

Bowlee Park Community School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133446
Local Authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	341390
Inspection dates	9–10 March 2010
Reporting inspector	David Halford

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	412
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Tony Wright
Headteacher	Ms Chris Windle
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 16 lessons and observed all teaching staff present on the inspection days. They held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils, parents and carers, and the School Improvement Partner. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, assessment data and records, safeguarding arrangements and school documents. Inspectors also considered the responses in the 106 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and those from staff and pupils.

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

- pupils' current standards and levels of attainment in basic skills because there is limited published data currently available
- the quality of provision in the new school setting
- the quality of leadership and management in ensuring that the school's ambitious drive for improvement is understood fully by all.

Information about the school

Bowlee Park Community Primary School is very much larger than most schools. Almost all of the pupils are of White British heritage, with a small number coming from other cultural backgrounds. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils receiving free school meals is well above the national average. A higher than average proportion has special educational needs and/or disabilities. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision consists of a Nursery and Reception classes.

The school has been in existence since September 2008 having been established following the amalgamation of two neighbouring schools. The process of amalgamation has been undertaken during the spring and summer period of 2007 and has involved three changes of site and significant reorganisation of staffing. The school opened in a refurbished and remodelled building in January 2009.

The school holds Healthy Schools Status, the Activemark, Eco-Schools Award, Leading Aspect Award, Arts Council Award and Read Write Inc Model School.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This outstanding school is an extremely happy learning community successfully providing education and care of the highest quality for all its pupils. Pupils are exceptionally well cared for in the welcoming environment. Each one is known and valued as an individual so all feel secure and radiate pleasure in all they do. The inspectors agreed with the school's evaluation of its effectiveness, and value for money is excellent.

Outstanding teaching and curriculum provision that really capture pupils' interests and actively engage them in purposeful learning ensure that they make excellent progress. Achievement is outstanding. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills well below those typical for their age, especially in language and communication, and this is an area which requires further attention throughout the school. Pupils' standards are above average by the time they leave Year 6. The school recognises that further consolidation of strategies already in place is needed to enable more pupils to gain the higher levels in basic skills.

Children get off to a flying start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and progress rapidly. This was seen to excellent advantage in outside play and in the real concentration observed in children drawing with pastels. Pupils' enjoyment of school is clear for all to see and is a major factor in their outstanding achievement as they pass through the key stages. The school manages pupils' behaviour very effectively and, as a result, behaviour is outstanding. Pupils say clearly that they feel entirely safe in school and are very aware of personal safety. The Healthy Schools and Activemark awards acknowledge pupils' excellent understanding of health issues. Pupils speak well of their good contribution to the school and wider community. Their personal and academic skills are very strong foundations for their future lives. Attendance is satisfactory, despite the school's strenuous efforts to improve it.

Dedicated and inspirational leadership has overseen much change and development through the extended period of amalgamation. The opening of the new school has been undertaken in a manner to ensure that pupils' progress and achievement have been fully sustained. Very clear leadership roles help to transmit successfully senior leaders' exceptionally high aspirations, which are seen in the commitment of staff, governors and pupils to achieve ambitious targets. This school knows itself extremely well, as shown in highly focused development plans. Sustained concentration on standards and the quality of the leadership team and staff give the school outstanding capacity for further improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' standards further in numeracy and literacy by:
 - embedding strategies already in place to increase the number of pupils gaining the higher levels in national tests and assessments
 - improving pupils' speaking and listening skills throughout the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

All groups of pupils make excellent progress as they move through the school. Their books, work in lessons and discussions show a clear understanding of their own progress. They are enthusiastic and ambitious to aim higher, listen carefully in lessons and cooperate with teachers and with each other. The school's 'Can do!' culture permeates all aspects of school life, for pupils and staff. Consequently, pupils' attainment is above average in English, mathematics and science. Very well-focused and well-targeted support enables all pupils from a wide range of ability groups, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the small number who speak English as an additional language to make excellent progress.

National data is limited as the school is newly established, but the school's data show clear trends for improvement over time in both key stages 1 and 2, sustained despite the fact that the school welcomes many pupils with significant barriers to their learning. Writing is strong, especially in Key Stage 1, and there is a good emphasis on developing reading skills through the school. Many children enter school with very low levels of communication skills and this is an area which the school recognises needs further development across all year groups. However, it will take time thoroughly to embed and consolidate pupils' skills such as using more interesting vocabulary and organising their ideas more effectively. The school has effective strategies in place which over time need to have full impact on pupils' improving standards in basic skills, especially for the higher-attaining pupils.

Outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development offers pupils varied opportunities to reflect on emotions and experiences. Pupils of all backgrounds form friendships and mix happily together. They are considerate, show a keen sense of right and wrong and clearly understand that their actions have consequences. They know they are safe, say that bullying is not a problem and know staff will always help. In-school work on developing enterprise skills and additional responsibilities raise pupils' aspirations and give them greater independence so they move to the next stage of their education with confidence. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. Everything possible, including the positive assistance from the local authority, is done to help the small number of families who find regular school attendance difficult. There are emerging signs that these actions are resulting in measurable improvement.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Every member of staff demonstrates very high expectations for pupils. Pupils know this and rise to the challenge, saying teachers are helpful and make them work hard. Different teaching styles, secure subject knowledge and highly effective questioning techniques stimulate pupils' thinking and reasoning skills, really involving them in their learning and promoting excellent progress. Extremely precise tracking of pupils' progress and understanding ensures that activities are very well matched to different abilities and additional support is expertly managed and carefully targeted where needed. Skilled teaching assistants make a very strong contribution. Work is thoroughly marked, pupils are sure of their targets and they are very confident about what they must do to improve their work.

The rich curriculum provides high-quality opportunities for pupils to develop basic skills and an excellent programme for personal development which is very effectively adapted for pupils with additional needs. High-quality information and communication technology resources are used extremely well across the curriculum. Pupils spoke highly of the very wide range of enrichment activities, particularly the interesting visits that are made linked to the work they are undertaking. Extended partnerships provide excellent opportunities the school alone cannot provide, for example the exceptional opportunities to develop pupils' art skills and the additional opportunities offered by the sports centre adjoining their new school building.

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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Care procedures of the highest quality show that each pupil really matters as an individual; staff know pupils and their families well. The school really does 'go the extra mile' to reach those who find it hard to be involved with their children's learning or need help with matters relating to attendance. Very good induction and transition arrangements ensure that starting school or moving to the next stage of education are confident, happy experiences. Specific, high-quality support and pastoral care very effectively target pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, the small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language and those who need additional challenge so they all develop and progress equally well. Parents and carers value the range of information provided about their children's progress, activities and school events and most parents and carers believe the school works hard to incorporate their views.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders' aspirations and ambition to provide the best is central to this school and has ensured that the morale of staff and pupils' above average attainment have been maintained throughout the period leading up to the establishment of the new school. The provision of equal opportunities and the elimination of discrimination are excellent, are at the school's heart and are shared by all members of the school community. They successfully achieve their aim of giving every pupil the best possible opportunities in all aspects of school life. Leaders and managers monitor teaching and learning rigorously. They complete action plans focused firmly on raising standards and improving provision in their areas of responsibility. Good governance based on training, skills and knowledge gained from well-organised systems ensure that governors are well informed, but they are not yet fully able to challenge the school and hold it to account.

Relationships with parents and carers are good. The school's community cohesion provision is also good. It is based on an excellent understanding of the school's context and of local needs, but there is further work to do to reach out nationally and internationally. The school is a calm, harmonious environment that reaches out to support its local community very well. Valuable partnerships with external agencies support pupils and their families, and the school leads the development of many activities for other establishments. Safeguarding procedures are excellent and meet requirements. Pupils, and parents and carers agree that the school is extremely safe.

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Very rigorous risk assessments cover all activities and are widely discussed so that all share equally in the collective responsibility for pupils' safety and well-being.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Excellent provision ensures that all children make outstanding progress in their learning and development. From well below average starting points, especially in communication and language skills, all progress effectively towards the learning goals for their age by the time they move to Year 1. Children are very well cared for and supervised at all times, so they feel very secure, safe and keen to learn. Their behaviour is excellent and their enjoyment is obvious as they laugh and play happily together inside and outside. Parents and carers, and children enjoy excellent warm, friendly relationships with all the adults in the setting. From the moment they arrive each day, the bright stimulating environment captivates children and invites them to explore and investigate indoors and across the extensive outdoor provision. They love planting seeds, riding on the very wide range of wheeled toys and extending their developing skills in very stimulating surroundings. Outstanding teaching and very carefully planned activities move learning along in small steps through challenging experiences that encourage children to think independently and solve problems. Children begin to look after themselves and enjoy their daily milk and fruit. Exceptionally strong leadership imparts a very strong vision for future improvements. Very good use of the particular skills and knowledge of each member of staff provides learning that takes full account of each child's individual learning needs.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

From quite a high return of inspection questionnaires, the very large majority of parents and carers are entirely satisfied with the educational provision the school makes for pupils. Their views are summed up very aptly by the parent who wrote: 'I have been really impressed with the school. My child has thrived here and learned with enthusiasm and interest. He feels safe and secure and the staff are always responsive whenever I discuss any issues.' A very small minority express some misgivings, mostly about the school not taking sufficient account of concerns or issues the parents and carers have. The inspection found no evidence to support this and the inspectors agree fully with those parents and carers who are supportive of the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bowlee Park Community 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 106 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 412 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	60	57	36	34	7	7	3	3
The school keeps my child safe	66	62	37	35	3	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	54	51	43	41	9	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	53	50	44	42	8	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	56	53	43	41	6	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	51	48	46	43	9	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	54	51	44	42	5	5	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)	38	36	61	58	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	47	44	47	44	9	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	45	42	45	42	7	7	8	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	41	39	42	40	16	15	5	5
The school is led and managed effectively	50	47	43	41	5	5	8	8
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	55	52	38	36	6	6	7	7

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.



11 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bowlee Park Community School, Manchester, M24 4LA

My colleagues and I really enjoyed our recent inspection of your new school. Thank you very much for your warm welcome and for looking after us so well. You were very helpful in lessons when we asked you to explain what you were doing and also very friendly around the school. My particular thanks should go to everyone who spoke with us and who helped us to understand why it is that you enjoy your school so much.

Bowlee Park Community School is an outstanding school, with some really interesting work taking place. The staff provide for you all outstandingly well and make sure you feel really safe and secure. I think that the way in which your headteacher and her staff manage your school is also outstanding. I shall remember the discussion that I had with some Year 6 pupils and the exciting time Year 1 had in their PE lesson miming the octopus washing his toes!

When we visit schools, inspectors also look for things which will help each school to get even better. While the standards you attain in numeracy and literacy are quite good, I think you can do even better; especially those boys and girls who find learning easy. I also feel that you can improve your speaking and listening skills. I have asked your headteacher to make these important improvements.

Thank you once again for all your help when we made our visit to you. I send you all my very best wishes for the future. I do hope that you continue to enjoy learning as much as you do at the moment.

Yours sincerely

Mr David Halford

Lead inspector

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