

Old Hall Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 105294 |
| Local Authority | Bury |
| Inspection number | 355747 |
| Inspection dates | 9–10 September 2010 |
| Reporting inspector | Judith Straw |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 145 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr Barrie Rostron |
| Headteacher | Miss Karen Young |
| Date of previous school inspection | 15 October 2007 |
| School address | Springside View Bury Lancashire BL8 4LU |
| Telephone number | 0161 761 2051 |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They visited 10 lessons and observed seven teachers. They held meetings with groups of pupils, parents and carers, governors and members of staff. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including the school development plan, all documents relating to safeguarding, teachers' lesson plans, assessment and tracking information and a sample of pupils' workbooks. Eighty-four questionnaire responses from parents and carers were scrutinised.

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

- It investigated the progress of all pupils, particularly in mathematics and science.
- It considered how well teaching supports the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- It looked at the effectiveness of leadership and management in bringing about improvement since the last inspection and the accuracy of self-evaluation.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportions of pupils from ethnic minority groups and who speak English as an additional language are well below average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The school has gained Healthy Schools status, Activemark, Sustrans (sustainable travel) Bronze award, Eco-Schools Silver and International School Award at intermediate level.

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

Old Hall is a good school in which all groups of pupils achieve well. Pupils are totally confident that they are safe; their commitment to healthy lifestyles is excellent and they make an outstanding contribution to their local community. The care, guidance and support offered by the school are excellent.

Pupils have a strong sense of social responsibility. Some are engaged in working with the travel team to encourage sustainable travel and encourage walking or cycling to school; some work as eco warriors encouraging energy-saving schemes and managing the school garden; the school council manages fundraising and the involvement of pupils in shaping the direction of the school.

Children make a good start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. From starting points below what is expected they make good progress. Children learn in a bright, stimulating environment. However, their opportunities to learn outside are currently limited by access difficulties. From Years 1 to 6 all pupils progress well. Overall, standards are average but above average in mathematics and reading. The school has taken prompt action to halt a decline in standards and a dip in attainment in 2008 so that standards are now rising and pupils achieve well.

Teaching is good. In most lessons pupils make rapid progress. Just occasionally, the pace is slower and the work not as well matched to pupils' needs because planning is not based on responding quickly to what pupils learned the day before. In judging the quality of teaching and learning, managers have tended to look too much at what the teacher is doing and not focused enough on what pupils are learning. There are very effective systems to identify pupils who need extra support and a good range of strategies is used by the school to help pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities so that they achieve well. The good curriculum is constantly being improved by becoming creative and providing breadth and challenge.

Outstanding leadership of the headteacher has been key to the school's success. A strong sense of shared purpose drives the school forward with all teachers and middle managers taking an active role in evaluating the work of the school and designing improvements. The governing body is fully supportive, contributes to accurate self-evaluation and holds the school to account. These strengths in leadership, combined with what has been achieved since the last inspection, demonstrate good capacity to move the school on further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Further improve the quality of pupils' learning in lessons by:
- – sharpening planning on a daily basis so that each lesson builds quickly on what pupils learned the day before, taking account of learning that was successful and learning that needs reinforcement
- – focusing in lesson observations on how pupils are learning, rather than on what the teacher is doing.
- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
- – further developing the use of the outdoor for learning and improving the access to this area.

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

All groups of pupils make good progress. Pupils are attentive in lessons and keen to succeed. Their good behaviour and enthusiasm make a strong contribution to their learning and progress. They listen to adults and to each other and work well individually or in pairs or larger groups. Pupils persevere when faced with problem-solving activities and enjoy their learning. In a Year 5 'Challenge Friday' mathematics lesson there was a shout of triumph from one group, 'Wow, we've just cracked the hardest one!' Similarly, Year 6 pupils were working on code-breaking problems in an entertaining, as well as challenging, lesson in which they were assisting Sherlock Holmes. Class routines are well established and pupils respond well to the high expectations of their teachers. Pupils achieve well in a range of subjects.

The contribution pupils make to their school is outstanding. Pupils feel totally safe and say that there is no bullying. As one parent commented, 'This is a school where pupils help and respect each other'. Pupils have a thorough understanding of the importance of healthy living and how to adopt safe practices. They are ambassadors for the cause of environmentally friendly travel with their 'Bike it' breakfast and 'Walk on Wednesday' schemes. These activities are organised by the travel team. Pupils show their concern for the environment through the work of the eco group and every class proudly maintains its own raised bed of flowers and vegetables in the school garden. The school council organises numerous fundraising activities for many charities as well as being consulted about school developments such as the curriculum. Attendance is rising and is now above average. Pupils' rising standards, good interpersonal skills and their ability to relate well with adults and each other stand them in good stead as they move to the next stage of education.

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.

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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 | 1 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 1 |
| 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 | 2 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |

How effective is the provision?

Teachers know their pupils well and relationships are good. Lessons provide a good range of different activities to keep pupils engaged and interested. Most lessons have pace and challenge. Teachers use questions effectively to check pupils' understanding. Teaching assistants are well prepared, patient and skilled in ensuring that different groups of pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress. Just occasionally, teachers misjudge the level of understanding of their classes so that some pupils find work too easy while others find it too difficult. This is partly because lesson planning is done for the week rather than on a daily basis. Marking is constructive and helpful so that pupils know how to improve their work.

The curriculum is stimulating and creative. The school is seeking to improve provision to maximise enthusiasm and enjoyment. The introduction of 'Challenge Friday' work has reinvigorated pupils' learning in mathematics so that standards have risen and many pupils are achieving well beyond expectations. All pupils learn Spanish. The school is introducing a weekly literacy challenge this term. There is good provision for extra-curricular activities at lunchtime and after school with clubs such as circus skills, film club, playground leadership and dance.

Outstanding care, guidance and support ensure that all pupils are making increasingly better progress. An excellent range of partnerships with other agencies support pupils and their families. Safeguarding arrangements ensure that pupils have an excellent awareness of safety and well-being. A recent emphasis on attendance has resulted in improvement; it is currently above average. Transition arrangements ensure that pupils move easily and happily into Reception, between classes and later to different high

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schools. Improved and regularly updated individual education plans ensure that the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are carefully monitored. Targets are set for them which are relevant, challenging and achievable so that they make consistently good progress.

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 | 1 |

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has been in post since September 2009. She has a very clear vision for Old Hall which is shared by all the adults who work there. Leaders and managers at all levels are effective in promoting equality of opportunity, tackling discrimination and giving every pupil the opportunity to be successful. New systems for monitoring the effectiveness of the school ensure that all staff play an active role in making the school as good as it can be. The leadership of teaching and learning is good but observations focus too much on what the teacher is doing and not enough on what pupils are learning and how much progress they make. Planning is too prescriptive at the moment so that there are not enough opportunities to tailor what happens in each lesson to the precise needs of the group being taught. A rigorous tracking system is in place to ensure that teachers are aware of the rate of progress of every individual so that prompt action can be taken to help anyone falling behind.

The governing body is knowledgeable about the school's work and fully involved in measuring performance. Arrangements to safeguard children are good. Pupils are confident that they are safe and well looked after in school and their parents and carers agree. The school's measures to promote community cohesion are good in all respects. The school has many strong local links, an increasing range of national links and a good range of international links. Pupils enjoy greatly the international dimension to the school, such as China, Spanish and Africa days. Steps are taken to evaluate what is being done and then constantly to improve it.

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 |

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| | |
|--|----------|
| 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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress because of effective leadership and management, good provision and very effective tracking of each child's progress. Children enter the Reception class from a number of different settings and generally have skills below what is expected for their age. They make good progress across the year so that by the time they enter Year 1 the great majority are working at the expected levels.

With the help of adults children settle quickly into the friendly and exciting learning environment. Children enjoy a good balance of activities led by adults and opportunities to choose their own learning and play. The classroom is bright, stimulating and well resourced. A newly developed outside learning area is well used but at present children do not have the opportunity to move smoothly from one to the other because the outdoor area is situated some distance away from the classroom and children must be formally escorted there. Adults manage the children well so that they all enjoy numerous activities during the day such as learning letters and sounds, singing, reciting, hearing stories and solving problems. Adults offer plenty of praise and encouragement and know the children well. They observe and record activities in each child's learning record, often illustrated with photographs and examples of completed work. The accuracy of these assessments means that children who need any additional help are quickly identified and assisted. Staff are meticulous in taking care of children so that they are contented and happy. Even though the current Reception class had been in school for less than two weeks children there were happy to talk to visitors and able to show what they were learning. There are very good links with parents and carers.

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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

Many parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire. The very large majority were entirely happy with all that the school offers. 'A wonderful and friendly school' was a typical comment. Parents and carers spoke of their appreciation of the talent and commitment of the staff and the leadership of the headteacher. They especially like the open lessons where they are invited to learn alongside their children. A few parents and carers felt that there could be more sporting activity after school. The school has expanded the range of after-school clubs this term so this concern is being addressed.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Old Hall 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 84 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 145 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 65 | 77 | 19 | 23 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 70 | 83 | 14 | 17 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 53 | 63 | 30 | 36 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 54 | 64 | 30 | 36 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 52 | 62 | 31 | 37 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 46 | 55 | 37 | 44 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 50 | 60 | 33 | 39 | 1 | 1 | 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) | 49 | 58 | 32 | 38 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 55 | 65 | 28 | 33 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 48 | 57 | 33 | 39 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 48 | 57 | 32 | 38 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 62 | 74 | 20 | 24 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 67 | 80 | 17 | 20 | 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

| Type of school | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools | 58 | 36 | 4 | 2 |
| Primary schools | 8 | 43 | 40 | 9 |
| Secondary schools | 10 | 35 | 42 | 13 |
| Sixth forms | 13 | 39 | 45 | 3 |
| Special schools | 33 | 42 | 20 | 4 |
| Pupil referral units | 18 | 40 | 29 | 12 |
| All schools | 11 | 42 | 38 | 9 |

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Old Hall Primary School, Bury, BL8 4LU

Thank you for making my colleague and I so welcome when we visited you in school last week. It was a pleasure to see you in class and to talk to you about your work and interests. I am writing to tell you what we found out.

Yours is a good school where you make good progress and achieve well. Your awareness of healthy living and your contribution to the community are excellent. You told us that you feel totally safe and we saw how well the adults in school look after you. You are becoming thoughtful, considerate young people keen to look after each other and make a strong contribution to the community. Your parents and carers agree with this view.

You make good progress because teachers give you interesting things to do and you try your best. We were very impressed with your 'Challenge Friday' mathematics lessons and can see why you are doing so well. We like the way you learn about other countries such as China, Spain and Africa. We hope your international week later this term is a great success.

All the adults in school want to make the school the best it can be. We have suggested two ways to help. First, we think that sometimes the work needs to be a bit harder for some of you and a bit easier for others. Second, we saw how much the children in Reception enjoy learning in the outdoor area. It would be better if they could move in and out of the classroom without having to be taken round the corner. You can help by continuing to be enthusiastic and keen to learn and by telling the teachers if the work is too hard or too easy.

We wish you all happiness and success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Judith Straw

Lead inspector

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