



# Alderman Bolton Community Primary School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 133677  
**LEA** Warrington  
**Inspection number** 282331  
**Inspection dates** 23 March 2006 to 24 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs Marguerite McCloy HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Longdin Street
<b>School category</b>	Community		Latchford
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		Warrington, Cheshire WA4 1PW
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01925 633262
<b>Number on roll</b>	241	<b>Fax number</b>	01925 633612
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Dennis Pickering
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Lyndsey Glass

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 23 March 2006 - 24 March 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 282331
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

---

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

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.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and two additional inspectors. The previous inspection in March 2004 found that the school had serious weaknesses in the teaching and learning which led to some pupils underachieving. Since then, HMI have visited the school to assess its progress on the areas for improvement.

## Description of the school

Alderman Bolton Community Primary School opened in September 2002 following the amalgamation of infant and junior schools. It is an average sized primary with 241 pupils on roll, which includes 39 children attending part-time in the nursery. The school is situated in the Latchford district of Warrington, in a mixed area of private and rented housing. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is just above average. However, there are higher than average levels of social deprivation in the local area and a higher than average number of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The majority of pupils are of white British background. A number of staff changes have taken place in the last two years, although staffing is now stable.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Alderman Bolton Community Primary School provides a satisfactory education overall for its pupils and has a number of strengths which are leading to significant improvements in areas of its work. This matches the school's own view of its effectiveness.

The school has made good improvement overall since its last inspection due to strong leadership, management and governance and a higher proportion of good teaching. The recently appointed headteacher has successfully set a very clear direction for the school in a relatively short time, leading to a strong sense of teamwork. The leadership of the school has a good understanding of its strengths and areas for development and is acting rigorously to make improvements in partnership with local authority advisers. Despite the school's best efforts, attendance remains well below average.

From a low starting point, pupils make a positive start due to good teaching in the Foundation Stage, although many children have not yet reached the standard expected of them by the time they leave the reception class. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 were significantly below average in the 2005 assessments of Year 2 pupils, although appropriate action has been taken to remedy this. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall across the school. This is illustrated by the gradually rising levels of achievement at the end of Key Stage 2, where standards in mathematics and science were in line with the national average and in English was just below.

The school provides good care, guidance and support for its pupils. Children behave well and show positive attitudes to their learning. Teaching is improving but is not yet consistently good. The school is aware of the need for teachers to consistently provide further challenge to pupils who are capable of attaining higher levels.

The school is providing satisfactory value for money. Based on recent improvements and the developing strengths in leadership, teaching and whole-staff teamwork, the school has good capacity to improve.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards further, particularly at Key Stage 1, and ensure that more able pupils reach above average levels of attainment.
- Strengthen the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better and accelerates the rate of pupils' learning.
- Improve attendance.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. A significant proportion of children enter the school with skills which are well below average, especially in speech and language, emotional and social development. Despite getting off to a good start in the nursery

and reception classes, many have not yet reached the standards expected of them by the time they enter Year 1, particularly in communication, language and literacy.

In the 2005 assessments, Year 2 pupils reached standards which were significantly below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics, reflecting a steady decline over a three year period. No pupils exceeded the average level in reading or writing, and only a small minority did so in mathematics. Boys achieved slightly better results than girls. Contributing to the poor results were staffing difficulties in Key Stage 1 and the high proportion of last year's Year 2 pupils who required additional support with their learning. The school had also been concentrating its efforts on Key Stage 2 standards following the last inspection. As a result of changes in leadership and governance, these issues are now being remedied. Whilst the impact on test results has not yet been fully felt, the current Year 2 pupils are making satisfactory progress towards improved standards for the 2006 assessments.

The school's Key Stage 2 results in the 2005 national tests in English, mathematics and science showed considerable improvement from the previous two years. Although English remains below the national average, standards in mathematics and science were in line and the school met its own targets. There was no difference between the performance of boys and girls in the tests. However, a much lower than average proportion of pupils achieved the higher level. Based on those pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1, they made satisfactory progress overall. The current Year 6 pupils are on target to improve further on last year's results and this reflects the rising trend of achievement across the school. Vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities for the most part make similar progress to other pupils, thanks to the high levels of care and support provided by the school.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

Children's personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is satisfactory with some strengths. Children are treated as individuals and they generally feel safe and secure. Pupils say that they enjoy school more now than in the past but attendance is still below average and procedures to improve it have met with limited success. As a result of strategies put in place by the school, punctuality is improving and behaviour in lessons and around school is good. The school's emphasis on improving pupils' social and emotional development ensures that they are well prepared for learning and have tolerance and respect for others. They are encouraged to take responsibility and their views are listened to, although the school council is in the early stages of development. Pupils are aware of how to adopt healthy lifestyles as the school provides a choice of healthy options at lunchtime and promotes the importance of physical education and sports activities. Pupils respond well to being given opportunities to take responsibility; for example, a group of pupils run a lunchtime dance club and organise mini football tournaments. Pupils contribute to charities and are involved in organising fundraising events. Dance and football clubs are regularly organised by older pupils. During the inspection, these pupils confidently

made announcements and presented awards to younger children in the weekly achievement assembly.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, although a number of good aspects were seen in most lessons. Some common positive features seen in lessons have evolved as a result of effective staff development. During the inspection, no inadequate teaching was seen and a better proportion of lessons were judged to be good than was the case at the last inspection.

Most teachers have good subject knowledge, particularly in literacy and numeracy. In the best lessons, teachers engage pupils particularly well through their own enthusiasm, brisk pace and a range of interesting activities. Most lessons are characterised by warm and positive relationships, with teachers managing pupils well and making effective use of praise, encouragement and promoting independent work skills. Lessons are well prepared, although teachers sometimes lack the confidence and imagination to adapt exemplar plans in order to make lessons more exciting and relevant for pupils. Lessons generally meet the range of pupils' needs, but not all teachers are ensuring that the relatively small number of pupils who are capable of achieving higher levels are challenged sufficiently. This is beginning to happen more consistently, for instance, in some Key Stage 2 classes, and is leading to more optimistic targets for the future.

Teachers provide pupils with a range of opportunities to discuss ideas with partners and these help to extend their speaking and listening skills. Assessment and tracking of pupils' progress have developed well since the introduction of target setting and this supports teachers in planning effectively for pupils' future learning. Pupils with additional learning needs and/or disabilities, especially those with social, emotional and learning difficulties, are well supported. This is carried out through the organisation of small group intervention work for literacy and numeracy and the afternoon sessions in the nurture base. Skilled teaching assistants and other staff are deployed well to support learning. The school is building good relationships with parents and carers in order to help children to make better progress and experience success.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum which is satisfactory overall and includes a range of enrichment activities such as visits to places of interest and opportunities for sport. Good attention is paid to developing pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy. The school is not yet fully promoting these skills as widely as it might across the curriculum. However, there are plans in place to address this and to develop more creative links between a wider range of subjects.

The school promotes well pupils' awareness of safety issues and healthy lifestyles. Pupils have opportunities to contribute to the school community and to take responsibilities. There are good opportunities to join in a variety of additional activities at both Key Stages 1 and 2. These include sports, arts and music clubs which reflect strong areas of the school's work.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides good care, guidance and support for its pupils. Staff are highly committed to promoting pupils' health, safety and welfare, as seen in the quality of their relationships and support for all children. Child protection procedures are robust and regularly reviewed. Risk assessments are attended to and pupils feel safe and well supported in school. They settle well into school due to good support from Foundation Stage staff. Older pupils are well informed about future options and there are good links with secondary schools. Learners at risk are identified early because of the careful attention paid to checking pupils' welfare. The school's use of its nurture group provision, learning mentor and support services ensures that all pupils, including those at most risk, are well supported. The nurture facilities are particularly successful in improving the emotional health and achievement of the children, and parents agree with this positive view. Pupils are making better progress due to the improved use of target setting by teachers and support staff. Effective links with outside agencies support the school's strategies to improve behaviour and attendance.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. In addition, inspectors recognised that recent improvements demonstrate strong aspects of leadership and good capacity for further improvement. Following an unsettling period after the last inspection, staffing is now stable and the decline in standards has been halted. Since taking up her post at the start of the school year, the headteacher has been successful in setting a very clear direction for the school, promoting a sense of teamwork and improving staff morale. She has the support and confidence of staff and governors, who are similarly committed to improving standards of achievement for all pupils.

The leadership team carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively and work well together to monitor standards and progress, analyse test results and set targets for improvement. Teachers now have an understanding of the relationship between the quality of teaching and learning and its impact on assessment data. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and based upon a range of strategies by which the work of the school is monitored. The headteacher has received effective support from local authority advisers and consultants so that she has quickly gained an accurate picture of the quality of teaching and where improvements can be made. This is being addressed through the school's commitment to a national programme of intensive support for literacy and numeracy. This is increasing the effectiveness of teachers' use

of pupil assessments and targets to bring about more rapid improvements. Action plans for improvement are well focused, shared with all staff and appropriately monitored. The school is beginning to set more challenging targets and the improving profile of teaching and learning leads to a better capacity to reach these.

Good improvement has been made since the last inspection when it was found that there was a need for the leadership of the school to focus more strongly on raising standards and managing staff performance, and for governors to challenge and monitor the school's provision. During the last two years, governors have become more involved in monitoring developments and played a full role in working alongside the local authority and headteacher. Consequently, the governors are well aware of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and they share the headteacher's vision and optimism for the future development of the school.

The school is forging closer links with parents through regular communication and inviting their views on the school and what it has to offer. The school's response to a recent survey of parents and pupils shows that their views are being listened to and acted upon where possible. Every effort is also being made to emphasise to parents the importance of regular attendance. Although the school is monitoring pupils whose attendance is poor, levels of attendance remain stubbornly low.

Following the period of instability, the school recognises that expectations of pupils' academic achievement should now be raised in order to improve the rate of progress for the majority of pupils, especially for those who are capable of achieving above average levels.

Due to the impact of staff absences and the cost of supply teachers in the past, the school's finances have been stretched and expenditure for each learner is relatively high. Taking into account recent improvements, however, the school is providing satisfactory value for money.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Inspection judgements

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

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	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	3	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

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	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	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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**

As you know, inspectors visited your school recently. We enjoyed joining your lessons, listening to what you thought about your school and finding out about all the things you do.

Here are some of the good things we found.

- You are well behaved in your lessons and around the school.
- The school takes good care of you. All the staff help you and listen to you if you have any problems with your feelings or your work.
- Your new headteacher is helping all the teachers and support staff to work together as a strong team so the school can be even better.
- You are beginning to learn more quickly, especially when your teachers make sure you know what your targets for improvement are!

We know that the school wants to help you to make better progress in English and mathematics and learn even more, including those of you who may be able to reach the higher levels. We have asked the headteacher and her staff to continue improving the teaching so that it is good or better all of the time. This will mean challenging you more, so be prepared for some hard work!

We do think that your school is better than it used to be and we know that you agree with us because you told inspectors that you like going to school more now. However, some of you still don't come to school on every day possible, and that is making it difficult for teachers to help you learn faster. You can play your part by asking your parents not to take you on holidays in school time, and to make sure you are in school each day unless you are ill. You could make that one of the most important targets for you and your family! Thank you for being so friendly and helpful, and good luck for the future.