

Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119172
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	326959
Inspection dates	6–7 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Sheila Mawer

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	261
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	Ralph Latham
Headteacher	Mr Jo Hale
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Rutland Street Colne Lancashire BB8 0QJ
Telephone number	01282 863225
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average sized primary school, close to the centre of Colne. It serves an area of considerable social and economic disadvantage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is significantly higher than the national average. The vast majority of pupils are White British. Over a quarter of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, which is well above average. In Key Stage 1, there is a designated base for nine pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, known as the Rainbow Class. There are 32 children of Reception age in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The school holds several awards including Artsmark Bronze, Quality Award for Nurture Groups and Activemark.

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 performance is excellent across nearly all aspects of provision. The exemplary leadership of the headteacher is pivotal to its success. He has the complete confidence of parents, staff and governors in his unrelenting drive to provide the best possible education for every pupil. Very effective teamwork from senior managers and the expertise of subject leaders enable pupils to make rapid gains in their learning. Rich displays around the school and a remodelled building give pupils a stimulating environment in which to flourish. Governors are well informed and support the school fully. They ensure it gives excellent value for money, particularly in maintaining generous staffing levels for the most vulnerable pupils, at a time of falling rolls.

Pupils' well-being and the opportunity for all to succeed are central to the work of the school. Adults care deeply for their pupils and support them in every way possible. This is strongly endorsed by parents who rightly believe their children receive excellent care and support. One commented, 'From every background children are nurtured and cared for, enabling them to be happy and eager to learn.' The school is a strong and harmonious community. Very good partnerships with parents, other schools, the local community and other organisations contribute successfully to good community cohesion. Pupils are less aware of the diverse cultures within the United Kingdom and the wider world.

All pupils achieve highly from a starting point that is much lower than usually seen. They make excellent progress and by Year 6 reach standards that are above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards by the end of Year 2 are broadly average. The school has been particularly successful in increasing the number of pupils who reach above expected levels in the national tests by Year 2 and Year 6. Significant steps have been taken to improve writing across the school and particularly the quality of boy's writing, and this work has been successful.

Outstanding teaching and a vibrant curriculum contribute strongly to pupils' excellent personal development and their rapid progress. A combination of skilled teaching and exemplary relationships makes the learning highly enjoyable and productive. Pupils receive good guidance on how to improve their performance and this contributes strongly to their progress. The excellent curriculum both inside and outside of lessons encourages pupils to think imaginatively and independently. Attendance, although satisfactory, is continuing to improve. Robust measures are used to target families who take their children away during term time. Provision for personal, social, health and emotional development is a strength of the curriculum. It ensures that pupils' enjoyment of school, their behaviour and awareness of how to stay safe are outstanding, and that they have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles. The responsibilities pupils are given in school prepare them very well for life ahead.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Provision in the EYFS is outstanding. It is highly effective in meeting the needs of the children and enables them to make exceptionally good progress. Detailed knowledge and robust assessments of every child help adults to plan a wide variety of exciting learning experiences. The outstanding curriculum provides excellent opportunities for children to play, explore and be significantly challenged in their learning. The indoor and outdoor spaces are used very effectively. The children show exceptionally high levels of independence, curiosity, imagination

and concentration in response to this excellent provision. The Reception teacher leads the EYFS staff very effectively. She ensures that they are all involved in the assessment of children's achievements and in planning for their development. Teamwork is strong. All staff have high aspirations for the children and they support the learning exceptionally well. Their on-going professional development, for example, in the communication, language and literacy programme, prepares staff well for the work they do and leads to further improvement in provision.

When children enter Reception, the majority have skills that are significantly below what is typical for their age. Only a minority of them reach the goals expected of five-year-olds. However, in this safe and caring atmosphere they make significant gains in their learning in relation to their starting points and capabilities. They work harmoniously with each other, are very well behaved and highly enthusiastic about their learning and achievements.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase pupils' knowledge and understanding of the diverse range of communities within the United Kingdom and the wider world.
- Raise further the level of attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Standards have improved significantly across the school since the last inspection. Challenging targets are met. Pupils make excellent progress from their very low starting points in Reception. Pupils by the end of Year 2 are reaching broadly average standards. The results of the school's assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2008 were just below average in reading and mathematics. Writing was broadly average at both the expected and higher levels.

By the end of Year 6, pupils reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science. In 2007, results in the national tests at Year 6 were above average in English and science and significantly above average in mathematics. An above average proportion of pupils also reached the higher levels in these three subjects. Provisional test results for 2008 in Year 6 indicate that this positive trend is being sustained, although fewer pupils reached the higher levels because of year group differences. The high number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those in the Rainbow Class achieve as well as their peers. This is because their needs are quickly identified and highly skilled staff provide effective support and 'catch up' programmes.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is outstanding and their spiritual, moral, and social development is excellent overall. Pupils form outstanding relationships with each other and have great respect for adults. They are proud of their school and enjoy coming because lessons are fun. Attendance is satisfactory and improving due to the school's continuing efforts. The pupils themselves are a great strength of the school. They are polite and helpful and play together extremely well. They say they feel totally safe in school. Behaviour both in and out of lessons is outstanding. Bullying is rare and school rules are seen as fair. Pupils know how to eat healthily and enjoy many opportunities to exercise. The school council is clear in its purpose of making the school a better place and its members are rightly proud of improvements they have made in the

playground. Pupils display mature attitudes towards the responsibilities they are given in school, such as organising Sports Relief Day. Cultural development is good. There is active involvement with the local community and pupils raise funds for different charities. Their understanding of Britain and the wider world as a diverse society is less well developed. High achievement and excellent social skills ensure that pupils are very well prepared for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Many lessons seen during the inspection were outstanding and none were less than good. This exceptional quality teaching ensures that pupils make excellent progress. Lessons move on at a purposeful pace and challenging work is accurately tailored to individual needs. Very supportive relationships make a significant contribution to pupils' achievement and attitudes, helping them to aim high. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities thrive in this supportive environment. The Rainbow Class is a haven of security for pupils with emotional difficulties. Their challenging behaviour is managed extremely well and is no longer a barrier to their learning.

An example of first-rate learning was seen in lessons where pupils in the upper juniors classes were studying the witches' scene from Macbeth. Through expert questioning from the teacher and a lively debate, pupils from one class interpreted the scene extremely well. Another class skilfully performed the scene and then evaluated their performance. There was a lot of fun in both lessons and significant gains in learning. Another successful feature of the teaching is the effective use of visits and visitors. High quality discussion, writing, artwork and science resulted from a visit of several owls to Year 2. It also extended their breadth of experience and the involvement of pupils in their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The outstanding curriculum has been successfully designed to enable pupils to make excellent progress. It also meets their personal needs and interests. The school works very well with other organisations to promote pupils' understanding of health and safety. It is currently working towards the Healthy Schools award. There is very good provision for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). Throughout the school, these skills are promoted successfully across the curriculum. Specialist teachers are employed for music and are successful in keeping standards and interest levels high. The curriculum is enriched through an excellent variety of visits and visitors to the school. The residential visit in Year 5 to the outdoor pursuits centre offers children a range of physical challenges and problem solving activities. Very good opportunities are available for pupils across the school to engage in an extensive range of out of school activities. These include football, netball, multi-skills, cheer leading, science and a school choir.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support of all pupils are outstanding. As a result, pupils achieve very well and are fully included into all aspects of school life. Pastoral care is of exceptionally high quality. Academic guidance is good. Procedures for tracking pupils' progress are effective and

this leads to the correct support to address any underachievement. Group targets help pupils to work hard to reach the next steps in their learning. Guidance in writing is excellent. Through exceptionally helpful marking and self-assessment, pupils clearly know how to improve.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified early and are supported particularly well. Parents and carers are very appreciative of this. The school works exceptionally well with other organisations to provide specialist support. Parents attend workshops and help with homework. The school appreciates this, as it impacts positively on the learning. Provision in the Rainbow Class is exemplary in meeting the needs of vulnerable children. Safeguarding meets government requirements.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. At the forefront of the school's success is the highly effective leadership of the headteacher. With the support of an excellent senior management team, he has created a school where pupils and staff flourish. In particular, senior managers have raised the self-esteem and standards reached by all pupils, through better teaching, monitoring and assessment. In 2005 only about 5% of pupils by Year 6 reached the higher levels, while recently this has been closer to 40%. The school makes extremely good use of challenging targets to raise standards further. Self-evaluation is largely accurate, although the school is too modest in judging its overall performance. The senior management team has an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses through their rigorous monitoring. School developments are underpinned with staff training, so improvements can quickly become embedded into practice. The governing body is increasingly successful in holding the school to account. Through their good governance they provide clear direction for the work of the school. Together with senior managers they have made excellent improvements since the last inspection. With this proven track record, the school has an outstanding capacity to improve further.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

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	2
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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

7 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Park Primary School, Lancashire, BB8 0QJ

On behalf of the inspectors, I would like to thank you all for your help when we inspected your school. We enjoyed our inspection very much indeed. I am writing to let you know what we found out. I know you will all be very proud to learn that you go to an outstanding school. Here are some of the many things that are excellent.

Your personal development is excellent and you are all a great strength of the school. This means that your behaviour and your attitudes to work and keeping safe are all first-rate. You also have a good understanding of how to stay healthy. Those of you who do extra jobs in the school, like the school council, are doing a great job in helping to keep the school running smoothly and being responsible citizens.

You told me how much you like your teachers and the rest of the staff. They all care for you extremely well. Teaching is excellent and you are all making outstanding progress. When you leave Year 6, standards are above average. You all said how much you enjoy your lessons because the teachers make the learning interesting. I saw how much fun you had with the witches' scene from Macbeth, when I visited the upper juniors. You also enjoy the visits and visitors that make up the rich curriculum. Those in Year 2 will remember the visit from the owls for a long time to come. You did some really good writing. Children in Reception are doing really well. It was lovely to see you all working so hard on your activities and having a lot of fun making candles for Divali.

Your school is outstanding because the headteacher, staff and the governors have worked together and succeeded in giving you the best possible education. Even though your school is very successful they are keen to make it even better. Attendance is satisfactory and improving, but it isn't good enough yet. I hope you will all try to attend school promptly and regularly, and I have asked the school to continue to support you with this so that attendance levels can rise more quickly. Your community in school is very strong and you do lots of things in the local area. I have suggested that the school provides you with more opportunities to find out about different cultures in the United Kingdom and ways of life in the wider world. I am sure you will all enjoy learning about different communities.

My best wishes to you all for your continued success!

Yours sincerely

Sheila Mawer

Lead inspector