

Limehurst Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105638
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	377271
Inspection dates	17–18 October 2011
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	318
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Shirley Buckley
Headteacher	Mark Roberts
Date of previous school inspection	8 January 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 13 lessons, taught by 12 teachers. They held meetings with staff, groups of pupils and the Chair of the Governing Body. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation including: information relating to pupils' attainment and progress; the school's self-evaluation; minutes of meetings of the governing body; and evidence relating to how the school supports pupils whose circumstances potentially make them vulnerable. Inspectors also examined evaluations undertaken by the school to ensure it meets statutory requirements with regard to safeguarding. In addition, 78 questionnaires completed by parents and carers were scrutinised along with questionnaires completed by staff and pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether pupils achieve as well as they should, especially in English.
- How effectively leaders and managers, including the governing body, drive improvement, especially in pupils' literacy skills.
- How effectively the school uses assessment data to track pupils' progress and to help them understand what they need to do to improve.
- Whether all groups of pupils, especially boys, achieve as well as they can.

Information about the school

This is a larger-than-average primary school in which a high proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for free school meals. Nearly all pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is above average. The school has Healthy Schools status. It has gained the Active Schools Award and the Eco-Schools Silver Award. The school has gained Financial Management Standard in Schools accreditation.

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

This is a good school in which pupils make good progress and achieve well. Leaders and managers, including the governing body, evaluate the effectiveness of the school accurately. They know what the school's strengths are and tackle weaker areas rigorously and effectively. A sharp and well-planned focus on improving pupils' writing skills has led to a significant improvement in attainment in English and, consequently, a sustained rise in pupils' overall achievement. Consequently, the school demonstrates good capacity for sustained improvement.

Pupils enjoy school. Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are generally below expected levels. They make good progress as they move up through the school. By the end of Key Stage 2 attainment is in line with national averages. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress because of the effective support and guidance they receive. Pupils feel safe in school. The vast majority of pupils behave well and responsibly. They are considerate and respectful to the adults working with them and to each other. They are courteous and welcoming to visitors. However, a few boys can occasionally disrupt learning when teaching lacks the necessary pace and variety to stimulate their interest and engage them fully. Since the previous inspection, attendance has improved because the school has embedded an effective range of initiatives to promote its importance. As a result, attendance is now average and improving.

The great majority of teaching is good. It enables pupils to make good progress and enjoy learning. A small amount of teaching is satisfactory. This occasionally slows pupils' progress. Assessment data are used effectively to track pupils' progress. This plays a significant role in supporting pupils' good progress. However, the quality of marking is inconsistent in making clear to pupils what they need to do to improve their work. The good quality of the curriculum supports learning effectively, especially in developing pupils' basic skills in literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT). The wide range of popular and well-attended enrichment activities makes a valuable contribution to pupils' personal development and levels of self-confidence.

Good leadership and management at all levels provide the school with a sharp focus on improvement. Monitoring is regular and rigorous. The governing body is knowledgeable and supportive of the drive for improvement. It holds the school rigorously yet sensitively to account.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching and students' progress are consistently at least good by:
 - tackling the small amount of satisfactory teaching
 - ensuring that all teaching matches tasks closely to the needs and abilities of different groups of pupils
 - ensuring that teaching is always lively and varied to stimulate pupils' interest and engage all pupils fully in their learning
 - improving the consistency of teaching in providing opportunities for pupils to develop their skills as independent learners
 - ensuring that marking is consistently helpful in showing pupils how to improve their work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

In most lessons pupils are eager to learn. They are industrious and strive to give of their best. Pupils are keen to answer questions. They especially enjoy practical activities. For example, the simple yet effective activity of folding sheets of paper in a Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson brought squeals of delight as pupils discovered lines of symmetry in a variety of shapes with only minimal help from the teacher. However, in a few lessons the teacher provides answers too readily thus acting as a damper on pupils' natural joy at finding things out for themselves. Attainment is rising rapidly and securely, especially in pupils' writing, because the school has implemented appropriate and coherent strategies to bring about the necessary levels of improvement. Consequently, achievement is good. The gap between the attainment of boys and girls is narrowing rapidly and securely as boys' writing skills develop apace. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the focused support they receive from a team of very effective support assistants.

Pupils' enjoyment of school is seen in their happy demeanour and in rising attendance levels. Punctuality to school has also improved. Pupils are proud of their school. A typical comment is, 'I love coming to school. It's good fun. We learn a lot. Everyone is treated the same.' Pupils know how important healthy lifestyles are. They can explain what foods are good for them and why. Participation rates in the wide range of sporting enrichment activities are high. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities in school by becoming prefects and monitors, for example. They take these responsibilities extremely seriously. Pupils are active in their local community by, for example, supporting a local care home and supporting several local charities. Pupils' good social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is seen in the respect they show for each other and especially for those who are different or physically disabled.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	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 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?

Teaching is good overall, despite a few inconsistencies. It enables pupils to make good and improving progress. Lesson planning is good and detailed. It matches tasks closely to the needs and abilities of different groups, although occasionally tasks are set that are too easy or too hard for different groups. Most teaching is conducted at a good, lively pace and with a good variety of activities that keep pupils interested and on their toes. In the few lessons where teaching is satisfactory, however, too much teacher talk slows the pace of learning; pupils are not fully engaged and this limits opportunities for independent work. The school has established sophisticated and effective procedures to track pupils' progress to ensure they make expected progress towards demanding targets.

The curriculum is well organised and well thought out. It is constantly under review to make sure it is adapted to meet the needs of individual pupils, different groups and different cohorts. The use of numerous themes provides good support for the development of pupils' basic skills across the curriculum in literacy, numeracy and ICT. There is a wide range of enrichment activities in sports and the arts that makes a significant contribution to pupils' enjoyment and good personal development. Pupils are especially enthusiastic about the adventure activities that they go on out of school. They are also enthusiastic about learning Spanish which is taught by foreign languages assistants from Spain.

Good care, guidance and support ensure that every pupil feels valued. Effective support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable ensures that they make good progress and are fully included in the life of the school. Transition arrangements into the Early Years Foundation Stage ensure that children settle quickly into school life. Older students are provided with good preparation for the move to secondary education.

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

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?

Leaders and managers evaluate the school's effectiveness accurately. They use the outcomes astutely to plan for improvement. Expectations are high for all pupils regardless of ability, gender or background. Staff morale is high in the pursuit of improvement and making sure that pupils get off to a good start in life. Rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning ensures that teaching is good. Comprehensive plans are in place to support and improve the few inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. The governing body fully supports the drive for improvement and uses evaluation outcomes and data effectively to hold the school rigorously to account. Parents and carers are kept well informed about the progress of their children. The school welcomes any parental concerns and responds promptly and appropriately.

Leaders and managers promote equality of opportunity well. Previous gaps in attainment between different groups such as between boys and girls are narrowing rapidly and securely. The attainment of all groups of pupils is rising securely. All pupils get on together conspicuously well. Discrimination in any form is not tolerated.

The school adopts recommended good practice for ensuring the safety of its pupils. Checks on the suitability of adults working with pupils are carried out and recorded meticulously. Training for staff is of good quality and carried out regularly. The curriculum pays close attention to e-safety when using the internet. Parents and carers are also made aware of the potential threats the internet may pose.

The school plans effectively to promote community cohesion. The school itself is a harmonious community. Pupils are involved in a wide range of local initiatives and activities. Educational visits and visitors to school enable pupils to appreciate cultural and religious differences and diversity. In discussions, pupils show good levels of understanding and respect for those who are different.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

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

The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children make good progress and achieve well because teaching meets their learning needs accurately. Children play and learn happily together in a harmonious atmosphere where every child, regardless of ability or background, is valued equally. Overall, children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills below those normally expected. In communication and language development, and in personal, social and emotional development skills are generally well below age-related expectations. The Early Years Foundation Stage provides children with a firm foundation for future success. Children work and play in a welcoming and stimulating environment both indoors and outside. Teaching is enthusiastic and supportive. Children's progress is checked effectively and the outcomes are used to plan activities according to individual children's needs. Children are very happy and obviously enjoy their learning in the safe and nurturing environment. Parents and carers are informed on a regular basis of their child's progress. There are detailed arrangements to ensure children settle quickly and smoothly into their new surroundings. Where necessary, effective use of outside agencies provides support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage provide a good vision for future success, a strong sense of purpose for its work and a good balance of teacher-led and child-initiated activities to stimulate and engage children in work and play.

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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers who returned completed questionnaires was broadly in line with the national average. The responses to the questionnaires show that most parents and carers are happy with the education the school provides. There were no areas of general concern, although a few parents and carers think that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors observed behaviour in lessons and around the school, held discussions with staff and pupils and scrutinised behavioural records. Their findings are in the report.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

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

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

The inspection team received 78 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 318 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	39	50	35	45	3	4	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	41	53	37	47	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	31	40	44	56	2	3	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	37	47	38	49	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	45	58	33	42	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	36	46	37	47	3	4	2	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	41	53	37	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)	32	41	43	55	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	37	46	59	1	1	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	38	38	49	5	6	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	27	35	43	55	5	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	35	45	40	51	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	43	55	34	44	1	1	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 all 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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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. Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



19 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Limehurst Community Primary School, Oldham, OL8 3JQ

Thank you for your warm welcome when your school was inspected recently.

You go to a good school. I was very pleased to see that you achieve well and that your skills in English, especially in writing, have been rising rapidly – well done! I was also pleased to see that your attendance and punctuality have improved – again, well done! Boys are also doing much better and making better progress – please keep this up! Your school takes good care of you. It was pleasing to see how well you all get on together and how polite you are.

The teaching you receive is good. However, there are a few things we are asking your school to do to help you learn even better. They are:

- making sure that all teaching is good and that it is always lively enough to keep you interested
- making sure that teaching always sets you tasks that challenge you appropriately and encourage you to find more things out for yourselves
- making sure that marking is always helpful in showing you what you need to do to make your work even better.

I am confident that you will continue to work hard to make sure your school goes from strength to strength in the coming years.

I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Wall
Lead inspector

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