

Button Lane Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131938
Local Authority	Manchester
Inspection number	341255
Inspection dates	19–20 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Stephen Wall

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	316
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Bown
Headteacher	Mrs Michelle Joyce
Date of previous school inspection	0 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation, policies, pupils' books, assessment information, pupil and staff questionnaires and 43 questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

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

- the achievement and progress of pupils in Key Stage 2
- the effectiveness and impact of all leadership and management
- the quality and impact of teaching, especially in Key Stage 2.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average primary school in which just over half of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. Most pupils are of White British heritage although a few use English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision consists of a Nursery and Reception classes.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils' progress and achievement in mathematics and science in Key Stage 2 and in their preparation for their future success when they leave the school.

Pupils enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills below those expected for children of their age. Their progress and achievement are satisfactory until the end of Key Stage 1. However, most pupils in Key Stage 2 have made inadequate progress for a number of years. Attainment in English, mathematics and science has been far too low. The impact of previous turbulence in the leadership and management of the school, identified at the time of the last inspection report, has taken time to put right. The situation has not been helped by further staffing difficulties in the management of Key Stage 2 since the last inspection. However, leaders have overcome these difficulties and the school is starting to move forward with a strong focus on identifying and tackling weaknesses. After rigorously tackling shortcomings in pupils' writing skills, for example, attainment in English has improved significantly; pupils' progress and achievement in this subject is now good. In science, and especially mathematics, however, attainment still remains stubbornly low despite some early signs of improvement. The significant improvement in English and the early signs of rising attainment in mathematics and science, together with satisfactory self-evaluation, demonstrate that the school has satisfactory capacity to continue improving.

Since the last inspection, leaders and managers have brought about good improvement to the learning environment. There are good resources to support teaching and learning, especially in information and communication technology. There has been a strong emphasis on improving the use of assessment and on the professional development of staff. As a result, teaching is satisfactory overall and some is good. However, too much teaching does not challenge pupils rigorously enough, especially those who are of average ability or more able. Good relationships with parents and carers have been fostered. Confidence in the school is returning as seen in the fact that it is now oversubscribed for places in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Leaders and managers have also achieved much in bringing order to the school and restoring pupils' self-confidence. The school's care, guidance and support for pupils and their families are good. Pupils are well behaved. They are welcoming, polite and inquisitive. They understand the importance of respect and work harmoniously together

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and with adults. Pupils' enjoyment of school is growing as their achievement improves. However, too many pupils are regularly absent from school. This acts as a brake on their progress and, given their low achievement in mathematics and science, means their preparation for the next stages in their education is inadequate.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and achievement in Key Stage 2 in science and especially mathematics by:
 - making teaching more challenging in these subjects
 - matching tasks more closely to the needs and abilities of different groups of pupils
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills to practical problem solving
 - providing more opportunities for all pupils to take part in practical science activities and experiments.
- Improve pupils' preparation for the future stages of their education by:
 - improving attendance
 - making sure that all pupils make at least satisfactory progress in mathematics and science.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

In lessons, pupils behave well. They have positive attitudes to learning and are eager to participate. They work effectively together in groups and in pairs. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress because of the effective support they receive from skilled teaching assistants. Pupils who are of average ability or more able make slower progress, however, because too often the level of tasks they are set is undemanding and too often repetitive. In mathematics, for example, there are too few opportunities for pupils to apply their skills to problem solving. In science, some pupils reported that they regret the fact that they do not carry out enough practical experiments to keep their interest alive.

Pupils say how safe they feel in school. They have confidence in adults to help them with any problems. They know how important it is to avoid potentially dangerous situations by, for example, being aware of strangers and staying safe on the roads. Pupils know the importance of healthy lifestyles. They can say what foods are good for them and what foods are to be treated with caution. Pupils understand the dangers of smoking and other substance abuse. They enjoy being active. Large numbers take full advantage of the wide range of opportunities the school provides for sports at lunch times. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities in school by becoming class monitors or school council representatives, for example. However, pupils' involvement in the local community is limited. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good

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overall. They have a good grasp of right and wrong. They accept the school's rules and act maturely. They respect each other and the adults who work with them. The school is developing pupils' cultural horizons by introducing more contact with schools whose intake is more ethnically and culturally diverse.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers prepare their lessons in detail. They are becoming increasingly adept at using assessment data to match the tasks they set more closely to the needs of different groups of pupils. The school accepts, however, that this is not developed enough to have full impact on improving the quality of pupils' learning. Good relationships have been forged between teachers and pupils, with the result that behaviour in lessons is good almost all of the time. Teaching is most effective when it is varied, conducted at good pace, pitched at the right level and makes effective use of information and communications technology. However, too much teaching lacks the rigour to challenge pupils sufficiently, especially in mathematics.

Leaders and managers are improving the curriculum by adding extra emphasis on

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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themes for learning. This is proving popular with pupils and is adding to their enjoyment and motivation because it makes what they learn more meaningful. However, this new approach is at a relatively early stage and the full impact on pupils' learning has yet to be seen. The school provides a satisfactory range of enrichment activities in sports and the arts.

Pupils feel safe in school because of the good care, guidance and support the school provides. Pupils say how much the adults care for them. 'There is always someone to turn to for help. The adults never let us down. They always help us out of problems rather than blame us for being silly,' is a telling comment from an older pupil. The highly effective pastoral support manager has forged very strong links with outside agencies to provide care and support for both pupils and their families when necessary.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides strong and enthusiastic leadership. A new management structure, involving more delegation of responsibilities, has revitalised leadership and management at all levels. Solid teamwork has been developed in the pursuit of raising attainment. Adults working in the school are held more rigorously to account because satisfactory self-evaluation procedures highlight not only where weakness exist but what needs to be done to tackle them. Leaders and managers are strongly committed to promoting equality and tackling any discrimination. Their effectiveness and impact are seen in the satisfactory achievement of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the improving achievement of the other pupils, regardless of background, ability or gender. While statutory responsibilities towards safeguarding of pupils are met, overall provision is not stronger than satisfactory because attention to some details, such as, recording staff training in child protection and providing new staff with immediate training in safeguarding procedures, are not sufficiently robust. Leaders and managers promote community cohesion effectively within school and the local community by encouraging pupils to take on responsibilities and become active in raising money for charities. However, opportunities for pupils to investigate and appreciate wider community issues, both nationally and internationally, are at an early stage of development. Governors carry out their responsibilities meticulously. They are very supportive of the school and are developing their readiness to ask pertinent questions to hold the school more rigorously to account.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

With skill levels generally below those expected for their age on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make satisfactory progress and enter Key Stage 1 with skills and knowledge below age-related expectations. Sound teaching overall enables all children to make satisfactory progress. However, a lack of pace in some teaching slows children's rates of learning. Children make more rapid progress in the Nursery where good teaching predominates. In Reception progress is satisfactory overall. Achievement is weakest in the development of children's communication and literacy skills.

Opportunities for outdoor play and learning are somewhat limited, because the school limits the number of children outside so that supervision can be assured. This limits their physical development and their exploration of the world around them. Satisfactory leadership and management ensure that children feel safe and that they work and play in an attractive and stimulating environment where relationships between children and adults are strong. Assessment is used effectively to track children's progress. Effective links with outside agencies ensure that specialist support is readily available whenever a specific need is identified.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Of the 43 responses received from parent and carers almost all were supportive of the school in all aspects of its work.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Button Lane 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 inspection team received 43 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 316 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	23	53	19	44	0	0	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	30	70	13	30	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	31	72	11	26	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	67	12	28	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	32	74	10	23	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	72	12	28	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	23	53	20	47	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)	26	60	13	30	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	63	16	37	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	53	18	42	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	27	63	13	30	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	30	70	13	30	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	34	79	8	19	1	2	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.



23 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Button Lane Primary School, Manchester, M23 0ND

Thank you for making me and my fellow inspectors so welcome when we came to inspect your school recently. It was a pleasure to talk to many of you. What you told us helped us greatly in reaching our judgements.

Your school does many things well. I was pleased to see how well you get on together and how well you behave in lessons and around school. Your school takes good care of you with the result that you feel safe in school. Many of you told me how much you enjoy coming to school and that your lessons were becoming more interesting, so that you feel you are starting to make better progress.

Despite doing several things well, there are some very important things that your school does not yet do well enough. For this reason your school has been given a notice to improve. This means that an inspector will visit to check progress in about six months time and the school will be inspected again in about a year's time to make sure that it has tackled some serious weaknesses successfully. While results in English in Key Stage 2 have risen sharply, too many of you do not achieve as well as you should in science, and especially mathematics. Attendance is too low because some of you take too much time off school. Low attainment in mathematics and science and low attendance mean that in Key Stage 2 your preparation for your future success is not yet as strong as it should be. So, I am asking your school to improve your progress in mathematics and science and to make sure that attendance rises.

Having seen your positive attitudes in lessons, I am confident that you will all work hard to bring about the necessary improvements and help it make the progress towards success.

I wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Stephen Wall

Lead Inspector

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