

Ribble Drive Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105300
Local Authority	Bury
Inspection number	308825
Inspection dates	3–4 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Jim Crouch

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 on roll	
School	224
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr A Matthews
Headteacher	Mrs S Erswell
Date of previous school inspection	7 March 2005
School address	Ribble Drive Whitefield Manchester M45 8TD
Telephone number	0161 766 6625
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average sized school serves a community in a suburb of Bury which experiences high levels of socio-economic deprivation. The school has an on-site Children's Centre. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average, as is the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The number with a statement of special educational need is average. A small number of pupils are in public care. The school is an Investor in People and holds the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the Activemark.

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 which is highly valued by pupils and parents. The headteacher and governors know the community very well and are fully aware of pupils' personal social and academic needs and the barriers to learning that many of them face. They have created a caring, inclusive and supportive school in which pupils trust their teachers and develop an enthusiasm for learning.

Children join the school with skills and abilities which are below those typical for their age. They make satisfactory progress through the Foundation Stage and, as a result, levels of skill on entry to Key Stage 1 are below those normally found. Recent improvements in monitoring learning mean that teachers are very well informed of the progress that pupils are now making at Key Stages 1 and 2. As a result, teaching and intervention strategies to support learning are well directed to meet the needs of learners. Pupils now make good progress so that standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are broadly average. Support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and the small number whose first language is not English, is good, enabling them to become confident learners and make good progress.

Teachers have high expectations. Year 6 pupils say, 'We have to work hard and get loads of homework, but we enjoy school because we learn a lot.' Most lessons are taught at a brisk pace and use a good range of activities to maintain pupils' interest and involvement. Subject leaders provide good curriculum guidance and monitor learning to inform planning and identify areas for school improvement. They work well together to develop cross-curricular topics and ensure that pupils have good opportunities to practise and develop literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills in meaningful contexts. The school is firmly committed to broadening pupils' experiences. It does this successfully through a good programme of visits and visiting speakers and by offering a wide range of extra-curricular activities as well as a residential course for older pupils.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. They demonstrate care for each other and show good awareness of the things they can do to improve the lives of others, as illustrated by their charity work. The majority of pupils show their enjoyment of school through their regular attendance and good punctuality. However, a small but significant number of pupils fail to attend regularly and, as a result, do not progress as well as they might. Pupils talk convincingly about their healthy lifestyles. They take part in a wide range of sporting activities, as celebrated by the school holding the Activemark, and take advantage of the school's breakfast club and fruit scheme. They enjoy taking on responsibilities, for example by serving on the school council, and are making good progress in developing the basic skills that they will need in their future life and the world of work.

The senior leadership team has used its good self-evaluation to raise expectations and aspirations. The school works well with parents, community organisations and other agencies to promote pupils' well-being. Issues raised in the last inspection have been successfully addressed and staff at all levels show the confidence and capacity to take on responsibilities, lead initiatives and promote pupils' learning. The good progress pupils are now making indicates that the school gives good value for money and has good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Parents and carers are happy to bring their children to this safe and happy setting where they are encouraged to be closely involved in their children's learning. They particularly enjoy looking through photographs and work samples in the attractive portfolios that celebrate their children's achievement in all areas of work. Children join the Nursery with skills that are below those typical for their age. Many of them show weak communication and social skills, and in some cases poor behaviour. Good induction procedures and good personal support mean that the children soon grow in confidence, make friends and learn to treat each other with respect. Interesting and stimulating activities give children the opportunity to choose and explore both indoors and outdoors and they join in enthusiastically. However, the staff do not always take full advantage of opportunities to develop the learning potential of these activities. As a result, children do not progress as well as they might and the children's skills at the end of the Foundation Stage are below those normally found for their age.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the attendance of pupils.
- Ensure that activities in the Foundation Stage are used consistently to promote pupils' learning and progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and standards by the end of Year 6 broadly average. Pupils start Year 1 with skills and abilities which are lower than those typical of children of this age. Good teaching and high levels of support mean that they make good progress through Key Stage 1. By the end of Key Stage 1 standards are close to the national average, although, as the school recognises weaknesses in writing remain. In recent years, progress at Key Stage 2 has been broadly satisfactory, with weaknesses in writing and mathematics. However, improvements in the tracking of pupils' progress, especially in writing and mathematics, have led to much more accurate identification of areas of underperformance and individual learning needs. As a result, the school has been able to match teaching more closely to learning needs and put support into place for individuals and groups of pupils. This has ensured that pupils are now making good progress at Key Stage 2 and achievement in writing and mathematics is improving. These improved levels of support mean that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and other vulnerable pupils now make good progress. The school sets challenging targets for its pupils. Internal tests and assessments indicate that pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 are already close to meeting their end of key stage targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Relationships with the adults who care for them are good and this has a positive impact upon learning. Pupils appreciate how well they are treated by staff. They say, 'There are only nice people at our school.' Pupils are polite and friendly. They follow school rules to keep them safe and show respect for each other on the playground and in school. Playground buddies are well trained and support younger pupils in their play. Incidents of misbehaviour are frowned on by the majority of pupils and addressed

promptly by staff. Attendance is broadly satisfactory and a majority of pupils attend well. However, a small but significant number of pupils fail to attend regularly and, consequently, do not progress as well as they might. Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are underpinned by opportunities to strengthen moral messages and embrace differences and cultural diversity. For example, a whole-school focus in assembly and form time on the theme of racist bullying has given them the opportunity to explore issues related to living in a multicultural society. Pupils are confident to contribute their views and raise issues of concern with the staff. Their awareness of how to develop healthy lifestyles is evident in their operation of a healthy tuck shop and the numbers involved in sports-based clubs at lunchtime and after school. Pupils work well in pairs and groups and are confident in their use of computers. This, combined with their improved progress in literacy and numeracy, means they are making good progress in preparing for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good, and some lessons are outstanding. Teachers use their good subject knowledge well to plan interesting and enjoyable lessons. There is good pace to learning because of teachers' confident approach and their good rapport with pupils. Resources, particularly interactive whiteboards, are used effectively to bring lessons to life. Pupils use computers well to reinforce and extend their learning. For example, in preparation for a literacy lesson, Year 3 pupils accessed the Internet to research a chosen holiday destination. This helped to make the main focus of the lesson, writing a postcard, more meaningful and enjoyable. Teaching assistants are a valuable part of the teaching team. They work effectively to provide sensitive, well focused support for groups and individual pupils, who, as a result, make good progress. Homework is used well to reinforce and extend learning. Teachers and subject leaders make good use of assessment data to plan lessons that build on what pupils already know and can do. Pupils are well informed of their individual and group learning targets and are frequently reminded to concentrate on working towards them. Work is often well tailored to meet the needs of different groups of learners, but very occasionally it does not provide sufficient challenge for pupils and, as a result, their progress slows.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum enables pupils to enjoy their education and achieve well. It places a strong emphasis on developing basic skills and generally provides stimulus and challenge for all groups of learners. It is enhanced by the inclusion of French for Reception to Year 4, by visits which broaden pupils' learning through first-hand experiences, and by visitors to school who bring with them particular expertise. The good personal development programme helps pupils to develop mature attitudes towards healthy lifestyles, their future well-being and relationships with others. The coherent links made between subjects support the development of literacy, numeracy and other skills well and help pupils make greater sense of what they learn. For example, a project on mountains gave opportunities for pupils to research on the Internet, practise a range of mathematical skills and discuss the arguments for and against tourism.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents say that the school takes good care of their children. A comprehensive induction programme and good support from staff and senior pupils means that new children settle in well. Child protection procedures are in place alongside the required vetting systems for staff. Pupils feel safe and supported: as one explained, 'We know who to turn to if we need help.' They are well informed of their learning targets and receive good advice on the next steps in learning. The school has developed good links with parents and is now working closely with the on-site children's centre to increase the level of support for children and their families. These links have contributed to an improvement in pupils' attendance so that it is now close to the national average. However, the school recognises that there is more to do to improve further the rate of attendance. Regular reports to parents are used effectively to inform them about their children's levels of attainment. However, some written reports are not always easy to read and tend to tell parents what their children have done, rather than what they have achieved.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides good leadership. Her vision shows a determination to do the best for all pupils and to make them aware of what they can achieve. There is a strong sense of common purpose among the staff. A well planned approach to developing the confidence and competence of teachers and teaching assistants means that the good resources of the school are used well. Leaders are fully aware of the strengths of the school and of those aspects where they need to do better. Leaders and managers play a major part in planning school improvement and work collaboratively to review existing practice and to raise standards. Subject leaders manage their own budgets and monitor teaching and learning, through for example, scrutinising pupils' work. The school improvement plan is detailed, based on good analysis of data and subject to regular review by staff and governors. However, while procedures for monitoring the impact of change are in place, the success criteria are not always explicit. The governing body brings a wide range of skills and knowledge to the school. It is well informed and is prepared to challenge the decisions of senior leaders. Arrangements for governors to work with subject leaders are in place, but are not carried through sufficiently well to be fully effective. The school has successfully gained the confidence and support of parents. Good links with outside organisations and in particular, the on-site children's centre, support pupils' progress and well-being and help them move on confidently to their next phase of learning.

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Annex A

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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

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

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	2

The quality of provision

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

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

Inspection of Ribble Drive Community Primary School, Whitefield,
M45 8TD

Thank you for welcoming the inspection team to your school and being so polite and friendly. We enjoyed talking to you and hearing all of the things you like about your school. We found that your school gives you a good education and helps you make good progress. Here are some of the things we judged to be good about your school:

- the progress you are making
- the care everyone takes of you
- how hard all the staff and governors work to do their best for you
- your behaviour and how well you all get on together
- the way your headteacher works with other people to help you in your education.

There are two important things that could be better and so we have asked the school to:

- make sure that all of you attend school as often as you can
- make sure that children in the Nursery and Reception classes learn more in lessons.

Of course, you also have an important part to play in helping your school to carry on improving. You can do this by attending regularly, continuing to be as positive about learning as you are now and keep trying to improve all aspects of your work.

Thank you again for making us feel so welcome.