

Bolton by Bowland Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119688
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	379869
Inspection dates	30 April 2012–1 May 2012
Lead inspector	Geoffrey Yates

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	23
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jeanne Bishop
Headteacher	Maureen Stansfield
Date of previous school inspection	25 November 2008
School address	Gisburn Road Bolton-By-Bowland Clitheroe BB7 4NP
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Introduction

Inspection team

Geoffrey Yates

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector visited eight lessons, observing four teachers. Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, teaching staff, the Chair of the Governing Body, two other governors and groups of pupils. The inspector also heard 10 pupils read. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at minutes of the governing body meetings, the systems for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress, safeguarding procedures, pupils' work, and teachers' planning and marking. Inspectors took account of questionnaires completed by 17 parents and carers and those completed by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

Bolton by Bowland Church of England Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school and all the pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average, as is the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs., all of whom are assessed as School Action. There are no disabled pupils or statemented pupils. Pupils are taught in two mixed-age classes; one class contains Reception children and pupils from Year 2, (there are no Year 1 pupils this year), and the other class has pupils from Years 3 to 6. The school meets the current floor standards, which the government sets as the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. It has achieved many awards, including the Eco Green Flag status. The headteacher is also headteacher of another school a short distance away.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. The school is not outstanding because teaching is good rather than outstanding and pupils are not given enough opportunities to apply their problem solving skills in mathematics.
- Children achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage from starting points which are expected for their age. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is above average in English and mathematics, but over the years has been stronger in English than in mathematics. The school's arrangements for teaching reading are good, leading to above-average attainment at the end of both key stages.
- The quality of teaching is good, with examples of outstanding practice. Where teaching is outstanding, the needs of all pupils are met exceedingly well throughout the lessons, ensuring that pupils are given every opportunity to think things out for themselves. In some lessons where teaching is not as effective, the pace of lessons slows because pupils are not fully engaged in learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and they have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in various situations, including when using the internet. Pupils say that bullying is not tolerated with one pupil commenting, 'We are a family school. We don't laugh at people with laugh with them.'
- Leadership and management are good, including the leadership of teaching and the management of performance. There is a clear focus on pupils' academic and personal needs and on systems to evaluate the school's work. This ensures that pupils enjoy all aspects of school life and are well prepared for the future.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure the quality of teaching is consistently good or better by:
 - increasing the pace of learning in some lessons so that pupils make at least good progress
 - providing consistently challenging opportunities in mathematics for pupils to use and apply their problem solving skills well.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Overall achievement is good and this aligns with the positive views of parents and carers. Pupils are enthusiastic, have excellent attitudes to learning, cooperate extremely well and are motivated to do their best. Pupils apply themselves well to the tasks that they are given to do, not just in English and mathematics. For example, in a music lesson they produced singing of high quality and clearly enjoyed the activity.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils make good gains in all areas of learning because of the high-quality adult support and the effective curriculum. They enthusiastically join in well-planned activities, both inside and outside led by members of staff. They also have appropriate opportunities to make decisions and choices to direct their own learning. By the end of the Reception Year children meet the levels expected for their age in all areas of learning and some exceed these.

The small number of pupils in each year group means that attainment at the end of each key stage can vary from year to year. In 2010, for instance, there was a dip in attainment in both English and mathematics. Inspection evidence shows attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 to be above average in English and mathematics, reflecting the above-average outcomes in the latest national tests. However, over-time, attainment varies between subjects with attainment in mathematics being broadly average in previous years. In mathematics, while there is evidence of improvements being made, pupils are not consistently challenged to use their problem solving skills well.

Across the school, pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs. The development of reading skills is given a strong emphasis. As a result, attainment in reading is above average in Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, clearly enjoy lessons. They respond well to the challenges teachers set as demonstrated by the good range of pupils' work on display around the school. In both classes, pupils respond positively to challenging activities. For example, pupils in Key Stage 2 were keen to identify synonyms for the words they had been given. Writing is given a high profile. One pupil's recount of a visit to an artist's studio included the following lines, 'Now it was our turn to be the artist. We all had to think up a character that we could create'.

Quality of teaching

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the teacher and teaching assistant support and challenge children well both in the classroom and in the outside area, with a strong emphasis on children's personal development. They ensure there is a very good balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities.

Across the school, parents and carers think that their children are taught well with good use made of support staff. Reading skills are taught very well. While teaching is good, there are examples of outstanding teaching. In the best lessons teachers move learning along briskly. They set high expectations of what pupils can achieve. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, for example, pupils were keen to work out a problem asking them to find the missing numbers. Teachers use marking well and pupils are aware of their targets. However, while there are

recent examples of pupils being challenged to use their problem solving skills well in mathematics lessons, a trawl of pupils' work shows this is not consistent across the academic year. Adults use questioning well to check what pupils understand. Improvements in the quality of assessment information have led to work now being accurately pitched at different levels in order to meet pupils' needs well in the mixed age-group classes. When teaching is sometimes less successful, the tasks do not always meet the needs of some pupils throughout the whole lesson and as such the pace of learning slows. For example, pupils have to sit through an explanation of a learning objective for one group of pupils before the learning objective for their group is explained. The small number of pupils with special educational needs receive good support including that provided by an additional teacher.

Teaching makes a very positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, younger pupils are captivated daily by observing the growth of tadpoles in the fish bowl in the classroom. All members of staff expertly encourage pupils in developing their social skills and to work productively alongside others. Some outstanding teaching was observed during the inspection. Evidence of this can be seen especially in the improvements in the quality of pupils' writing, reflecting the success of the recent leadership and management initiative.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The strong ethos of care is very clear in every aspect of school life. As a result, pupils know that everyone's efforts are appreciated and valued. All parents and carers report correctly that there is a high standard of behaviour in the school and their children feel very safe. Pupils are happy at school demonstrated clearly by their above-average attendance and good punctuality. Pupils cannot recall any instances of bullying and display a very clear understanding of the causes and effects of different types of behaviour. They manage their own behaviour very well and can explain how and why occasional playground disagreements or upsets do happen from time to time. Younger pupils are very confident that older pupils or adults will always provide help whenever it is needed. Pupils are keen to learn. For example, when the inspector was in the process of choosing which pupils might read to him, all the pupils politely shouted out, 'Can we all read please?' The inspector then proceeded to do what the pupils had asked. Pupils are polite and courteous and many display a good sense of empathy. All pupils play happily together and willingly support each other during lessons, if required. The school council regularly considers pupils' suggestions about school improvement and all pupils make a very good contribution to school and community life.

Leadership and management

Parents and carers think highly of the school leadership and management. The high expectations of the headteacher are clear to see in the good teaching and learning, in the improvements in the achievement of the pupils and very positive attitudes of staff and pupils. As such the school has a good capacity to improve even further. Staff are more aware of their responsibilities across the school and carry them out diligently. The curriculum is of a good quality; it meets the needs of all pupils successfully and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness very strongly. For example, the school has visited a Sikh temple, worked with an author and worked off-site with a sculptor. Pupils talk enthusiastically about these events and how much they have learned from them. The governing body and headteacher give a high priority to promoting equality and tackling

discrimination. As a result, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are fully included in the life of the school, enjoy learning and achieve equally well. Members of the governing body and staff ensure that effective procedures to safeguard pupils are in place and that government requirements are met.

Recent improvements have ensured monitoring is robust and regular assessments and detailed analyses of information are carried out. As a result, the school has an accurate understanding of its effectiveness. The leadership of teaching is of a good quality. Good practice is recognised and staff performance managed well to secure improvement in teaching and learning. Staff value greatly the provision made for their professional development, especially the work done through joint activities with the partner school. The governing body carries out its duties well. Members are provided with a good range of information about the school's performance and the impact of new initiatives. They use this to ask challenging questions which support the school's drive for improvement. A detailed development plan includes relevant key priorities.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



2 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bolton by Bowland Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Clitheroe, BB7 4NP

What a wonderful family feel your school has and what a wonderful setting the school is in! Thank you for the very friendly welcome you gave me when I inspected your school recently. It was lovely to see you enjoying your lessons so much. I really enjoyed my visit, especially talking with you. The pupils I spoke to, probably everyone, were great ambassadors for your school. I agree with your school that you receive a good education and that you achieve well. You told me how much you enjoy taking responsibility for things across the school and how proud you rightly are about the money you have raised for charitable causes. It was an absolute delight to see how outstandingly well you behave, not just in lessons but around the school.

I agree with you that everyone who works in the school takes very good care of you. You work hard in lessons and are very polite. You told me that you feel very safe in school and you know a great deal about how to stay safe. I have asked your school to make sure that it builds on the improvements already made in your writing by making sure in mathematics lessons that you are given plenty of opportunities to use your problem solving skills, so that you make even better progress. You can help your teachers by making sure you work as hard as you can when asked to solve problems. There is currently good teaching throughout your school with some that is outstanding. I want your school to do all it can to make all teaching outstanding so that the progress you make is rapid rather than good. You can help by making sure you take full notice of all that is said in lessons and by always trying your very best with your work.

I hope you keep on working hard so you can continue to play a big part in trying to make your school even better. Also, keep up your good attendance record!

Yours sincerely

Geoffrey Yates
Lead inspector

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