

Pool House Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119332
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	339408
Inspection dates	24–25 September 2009
Reporting inspector	David Law

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	102
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Christine Fell
Headteacher	Mrs J Cole
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They visited seven lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, looked at samples of pupils' books and the assessments teachers had made. The inspectors also looked at the school improvement plan and information from the school's self-evaluation. Inspectors received 24 parental questionnaires and spoke with parents in the playground. They looked at 43 questionnaires completed by pupils and 11 by staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- current evidence of pupils' achievement and in particular that of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the quality of teaching in enabling pupils to learn and make progress
- the contribution of leadership to school improvement.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average size school but the number on roll has recently risen. There are now 20 children in the Reception class but cohorts in Key Stage 2 are smaller with only 12 pupils in Year 6. One third of pupils are eligible for a free school meal. This is well above the national average as is the number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. A nurture class supports pupils with emotional and behavioural needs. More pupils than average join or leave the school part-way through their primary years.

Childcare provision, not managed by the governing body, occupies accommodation at the school and is subject to a separate inspection.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Pool House is a good school. The warm and friendly ethos enables pupils to feel valued and they are proud of their achievements. Provision for care, guidance and support is outstanding and pupils are treated with considerable respect. They are fully confident of being listened to and feel extremely safe in school at all times. Parents and carers strongly agree with this and feel well informed.

A committed and highly motivated team of staff know pupils well as individuals. They work effectively to remove barriers to learning and, as a result, all pupils make good progress. Good leadership at all levels provides clear direction and promotes a strong desire for each pupil to do well. Effective links with a wide range of partners support pupils' learning and promote their well-being. Pupils enjoy what they do and work hard to become better. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities have good support, particularly where emotional and behavioural difficulties get in the way of their learning. The nurture group is highly effective in supporting the most vulnerable. Small groups of more-able pupils receive well organised tuition that challenges them and helps them make good progress.

Good teaching ensures good learning, but pupils' skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening are not applied consistently to other areas of the curriculum to help raise attainment in English. The school has effectively addressed all the issues from the previous inspection and shows a good capacity to improve. School leaders involve everyone in purposeful self-evaluation. Weaknesses are identified, prompt action is taken and the impact on pupils is monitored carefully. For example, partly because of absences to key staff, attainment at the end of Year 6 fell in 2007. Action taken to overcome this has been effective and results have improved strongly.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attainment in English by creating more opportunities for speaking and listening across the curriculum and developing pupils' ability to use and apply their reading and writing skills.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils are eager to do well and show a good enjoyment of learning. They apply themselves with diligence and behaviour is good. Although attainment at the end of Year 6 is average, school data, and work in pupils' books, shows they make better than expected progress given their often low starting points. In the classroom, inspectors saw

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that all groups make good progress. Pupils are interested in what they are learning and acquire knowledge and understanding at a brisk rate. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because support is well organised and matched to their individual needs. The extent to which pupils develop the skills for future economic well-being is satisfactory, but many find difficulty in applying reading, writing and speaking and listening skills. Attendance is average, having improved in recent years. Pupils have a good knowledge of how to live a healthy life, with an excellent awareness of the foods that are good for them. They are keen to take responsibility within the school community. Pupils' understanding of the needs of others is well promoted and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Throughout the school, good teaching helps pupils to make good progress because positive relationships engage them and lessons are well organised. A loyal and effective team of teaching assistants is adept at understanding pupils' needs and effective in supporting learning at the right moment. Assessment is used well to plan for learning

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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and the marking of books clearly shows pupils how to improve. A good curriculum makes a strong contribution to pupils' development and well-being. It is enriched by a wide range of activities often provided through partnership, for example, specialist sports coaching in which pupils take part with enthusiasm. Pupils are not provided with enough planned opportunities to use their key literacy skills. The school has above average pupil mobility and meets this challenge through excellent induction, effective links with external agencies and well-targeted support for the more vulnerable. A number of pupils present challenging behaviour, but staff are highly skilled at managing this so the negative impact on learning is reduced. This is because they know the pupils well and involve parents and carers effectively. Steps to encourage regular attendance and reduce persistent absence have paid off and the school has met its targets.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers have high expectations and a strong drive for continuing success. This powerful commitment to all pupils is shared by every member of the school community. Performance is tracked carefully and information used to implement clear plans and policies for improvement. Particular attention is paid to the quality of teaching and lessons are monitored regularly. The progress of all groups is checked and provision astutely adjusted where it is needed. For example, provision for pupils in Year 6 last year was tailored well to their personal needs. All pupils made good progress to reach their targets and attainment rose. The headteacher has a clear view of the quality of learning expected and secures the enthusiasm of all staff. The assistant headteacher provides strong support and all teachers readily take on responsibility in leading areas of the curriculum. The governing body provides good support and challenges the school to improve through its clear strategic view. The school knows its pupils well and effectively tackles discrimination so every pupil has equal opportunity to achieve. Safeguarding procedures are good and the curriculum is organised well so pupils have a strong understanding of how to keep safe. Although the training provided in child protection is good, the school is seeking to make induction procedures for new staff even better. The school promotes community cohesion well. All pupils work and play harmoniously together and have a strong understanding of the school as a community. There are effective strategies to engage the immediate community and that further afield.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle well and make good progress. They have good relationships with adults, show lively interest in what they do and select activities for themselves with increasing independence. Learning is well planned to meet children's needs and good use is made of the outdoor provision. The environment is welcoming and adults are skilful at promoting children's curiosity. Provision for their welfare and opportunities for social and emotional development are outstanding. For example, children were highly enthusiastic about the 6-week-old baby that visited them recently. They feel very safe and approach adults with confidence. All adults know the children well and make accurate assessments of their needs in order to plan learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage team works very well together and good leadership and management ensures a clear focus on promoting development and well-being. Links with parents and carers are good and robust arrangements are in place to keep children safe.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

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Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are highly supportive of the school and appreciate the care and guidance given to their children. They are kept well informed about their children's progress and well-being. They are very happy with their child's experience and feel the school is well led and managed. Inspectors agree with these views. One parent said, 'My child is doing exceptionally well and I can speak to the teacher whenever I want to.' Another commented, 'My child talks about her good times at school constantly.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Pool House Community Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received 24 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 102 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	26	87	4	13	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	24	86	4	14	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	26	84	5	16	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	83	5	17	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	23	85	4	15	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	22	85	4	15	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	85	4	15	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	21	75	5	18	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	85	3	11	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	85	4	15	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	82	4	14	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	26	90	3	10	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	18	82	4	18	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



I enjoyed my visit to your school and you made me feel very welcome. Thank you for contributing to the inspection by being eager to talk to me and tell me things.

Your school is providing you with a good education. You told me that you feel entirely safe in school. I was impressed by your good behaviour. You are all very proud of your achievements and enjoy learning. Your attendance has improved and is now satisfactory, so well done! You show an excellent understanding of the importance of healthy eating. In lessons you always try your best. This is helping you to make good progress in your learning. The teachers and other adults take excellent care of you and the teaching and curriculum is good. You have many exciting things to do and you visit interesting places – I saw the photographs of your visit to the Outdoor Centre in the Lake District and it looked very exciting. I was pleased to see you know your personal targets. Your school is well led and managed and all the adults are keen for you to do well.

I have asked the school to find more ways for you to practise speaking, listening, reading and writing. I hope you will play your part in helping to achieve the improvements. You can do this by continuing to work hard and by trying to reach the targets your teachers set for you.

Best wishes for the future.

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