



Daisyfield Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119123
Local Authority Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number 291328
Inspection dates 16–17 November 2006
Reporting inspector Jennie Platt

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Clinton Street
School category	Community		Blackburn, Lancashire
Age range of pupils	3–11		BB1 5LB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01254 52108
Number on roll (school)	286	Fax number	01254 679069
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	
		Headteacher	Mr Peter Fenton
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–11	16–17 November 2006	291328

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Daisyfield is a larger than average primary school. Almost all of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups and almost all of these learn English as an additional language. The school serves an area of social and economic disadvantage. A high proportion of pupils are entitled to receive free school meals. The number of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2005. At the time of the inspection, the governing body was in the process of reconstitution and was due to meet to elect a new chair of governors.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides an acceptable quality of education with some good features. Value for money is satisfactory. This is a school that celebrates its cultural diversity to the full and provides a common ground of mutual respect, which enables pupils to learn in a friendly community. Most parents are pleased because their pupils are happy and enjoy school. One parent said that, 'My children go to school smiling and return with an even greater smile and sense of achievement.' The pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. This is a caring school and pupils say they feel safe because they know staff care for them. This has established an atmosphere of trust and pupils have a wide circle of friends. They eagerly accept responsibility and understand their actions can make their school a pleasant place to learn. Their progress in developing these skills prepares them well for the next stage of schooling and their future. This understanding leads pupils to support the local community enthusiastically and they work hard raising funds for several charities. Pupils recognise the importance of keeping healthy in what they eat and how they care for themselves.

The achievement of pupils is satisfactory. It has improved because of effective leadership from the headteacher and support from the local authority. The improved monitoring procedures make it easier to pinpoint where help is needed and are having a positive impact on progress. More pupils are now reaching the level expected for their age. Children enter the school with exceptionally low standards, with many learning English as an additional language. Good teaching in the Foundation Stage, with a successful focus on speaking and listening, enables children to overcome this difficulty. As a result, children make good progress, although they do not reach the level expected for their age by the end of the Reception year. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and test results show standards are close to average in reading and mathematics, but below in writing. In Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress and results of national test show a slowly rising trend. However, standards remain stubbornly below average for their age, particularly in writing.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, though inspectors saw some good teaching throughout the school. In these lessons, the pace of learning is brisk and tasks are challenging so that pupils achieve well. This challenge is less apparent in other lessons when teachers do not take account of assessment information to target work at the correct level. As a result, some pupils do not make their best progress. Occasionally, too long is spent listening to teachers and pupils start to lose interest.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing throughout the school.
- Remove the inconsistencies in teaching to make lessons more challenging and increase the rate of progress, especially in Key Stage 2.
- Make more use of assessment information to match work to pupils' ability and to involve children in their own learning by telling them how to improve.
- Extend the role of subject leaders to include more monitoring and evaluating of what is happening in the subjects they lead.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The achievement of pupils is satisfactory. Children enter the Nursery with well below average skills. Their literacy skills are very limited because for almost all of them English is not their first spoken language. Many of them are reluctant speakers. Although children do not reach the level expected of them by the end of the Reception class, many make good progress because speaking and listening are successfully promoted. Where language is less of a barrier children make very good progress as can be seen in their creative and physical development.

This good start is successfully built on in Key Stage 1. The results of national tests for seven year olds show standards are close to average in reading and mathematics but below average in writing. Many pupils still lack confidence in expressing their ideas in writing and this prevents them reaching average standards. However, given their low starting points, the number of pupils working at the level expected for their age represents good achievement.

The school's national test results for eleven year olds show standards are below average but are improving. Overall achievement is satisfactory except for the more able pupils who could make better progress, especially in writing. Boys do not make as much progress as girls. Decisive action has been taken to remedy this, with a more practical approach to teaching basic literacy skills. The new approach to writing in Years 3 and 4 is very practical and, as well as improving progress in writing, is capturing the imagination of boys.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. Those with a statement of special educational need that outlines their very specific requirements make good progress because extra help meets the pupils' diverse needs very effectively.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. They enjoy learning about other faiths and cultures. Pupils recognise the importance of abiding by the class rules they have drawn up. This leads to a harmonious community. Behaviour is good and pupils are polite and eager to help visitors. Occasionally, pupils' concentration lapses when the challenge and pace of lessons are insufficient. Pupils play together well; although the cramped space on the playground leads to the occasional dispute over games. Attendance is below the national average because pupils take holidays to celebrate their own cultural festivals such as Eid. However, it is a measure of pupils' enjoyment that most attend regularly. Much excitement was created during the inspection by the arrival of two fire engines and officers to talk to the pupils. Such visits contribute significantly to pupils' good understanding about keeping safe. They know about healthy eating and how to look after themselves. The school council is a good example of pupils making decisions and

learning to negotiate. Older pupils show a mature approach to helping others in school and the wider community. This gives them a sound basis of preparation for their next school and the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with examples of good teaching. In the Foundation Stage, teaching is good because staff have a good understanding of how these young children learn. As a result, the emphasis is on practical activities and fun so that children are happy. In most lessons, good use of bi-lingual staff enables pupils to use either their home language or English to promote their confidence in speaking; this lays a good foundation for future learning.

Teaching is satisfactory overall in the rest of the school with several strengths. Teachers make their classrooms attractive with many visual prompts, which effectively guide pupils as they work. Good relationships result in an orderly atmosphere, which aids learning. The new approach to teaching writing seen in Years 1, 2, 3 and 4 is very suitable for the needs of these pupils. The visual actions representing punctuation and the cultural focus in texts are capturing the interest of all. This is less obvious in lessons at the later parts of Key Stage 2, where the variety of tasks and challenge is missing and pupils, especially the boys, show less enthusiasm for learning. The pace of lessons is usually brisk in numeracy lessons but less so in literacy. Too long spent listening leads to pupils, especially boys, losing interest, particularly if they are less confident in speaking English. Lessons are generally prepared well with a good sequence of events and pupils understand what is expected of them. However, tasks are not always tailored enough to meet the needs of all pupils and to enable them to make the best progress they can. Teaching assistants provide good support because they understand the needs of the pupils they are helping.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The promotion of pupils' personal development is a strength in the curriculum, enabling them to learn in a happy and safe environment. Pupils appreciate the weekly lessons that provide opportunities to share their concerns. One pupil explained, 'It helps us to understand saying rude things is hurtful.' Throughout the school, planning takes every opportunity to value the pupils' culture and make learning meaningful. Literacy and numeracy are developed well in other subjects. Skills in information and communication technology (ICT) are improving but these are not being fully exploited in other subjects. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. A rich and exciting range of activities enables children to become confident and eager learners. New plans are in place to improve the outdoor space. Although staff use the limited space well for physical development, it is not fully exploited in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils

look forward to the special themed weeks, such as art and design, which enrich the curriculum. Some very attractive art work results from these activities. A good range of clubs also enhance pupils' experience. Healthy lifestyles are promoted well through ample opportunity for sport including the links with the local football club.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school gives good attention to safeguarding pupils and enabling them to achieve as well as they can. Vulnerable children are well catered for by having a mentor assigned to them and their parents so that they can share any worries.

Pupils feel safe because they know help is readily available and staff listen and respond to any concerns. Close links with many external agencies keep staff well informed about the best help to offer their pupils. For example, the dentist and the 'life caravan' visit to give good advice about healthy lifestyles.

Assessment procedures are good but staff do not always make best use of assessment information when planning lessons. The monitoring of pupils' progress throughout the year has improved with more regular checks so that any potential underachievement is spotted and action taken. This is having a positive impact on standards. Class targets for improvement are set but the system to focus on one area of literacy per term means insufficient attention is given to pupils' weaknesses in writing and pupils are unclear how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has a good management style and has brought in several important changes, which are leading to an improvement in standards. This includes monitoring of teaching and providing additional training where needed. The headteacher effectively gauges the pace of change, so ensuring staff commitment to new ideas. Consequently, the school is well placed to move forward.

Evaluation of the school is based on consultation and is accurate. The school is very clear about what needs to improve and is working well with the local authority to raise standards. For example, the imaginative way of teaching writing is already reaping benefits. The school recognises the need to improve the role of subject coordinators to include evaluation and monitoring within their areas of responsibility.

Strong partnerships with external agents lead to good inclusion for pupils who are learning through English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, the school does not have procedures to ensure that the needs of the gifted and talented pupils are fully met.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Daisyfield Primary School

Clinton Street

Blackburn

Lancashire

BB1 5LB

20 November 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave to the inspectors when we visited your school. We appreciated the way you told us about your school and showed us around when we were lost. We agree that this is a friendly school. You contribute to this by your good behaviour and the way you help others. Keep this up as it really makes Daisyfield Primary School a happy place to learn. You told us you feel safe and understand how to look after yourselves. Continue to listen carefully to your teachers so that you learn even more about keeping healthy.

We have asked the teachers and governors to look at ways to make your school even better. These include improving your writing. We enjoyed your Rainbow writing lessons and would like all lessons to be as exciting and challenging. We have also asked them to continue to look at ways to check that you are making as much progress as you possibly can.

We know that you work hard at school and wish you well for the future.

Best wishes

Mrs J E Platt, Mrs Y Clare and Mrs K Dodd (Inspectors)