in teaching and learning, and in the use of more challenging targets. The effectiveness of senior leaders in identifying underachievement and quickly putting in place effective measures to deal with it has also improved. These improvements, and the highly effective support given to those who need it, have ensured that standards have risen and are now above average in reading, well above average in writing and average in mathematics and science. Given that when the current Year 6 cohort left Key Stage 1 their attainment was below average, this represents good progress. Good progress was also seen in the overwhelming majority of lessons throughout the school during the inspection. Standards in music are high.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, vulnerable pupils and those at an early stage of learning English all achieve well due to the high level of effective support they receive. The achievements of the increasing numbers of minority ethnic pupils are also good

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils learn to understand their feelings and those of others and acquire very positive attitudes to learning. A striking feature is the high level of enjoyment shown in lessons and around the school. Behaviour is exemplary and pupils are thoughtful and show great sensitivity towards the needs of others. They are very eager to take responsibility and proud to tell visitors about their school. The positive ethos and harmonious relationships in the school community help pupils to make good progress. Pupils' spiritual development is good. Their moral and social development is outstanding as is their understanding of other cultures. Relationships are excellent and pupils from different backgrounds work and play well together. Attendance is average but the school does all it can to reduce absence, for example in working with parents to reduce the number of families taking extended visits in term time.

Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles and show an excellent understanding of the importance of regular exercise. Good participation in numerous school clubs helps to reinforce this. Pupils make excellent progress in developing the personal qualities needed to live effectively in a diverse community. They learn to cooperate, take decisions and show initiative, for example when they act as prefects. Good progress in the key skills of numeracy and particularly literacy prepares pupils well for their future economic well-being. Pupils show a high level of awareness of the need for safety and express how safe they feel in school. Parents are overwhelmingly appreciative of the way school develops pupils' self-confidence and love of school. One parent said, 'My child loves school, has made many friends and we are involved in her learning, which is so much fun.'

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The majority of lessons are good or better and much outstanding teaching was seen. There are small pockets of less effective teaching where the pace is slower, the tasks less focused and so pupils' concentration drifts. In the good and outstanding lessons there was considerable enjoyment and at times excitement due to the interesting learning activities which captured pupils' interests. In one outstanding English lesson, pupils were on the edge of their seats eagerly awaiting their chance to begin to plan their role play, debating the topic of corporal punishment. Teachers' planning of lessons is a strength, particularly in the way they provide different ability groups with diverse tasks so that every pupil is challenged. As result, pupils of all abilities achieve well. Teaching assistants and other adults provide well planned and effective additional support for those who need it. Pupils appreciate the very good marking and respond positively to the high quality guidance they are given which indicates how they can improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is a real strength of the school. The provision for music is outstanding. All pupils in Key Stage 2 learn to play an instrument and the performances of the choir demonstrate very high standards. Very good provision for physical education is enhanced through the inclusion of areas such as karate and dance. The breadth and understanding of pupils' experiences are widened because the teaching of different subjects is linked together. For example, in a project combining design and technology and religious education, after experiencing an online tour of what Islamic prayer in mosques was like, pupils' understanding of structures was developed by making mosques from different materials. The development of pupils' understanding through practical experience is a highly positive feature of the curriculum, for example when pupils carried out complex experiments in science to test out their hypotheses of which materials might be the best to stop ice melting.

Even though the range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities is extensive, some activities are so popular that pupils have to go on to a rota to participate.

The wide range of stimulating opportunities and the way they are adapted to match the needs of all learners are significant factors as to why pupils enjoy their learning so much and achieve well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides outstanding care, guidance and support. Highly committed staff enable all pupils to enjoy learning and achieve well. Very effective pastoral care is provided in a safe environment that promotes pupils' health and well-being. Pupils report that they feel very safe and very well cared for. This is evident in their happy disposition and smiling faces. Procedures for safeguarding pupils conform to statutory requirements. The school does all it can to reduce absence, and overall attendance improved last year to a fraction below the national average. There is outstanding academic support and guidance. Pupils are kept informed about how well they are doing and how they could achieve even more. Comprehensive information on pupils' achievements and needs is used to great effect in helping them to make good progress. Any pupils at risk of falling behind are identified early and robust measures put in place to keep them on track to achieve their challenging targets. There are excellent links with a wide range of agencies to further enhance the support for many pupils with particular needs which contributes effectively to their all round development. Links with parents are outstanding and this is reflected in the high level of confidence they have in the care and support provided. One parent said, 'She enjoys all aspects of her school day and is smiling from the time she goes 'til coming home.'

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The inclusion of all pupils is at the heart of the vision that school leaders have. School leadership has a strong sense of purpose and a passion to secure the achievement and well-being of all pupils. This is exemplified in the tenacity and commitment of the headteacher, who provides a clear lead. She has recently built a strong

team, successfully blending a range of talent and experience to create a common sense of purpose. The headteacher and her deputy work particularly well together in monitoring the standards and quality of teaching and learning and this is one of the main reasons why standards are rising.

Governors are kept well informed and play their part effectively in holding the school to account for the standards pupils reach and for their personal development. Although the school has a good grasp of its strengths and weaknesses, middle leaders do not currently contribute fully to self-review and improvement planning. The school sets challenging targets and these are used well to raise achievement and remove barriers to progress. The school makes an outstanding contribution to community cohesion. There are excellent links with parents, who strongly endorse the school's effectiveness in using outside agencies. Diversity is valued and equality of opportunity is promoted outstandingly well. Resources are used well and, taking account of the costs and outcomes achieved, the school provides good value for money.

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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 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?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

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

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	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Inspection of Butterstile Primary School, Prestwich Manchester, M25 9RJ

I am writing on behalf of the inspectors who inspected your school recently. We greatly enjoyed meeting you. Thank you for the extremely warm welcome you gave us.

We have judged that your school is good and improving. We found that it does some things outstandingly well; for example, the way it looks after you and cares for you. Your teachers also make your lessons enjoyable and provide a really wide range of activities for you outside lessons. Your teachers are working hard to improve the way you learn. You are extremely well behaved, polite and treat each other and adults with respect.

We have asked the staff to think about how all lessons can be as successful as the best ones we saw. We have also suggested that the teachers in charge of subjects could take a more active role in checking how well you are all doing. You can also help by doing your best to attend every day.

All the best for the future!