

Bradley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119175
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	326961
Inspection dates	14–15 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Kathleen McArthur

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)	373
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	Ms Susan Nike
Headteacher	Mr Richard O'Sullivan
Date of previous school inspection	1 January 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Dover Street Nelson Lancashire BB9 7RF
Telephone number	01282 615772
Fax number	01282 699924

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Bradley Primary School is larger than the average primary school. It serves an area affected by considerable social and economic deprivation. Almost all the pupils are of Pakistani heritage and the great majority are at an early stage of learning English in addition to their home language when they start school. The proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal is above the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is about the same as that found nationally.

The school holds the Sports Activemark, Healthy School status, the National Football Charter Standard and local authority awards for health and inclusive practice.

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 gives good value for money. Pupils work and play harmoniously together because they enjoy school and value their education. Parents are supportive and say they are pleased with the school. The headteacher provides astute leadership and successfully promotes the school's stated aim to provide 'the best possible future life opportunities for all our children'. Pupils are happy and healthy and acquire the skills that equip them suitably for their academic and economic future.

Children start school with skills that are well below those typical for their age especially in their knowledge and use of English. Achievement is good. Pupils make good progress through the school because teaching and learning are good overall. Standards have gradually risen since the previous inspection, particularly in science. By the time they leave, the majority of pupils reach broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science, although standards in mathematics have been lower than in English and science. Actions taken saw an improvement in the 2008 provisional mathematics results, but few pupils reached the higher levels. Teaching is good overall, but varies in quality. Interesting, well planned learning activities meet the needs of most pupils, but sometimes more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those at an early stage of learning English receive well-targeted and skilled support and make brisk progress.

Personal development is good. Comments such as, 'It's good here' and 'We like it here,' sum up pupils' attitudes. They behave well because they feel safe and secure and enjoy school. The school takes every opportunity to promote health and fitness. Consequently, pupils know fruit and vegetables are good for their health and the playground is always busy with sports and games activities. Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities at school, such as representing their classmates on the school council, and are caring and helpful towards others.

The school has been at the hub of innovative partnerships to create an exciting and varied curriculum that is broad and balanced. Pupils say they enjoy all the extra activities at school; the residential visit was greatly enjoyed by all who took part. Parents feel their children are well cared for at school. Academic progress is monitored rigorously and support directed where it is most needed.

Good leadership has ensured that issues from the previous inspection have been tackled effectively. Standards in science have risen, staff use assessment information well to set pupils challenging targets, and the curriculum is good. The leadership team gives the school good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. 'Children have a positive start to school life; this is where it all begins' is a typical parental comment. Personal development, care and welfare are outstanding. Parents speak highly of the welcoming atmosphere and thorough induction procedures that help their children settle quickly at school. A strong focus on speaking and listening skills and social skills ensures they make rapid progress in language acquisition.

Outstanding teaching and the vibrant, stimulating learning environment result in the majority of children making excellent progress. When they enter Year 1, attainment is close to that

expected for their age. Children learn through first-hand experiences. There is an excellent balance between teacher-led and child selected activities well matched to the children's needs. Extra adult support is provided for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and to help those in the early stages of learning English.

Excellent, enthusiastic and knowledgeable leadership and the dedicated staff team have improved provision and assessment procedures to track children's progress. One notable improvement is the excellently appointed all weather outdoor area where children explore and investigate using resources skilfully chosen to extend their learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve progress for more able pupils in mathematics at Key Stage 2.
- Raise the quality of teaching to ensure pupils are taught consistently well.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Overall, progress is good and pupils reach broadly average standards by the time they leave the school. However, progress reflects the quality of teaching so that where teaching is good or better, pupils progress more rapidly. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English make good progress because they are well supported in their work.

Key Stage 1 pupils build on the rapid start they made in Reception and progress well, although their limited language skills mean that standards remain below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1. Provisional results for Key Stage 2 in 2008 show pupils reached broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science. However, standards in mathematics, where few pupils reach the higher level, lag behind those in English and science. Pupils currently in Year 6 are working in line with their targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Behaviour is at least good and often excellent, when pupils are following instructions which contributes to their good progress. They move around school carefully and behave sensibly when playing outside. They are especially polite to adults, open doors and help to tidy up classrooms. However, when working independently, pupils show limited initiative and tend to wait for instructions before moving on. Pupils feel safe at school and could not remember any incidence of bullying. One said, 'In school, I don't have to worry about anything'. They respond well to advice on healthy lifestyles. They are enthusiastic about sport, especially cricket, and understand why the school provides healthy fruit snacks. Considerable efforts have raised attendance to satisfactory levels but a small number fail to attend regularly, which hinders their progress.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils know different feelings can be expressed through poetry, song and art. They are very interested in the culture of their home area and show a developing interest in other cultures. They are keen to undertake charity work and clearly understand the importance of being kind to one another, for example when Year 6 pupils act as 'buddies' to Reception children. Good personal skills and suitable learning skills prepare them satisfactorily for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching areas are bright, stimulating and full of interest which promotes pupils' learning, especially for those learning English as a second language. The quality of teaching, although good overall, varies and is strongest in the older classes. In the best lessons pupils know what they are going to learn; lessons move along at a good pace; adults display good subject knowledge; activities match pupils' needs; and good use is made of resources. Consequently, pupils behave well, are actively involved in learning and make good progress. In other lessons, pupils spend too long listening to the teacher, so that not enough time is left for the pupils to carry out their activities and progress slows. Planning is based on assessment information and work nearly always matches pupils' abilities. However, in some classes, all pupils are given the same work and the more able are not suitably challenged. Pupils have some opportunities to assess their own learning, for example 'thumbs up' shows they have understood, but it is not always clear how teachers then put support in place to help those pupils who had found the lesson difficult. Skilled teaching assistants provide valuable support for pupils with additional needs.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

An exciting and innovative curriculum is being developed based on work with the Creative Partnerships initiative. Several subjects are taught through topic work so pupils find learning interesting and stimulating. There is a strong focus on using key skills in literacy and numeracy through practical 'hands on' activities. Provision for pupils with additional learning and language needs is well planned, with good support from teaching assistants. The good programme for personal and social development helps pupils reflect on their feelings and emotions so they behave well. There is a wide and varied range of additional activities which enrich the pupils' experiences, including popular after-school clubs, educational visits and visitors to the school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Staff are dedicated to providing good quality care for all pupils. They know their pupils well and an atmosphere of mutual respect pervades the school, promoting effective learning and personal development. Procedures are reviewed with regard to cultural beliefs, for example dress codes. Robust safeguarding and child protection arrangements ensure that all pupils are kept safe in school. Risk assessments, such as those for the many school trips, are securely in place.

Academic guidance is good. Tracking systems are rigorously implemented and the data analysed to set targets for pupils in writing and mathematics so that all pupils know what they need to do next in order to improve their learning. Occasionally some targets are not written in simple enough language for pupils to understand.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school's self-evaluation procedures are good and give the leadership and management a clear picture of strengths and areas for development, reflected in the current plans for professional development. The headteacher sets a clear direction for improvement, and is well supported by the skilled deputy headteacher, senior managers and governors. Newly appointed subject managers are keen and knowledgeable but have not been in post long enough to make a real impact on standards. Governance is good. The governing body is fully representative of the community and contributes useful local knowledge and promotes valuable links. Community cohesion is promoted well; the school is very much at the centre of the neighbourhood and values its good relationships with parents and local schools. The school effectively includes all pupils in the range of activities and ensures external support agencies are involved to benefit pupils' learning and well-being.

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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?	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?	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?	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?	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

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?	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**

16 October 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Bradley Primary School, Lancashire, BB9 7RF

The inspectors would like to say a very big thank you for welcoming us to Bradley School. You were all very polite and friendly and everywhere we went we saw smiling faces which told us how much you enjoy school.

We enjoyed working at your school and thought you would like to know what we found out.

Bradley is a good school with good teachers who plan interesting lessons and activities, set you targets to aim for and help you improve your work. You get an excellent start in the Reception classes and we could tell the little ones really love learning outside. You make good progress through the school and reach standards that are about the same as most children of your age.

You certainly know how to be healthy and you told us you are really pleased with the improvements to the playground where you can do different sports or sit and play quiet games. We know you like going on lots of trips and staying for after-school clubs. We were very impressed by your good behaviour and by the way you care for each other. Year 6 do a good job as 'buddies', looking after the Reception children at dinnertimes. Your parents agree that the staff care for you well and make sure you are safe.

You have a good headteacher, school leaders and governors who work hard to raise standards and make Bradley School even better. We have asked them to help more of you reach higher levels in mathematics and to make sure that you are always taught well. We are sure you will want to help them help by working hard and enjoying school.

We send you our best wishes.

Kathleen McArthur

Lead inspector