



Limehurst Junior Infant and Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 105638
LEA Oldham
Inspection number 277381
Inspection dates 17 May 2006 to 17 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Margot D'Arcy CfBT Lead Inspector

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to inspect any school in England. The inspection is to be treated as a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary	School address	White Bank Road
School category	Community		Oldham
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Lancashire OL8 3JQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 9113140
Number on roll	296	Fax number	0161 9113141
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Shirley Buckley
Date of previous inspection	1 November 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Y Clare

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector met with the headteacher, children, staff, the chair of governors and the school's local authority adviser; 52 parents responded to the questionnaire seeking their views about the school. A range of documentation and children's work was also examined.

Description of the school

Limehurst is an average sized primary school with a Nursery. It is situated on the Limeside housing estate to the south of Oldham. Socially and economically the area is disadvantaged and the proportion of children entitled to free school meals is well above average. Almost all children are White British and all speak English as their first language. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Many children join or leave the school other than at the usual times. On entry to the Nursery, children's skills are well below those expected for their age particularly in communication, language and literacy.

The school has gained the Investors in People award and the Healthy Schools award.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school where children achieve well. From a low starting point on entry to the Nursery, children leave Year 6 with average standards in English and mathematics and above average standards in science. Value for money is good.

The school's success and ethos is underpinned by its motto of 'no excuses'. The headteacher, senior leadership team and governors are somewhat modest about what the school does well but are very clear about what needs improving. More importantly, they know how to go about securing improvement. For example, a whole school focus on promoting children's language through drama, research work and writing across many subjects saw significant improvements in last year's test results. More than half the Year 6 children (a much higher proportion than nationally) attained the higher level in English. Science results at this level were also much higher than nationally, continuing the school's tradition of ensuring children's very good achievement in this subject. Whilst mathematics results were slightly above the national average they did not reflect the same very good rate of progress during Key Stage 2 as seen in English and science. This is because children have generally attained above or well above average standards in this subject at the end of Year 2 so their starting point on beginning Key Stage 2 has been particularly high.

The school is keen to improve the achievement of more able children overall and to reduce the disparity in achievement between mathematics and other subjects so is tackling the issue with a vengeance. Rigorous checks on the quality of teaching and curriculum planning in mathematics have been conducted. These have resulted in very focused points for improving the balance of teaching methods and activities so that children are constantly challenged. Refinement to the assessment system is also underway so that the school can more easily pick up any underachievement. Whilst the impact of these initiatives may not be reflected in the most recent Year 6 tests (taken in the week prior to the inspection) there is no doubt that the provision in mathematics is good. Good and outstanding teaching was seen in this subject at both key stages and discussions with children revealed that for many, mathematics is a favourite subject. 'It's good fun', and 'it makes you think hard and discover things' were just two of the quotes from children.

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Although children's standards at the end of the Reception year are below national averages they make good progress given their starting points. Personal, social and emotional development is constantly promoted and a strong emphasis is given to developing basic skills. The organisation of the two classrooms into language and mathematics bases works well with structured play and teacher led activities continually reinforcing learning in these areas alongside others. Whilst children have good access to a safe outdoor environment the current work to extend and develop outdoor learning is an appropriate focus.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are taught at a brisk pace by teachers who have very good subject knowledge. The warmth of their relationships with children, balanced with high expectations of their behaviour and application to

work, result in productive learning. In outstanding lessons children were well challenged by work that built effectively on what they already knew. Problem solving is high on the agenda, which really motivates children. In science, for example, Year 5 children enthusiastically discussed the different processes they could use to separate a mixture of solids. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson children came up with innovative ways to record a seating sequence to address a problem set in the context of King Arthur's Knights of the Round Table. Year 2 children relished working out the two possible solutions to how many bipod and tripod (two-legged and three-legged) aliens there might be from a given number of legs. These lessons typify the excitement and enjoyment of learning that children speak about at Limehurst.

Children's personal development is good. They know their targets for improvement and appreciate being involved in assessing their own progress at the end of every lesson. Children have a good sense of right and wrong. They behave well at playtimes and in the dining hall; in lessons behaviour is often exemplary. Children work together responsibly and maturely and show confidence in sharing their views and explaining their work. The school has made children very aware of the need for a healthy lifestyle and how to keep safe. They talk knowledgeably about having a balanced diet, taking exercise and having enough sleep. Children know about the dangers of drugs and are well aware of issues such as road safety. The active school council has influenced a number of decisions, such as improving facilities at playtime, recycling paper and organising initiatives to raise money for charities. An interesting initiative that has raised children's economic awareness is the school's involvement with a credit union. This is teaching children how to manage their money through regular saving and understand the relative benefits and pitfalls of loans and credit. Attendance rates are average and showing improvement. Whilst many aspects of children's personal development are well promoted, the school is aware of the need to increase children's understanding of cultures different to their own. This has rightly been identified as a priority.

The school provides a good curriculum and a good level of care, support and guidance for children. The school is concentrating on developing key skills across the curriculum and some particularly good examples were seen in information and communication technology (ICT). Provision and standards in this subject have improved significantly since the last inspection in response to specialist teaching for all children from Year 1 upwards and much improved resources and planning. Effective links are being made between many subjects to enable learning to become as meaningful as possible for children. Regular and appropriate homework is set for children of all ages and contributes well to their learning. French is introduced from Year 1 and the Spanish club has proved so popular that this is being introduced into the main curriculum. An extensive range of additional opportunities that promote learning in subjects such as sport, ICT, music and design technology exist for children of all ages. The accomplished choir is a popular choice for many girls and boys.

The school works hard to improve children's attendance and punctuality. The popular breakfast club attracts a large number of children with its very good range of fruit, juices, cereals and hot choices. Moreover, it ensures that many children are in school and on time for lessons. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well

supported in school and through links with outside agencies, both of which ensure their good progress and well-being. Arrangements for helping new children to settle into school and to ease the transfer of older children to high school are good. Child protection procedures and health and safety arrangements are rigorous.

The headteacher leads and manages the school well and instils a true sense of teamwork. Issues from the last inspection have been dealt with very well and are now strengths. The school's accurate prioritisation of areas to improve shows that there is good capacity for further improvement. The deputy headteacher provides good support for the headteacher, as does the senior leadership team, all of whom are very good role models for teaching. Governors are well informed and involved. They support the school and make regular and appropriate checks on its work. Both parents and children are regularly consulted and are very happy with what the school provides. When asked if there was anything that could make the school better, one child succinctly summed up the views of many; 'absolutely nothing, because the school is great!'

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

N/A

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

N/A

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

N/A

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

N/A

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

N/A

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

N/A

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I enjoyed meeting and talking to you on my visit to your school yesterday. You were all very polite and helpful.

These are some of the things I liked about your school.

- You enjoy school very much, in fact those of you I spoke to couldn't think of one thing to make it better!
- You behave responsibly in lessons and play and chat together well at break times.
- Teachers and support staff work very hard to help you learn and to make lessons enjoyable.
- I was really impressed with how well you work together in lessons, trying so hard to solve the interesting problems that your teachers had set you.
- You have a lot of interesting clubs and activities to take part in before school, after school and even at lunchtime; I particularly enjoyed listening to the superb singing from the choir and having you explain French words to me.
- Your headteacher and all of the staff know you well and take good care of you.

Mrs Clare, the governors and staff do a good job and have plans to improve the school even more. They are working hard to help you achieve higher standards, especially in mathematics and are developing a new system to keep a better check on your progress. They also have a plan to improve your knowledge and understanding of the wide variety of people and cultures in the world.