

Higher Failsworth Primary School

Inspection report

| | |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 134784 |
| Local Authority | Oldham |
| Inspection number | 341527 |
| Inspection dates | 11–12 March 2010 |
| Reporting inspector | John Dunne |

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 | 337 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr Alan Smith |
| Headteacher | Mrs Helen Hampson |
| Date of previous school inspection | 6 June 2007 |
| School address | Stansfield Road Failsworth Oldham M35 9EA |
| Telephone number | 0161 6812645 |
| Fax number | 0161 2191773 |
| Email address | head@higher-failsworth.oldham.sch.uk |

| | |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| Age group | 3–11 |
| Inspection dates | 11–12 March 2010 |
| Inspection number | 341527 |

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 18 lessons taught by 12 teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation including data about pupils' progress, records of monitoring, policies, school improvement plans, safeguarding arrangements, the 70 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and the 92 returned by pupils.

- the progress of pupils in Key Stage 1
- the effectiveness of measures to continue to improve achievement
- standards of pupils' behaviour
- pupils' understanding of diversity and how well the school is promoting an understanding of cultures beyond the immediate locality.

Information about the school

The school is larger than average. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is broadly average. Most pupils are White British; a small proportion is from minority ethnic groups and there are very few at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The school has recently appointed a number of new staff including a new headteacher. The school has gained several awards including the Financial Management Standard in Schools, Healthy Schools Award, Tooth Friendly Platinum Award, Activemark and the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

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

The school has made significant improvements since the last inspection. The headteacher's vision in striving for excellence is unanimously shared and underpinned by rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's work. The impact of this is evident from sustained improvements in pupils' progress, more effective teaching in Key Stage 1 and significant improvements in the outdoor learning provision in the Nursery and Reception classes. It is continuing to improve due to strong leadership. For example, the curriculum, previously described as 'impeding development due to limited use of resources', is now a strength of the school. Stimulating cross-curricular themes create an exciting learning environment and promote basic skills well. Imaginative use of information and communication technology, for example video conferencing, enlivens lessons. As a result, pupils are motivated and try hard and this contributes significantly to their good progress. Continued positive improving outcomes show the school has a good capacity to improve further.

Children enter Nursery with basic skills mostly well below those expected. They settle happily, adapt well to routines and quickly gain confidence and independence. Children in the Reception Year make good progress due to good-quality teaching. In 2009 the headteacher worked closely with the school council to plan major improvements to the outdoor spaces for Nursery and Reception children. This provision is significantly improved but teachers are not yet adapting their teaching to take full advantage of the new opportunities for learning. In Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils continue to build upon the good start and attain broadly average levels by the end of Year 6. This represents good progress given their starting points. This is because teaching overall is good. However, it is not consistently good throughout the school and in all aspects. In a minority of lessons there is too much teacher direction and insufficient time given for pupils to develop their learning independently. Occasionally, all pupils do the same activities and so not all are sufficiently challenged.

Pupils' behaviour and relationships with each other and adults are good in class and around school and these make a positive contribution to the quality of their learning. Links with international schools are promoting pupils' understanding of other cultures.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By 2011 improve the attainment and progress of pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 by:
 - - ensuring that all teachers vary the work set for different pupils, taking into account what they can already do and what will extend them further
 - - eliminate the tendency for some teachers to talk too long and so ensure that in all

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

lessons pupils have sufficient time to accelerate their independent learning.

- By 2011 increase the effectiveness of learning in outdoor spaces in the Nursery and Reception classes by:
- - improving teachers' planning and its implementation so that full advantage is made of newly created outdoor provision to promote learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

The overwhelming majority of pupils really enjoy their lessons, behave well and attain a good range of learning skills. In the best lessons pupils show that they can work well independently and collaboratively and respond well to challenges. Where teaching is less effective there is a lack of pace and challenge and pupils are more passive. Pupils' achievement and their enjoyment of learning are good.

Pupils make good progress throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 to attain broadly average levels in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Vulnerable pupils, those with other barriers to learning, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language all achieve well due the careful attention they receive and well-focused intervention, often delivered by skilful teaching assistants. Pupils are confident that they feel safe and bullying is not an issue. Pupils know well how to recognise dangerous situations including those relating to new technologies. They can explain the benefits of exercise and healthy eating and many take part in the wide range of opportunities for physical activity. Pupils experience good opportunities to engage with the local community. For example, they present much appreciated gifts and musical events to local residents. Lessons and assemblies effectively promote pupils' inquisitiveness, curiosity and wonder of the world and pupils have good social skills and moral understanding in the way they show consideration for others and a clear sense of right and wrong. They show understanding of people from different backgrounds, religions and cultures because the school gives them experiences beyond their own everyday lives. For example, pupils shared stories and food with teachers from Pakistan to learn about life in lands other than their own. Attendance, although average, is above the rate for similar kinds of schools.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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 | 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 | 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 | 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 | 2 |

How effective is the provision?

The quality of the majority of lessons is good or better. In most lessons good subject knowledge, effective questioning and a variety of interesting activities which move with pace all contribute to good-quality learning. The best lessons make very effective use of speaking to make pupils really think hard and this is improving their writing. However, in the smaller number of satisfactory lessons, pupils spend too long listening to the teacher. Also, pupils sometimes receive work that is too easy or too hard. In these lessons pupils become distracted and their progress slows. Teachers generally use assessments well, pupils know what they must do to improve and this contributes to their good progress.

The curriculum has had a major overhaul. As a result, most subjects are taught effectively through topics which have a clear focus on the basic skills. Pupils say they find these themes, such as 'myths and legends' and 'Victorian times' really interesting. A memorable example was when pupils were spellbound as they questioned a dragon expert in Peru via live video conferencing. The school provides an array of enrichment and extra-curricular activities which are enjoyed by a majority of pupils. Provision for music and foreign languages is strong.

A rising number of pupils join the school with special educational needs and/or disabilities or complex emotional issues which represent potential barriers to learning. A number of these pupils also present challenging behaviour. The school understands every pupil's individual needs. Due to good care, guidance and support and effective partnerships with parents, carers and a wide range of external agencies, all groups of pupils are able to make good progress academically and personally.

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

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, other leaders, managers and governors are dedicated to the academic and personal development of pupils. Despite the significant number of new staff joining the school this year, including a new headteacher, the strong improvement in outcomes seen over the past two years is being maintained. This is because effective teams have rapidly been established and high expectations and a shared vision for improvement permeate the school. Leaders and managers at all levels understand where improvements still need to be made and there are clear lines of accountability to secure them.

Policies and procedures ensure equality for all and the elimination of all forms of discrimination and harassment. All groups of pupils achieve equally well. Leaders and governors ensure that procedures for child protection and safeguarding pupils, including staff training, meet requirements.

The school community is strongly cohesive and pupils are proud of their school and say that everyone gets on well with each other. The school has formed links internationally and this is contributing positively to pupils' understanding of diversity. However, promotion of community cohesion beyond the school community is at an early stage of development as is the school's evaluation of its success.

Governors not only understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school but they have been influential in determining its direction, for example by challenging the school about the progress of pupils.

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 |

| 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 | |
|---|----------|
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 2 |
| 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 | 2 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are well cared for and enjoy a good range of interesting activities in the well-planned and well-resourced rooms. Many of the tasks have been skilfully designed to motivate and develop children's speaking and personal development in particular, which are mostly much lower than expected for their age on entry.

Children are generally working within the expected levels for their age by the start of Year 1. This represents good progress. Adults go to considerable lengths to involve parents and carers. As a result, parents and carers are extremely well informed about children's progress and many spoke very positively of the way they are encouraged to become effective partners in their children's learning. This very positive partnership underpins children's good progress. The needs of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well met ensuring that they make good progress. Children gain a good understanding of how to stay safe.

Detailed records of assessments of all children illustrate the good knowledge that staff have of each child. In children's journals the development of individuals is recorded and the information is used to plan effectively for the next steps in learning.

The leader encourages all staff to take ownership by familiarising themselves with all aspects of planning and assessment for all stages of learning. Staff have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development and attend appropriate professional development. Outside provision for learning has recently been markedly improved, but teachers are not yet adapting children's learning experiences to use these resources to full effect.

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 |

Views of parents and carers

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

About one fifth of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. The vast majority are very positive about all aspects of the school's provision and this matches what was seen during the inspection. A very small minority felt that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. This is not the finding of the inspection, which judges behaviour to be good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Higher Failsworth 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 70 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 337 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 39 | 56 | 29 | 41 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 42 | 60 | 25 | 36 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 30 | 43 | 34 | 49 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 1 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 31 | 44 | 35 | 50 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 32 | 46 | 33 | 47 | 4 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 25 | 36 | 38 | 54 | 6 | 9 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 28 | 40 | 37 | 53 | 2 | 3 | 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) | 25 | 36 | 36 | 51 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 33 | 47 | 32 | 46 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 28 | 40 | 28 | 40 | 9 | 13 | 4 | 6 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 22 | 31 | 38 | 54 | 4 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 32 | 46 | 31 | 44 | 4 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 40 | 57 | 25 | 36 | 4 | 6 | 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.



13 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Higher Failsworth Primary School, Oldham, M35 9EA

I am writing on behalf of the inspectors who visited your school recently. Thank you for the warm welcome to your happy school. We judge that yours is a good school. You get a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes and are looking forward to learning in your new outdoor spaces. We have asked your teachers to think of more ways for you to use this new resource.

You make good progress in Years 1 to 6. You said you enjoyed the topic work and the inspectors agree that such lessons are really interesting and help you learn well.

Teachers organise a lot of extra activities for you and you appreciate this. Your teachers give you good advice so you know how to improve. You are growing up to be polite, very confident and very sensible young people. You behave well and everyone gets on well with each other. Nearly all of you attend well and on time. You are kind to one another and everyone in the school provides good care for you. You told us that school is a safe and happy place to be. Your headteacher, other staff and governors do a good job. They are planning even more exciting improvements for you, which will make your school even better.

In some of your lessons you spend too long listening to teachers and can get a bit bored; we have asked the school to sort this out. We have also asked all teachers to set different work for you so that those who can already do something can crack on with harder things and those who still need more practice get the chance.

You can help by continuing to try your best. All the best for the future!

Yours sincerely

John Dunne

Lead Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.