

Boundary Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133291
Local Authority	Blackpool
Inspection number	316065
Inspection dates	13–14 February 2008
Reporting inspector	John Heap

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	433
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jenny Briscoe
Headteacher	Mr Dayle Harrison
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2005
School address	Dinmore Avenue Blackpool Lancashire FY3 7RW
Telephone number	01253 478250
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger than average school serves a mainly White British population and has small groups of pupils from a range of other ethnic heritages. A small proportion of pupils are at the early stages of learning English and come from Polish and Portuguese backgrounds. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is more than three times the national average. Large numbers of pupils move in and out of the school during the year. A small number of pupils are looked after by the local authority. About one-third of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Extended provision includes before and after-school clubs.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with senior leaders that this is a good school which provides good value for money. Pupils and parents praise the school for much of its work and typical comments include, 'Since my children started at Boundary Primary they have come on in leaps and bounds.' This statement accurately reflects the good progress that the school has made in the last few years, particularly in raising standards and improving pupils' progress.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Moral and social development are strong and this has led to improvements in behaviour. Any inappropriate behaviour is dealt with promptly and well. Pupils are grateful for this and say that they feel safe and secure in the school. Pupils enjoy school and the wide range of extended services that it has to offer. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils know the importance of leading healthy and safe lifestyles and many make a good contribution to the day-to-day working of the school.

Achievement is good and standards are above average. Children get a good start in the Foundation Stage. They make good progress overall, particularly in Reception. They enter Year 1 with skills and abilities that are broadly typical for their age. Standards at the end of Year 2 are broadly average and this is a big improvement on recent years. Standards at the end of Year 6 have risen and national test results in 2007 were significantly above average. Overall, pupils make good progress but the rate varies across the school because there are inconsistencies in the generally good quality of teaching and learning. This is most noticeable in the lower standards achieved in writing. In particular, there are inconsistencies in the use of the satisfactory assessment information and academic tracking systems to ensure that pupils are properly challenged. Moreover, the quality of marking is not always clear enough in telling pupils how well they are doing and what they need to do next to meet their learning goals. The many pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the few from minority ethnic groups make good progress. They benefit from the good support provided through extra staffing and helpful resources. Pupils are well prepared for their future education and later life.

Academic and personal development are promoted well by the good curriculum and the effective care, guidance and support. The curriculum is packed with enriching activities from the excellent Foundation Stage outdoor provision, the highly enjoyable visits and visitors to the wide-ranging opportunities provided before and after school. Nevertheless, pupils are not given enough opportunities to use and develop their writing and mathematical skills across the curriculum. The excellence of the pastoral care is very important in the whole process of effectively lowering barriers to learning. In particular, the school successfully overcomes the difficulties brought about by the high levels of pupils joining and leaving the school during the school year.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher continues to lead the school vigorously towards a clear vision for improvement. He is well supported by key staff and governors. Nevertheless, the range and impact of their monitoring and evaluation work could be stronger, particularly in removing the inconsistencies apparent in some assessment practices.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage provision is good and it is well led and managed. Arrangements for the children's induction are effective. Children settle quickly and adjust well to classroom routines. Their attainment on entry is lower than what is typical for their age and is particularly low in language development and personal and social education. Children in the Nursery make satisfactory progress. Progress accelerates in the Reception class and is good overall enabling children to reach expected standards for their age by the end of Reception. There is a good balance between activities directed by adults and those which promote independent learning. This enables children to practise key skills and develop social skills effectively but, on occasions, opportunities are missed to provide good models of spoken language. The curriculum effectively meets the children's needs and the outstanding outdoor area is used well to extend learning. Staff provide a welcoming and exciting environment which stimulates children to learn through practical play. Care and support for children in Reception are outstanding with adults displaying genuine empathy and a firm understanding of individual needs.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing.
- Increase the opportunities for pupils to use and develop writing and mathematics skills across the full range of subjects.
- Make more consistent use of marking, assessment and academic tracking information to raise pupils' attainment.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and standards are above average. Across the school, standards are best in mathematics and science. Results of teachers' assessments at the end of Year 2 were consistently very weak up to and including 2005 but, since then, there has been a significant upturn in results, particularly in mathematics and standards are now broadly average. Similarly, test results at the end of Year 6 show a very pronounced upward trend with the overall standards being significantly above average in 2007. National data shows that pupils make really good progress in Key Stage 2 and the school has been in the top 2% of schools nationally for achievement over the last two years. Writing standards lag behind, however, particularly by the end of Year 2. The school is acutely aware of this and is working with local authority officers to improve teachers' knowledge and understanding of ways to raise standards.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those in other groups are well supported and make good progress. A lot of work has been done to provide boys with extra incentives and thereby achieve more. This is proving successful and in 2007, the 11 year old boys performed better than the girls and above the national picture.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good and makes a positive contribution to their good achievement. Pupils say they enjoy school and this is confirmed by the high proportion who attend well; their generally

good behaviour; and productive relationships. Occasional low level disruption is dealt with effectively by skilled teaching assistants. 'Pals' are trained to deal with any conflict that occurs, showing that pupils are able to take responsibility for themselves and others. Members of the school council are proud to represent their peers and the school listens to their views and takes appropriate action on their recommendations. Through the school's extended services programme, pupils have opportunities to attend a wide variety of clubs and activities that help develop community cohesion. The school provides a good range of physical activities and is correctly focusing on raising standards in swimming. This, and the teaching of an awareness of the need for a well balanced diet, contributes well to pupils' knowledge of how to lead a healthy lifestyle.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are carefully planned and meet the individual needs of learners. Teachers use questioning and discussion groups to encourage pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills which fosters their confidence and self-esteem. Good pace, challenge and high expectations promote effective learning in many lessons. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are taught well so pupils reach a good standard, particularly in Key Stage 2. A strong feature in all lessons is the good contribution from skilled learning assistants who support individuals well and work in partnership with the teacher to provide discrete guidance for different groups. Where assessment information is used effectively teachers' improved marking gives pupils a better understanding of the next steps in their learning. In a few classes assessment information and marking are not always used well enough to ensure pupils understand their own strengths and weaknesses. Opportunities for pupils to assess their own work are at a very early stage of development.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and provides additional opportunities for pupils to learn through a performing arts programme. The teaching of French is developing well across Key Stage 2. The large proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with other learning needs benefit from effective support, such as by grouping Key Stage 2 pupils according to their prior attainment in mathematics. The school has improved its resources for reading that have more appeal for boys. This is part of the school's drive to improve pupils' literacy skills. Enrichment of the curriculum is good. Healthy lifestyles are promoted positively through a wide range of extra-curricular sporting and artistic activities. Visits are well matched to the curriculum and particularly popular. A recent trip to the Trough of Bowland, by Year 4 pupils, resulted in good descriptive writing. However, the school does not always grasp every opportunity for pupils to extend their literacy and mathematics skills in other subjects. Aware that the school has limited ethnic diversity, visitors from minority religions and traditions talk to classes about tolerance and the need to become good community members. A wealth of other learning opportunities, which are offered through extended services, respond well to pupils' interests, safety education and their future economic well-being.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The extremely caring ethos of the school ensures that the vast majority of pupils are happy and feel secure. This enables them to learn effectively and make good progress. Pupils settle quickly, regardless of when they join the school, because of the friendly, caring welcome they receive. Child protection, risk assessments and safeguarding procedures meet legal requirements. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, or those who require help with a particular problem, are well supported by staff, learning mentors and fully trained playground 'pals'. Effective monitoring of behaviour, attendance and punctuality is leading to improvements. The school has an adequate system of monitoring each individual's progress. However, assessment is not used consistently to set challenging targets. Strong links with the local high schools ensure that transition is smooth between the stages of education.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and it is widely shared by all those involved in the life of the school. The recent rapid improvements in pupils' progress, together with the robust and effective way in which the issues from the last inspection have been dealt with, testify to the strong leadership. Morale is high. All who are involved in the school work effectively as a team and are committed to the pupils' welfare and progress. Through accurate self-evaluation and an outstanding commitment to the school, the headteacher has a thorough knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses. The capacity for further improvement is good. Planning for improvement is thorough and the school development plan is an effective tool to move the school forward. To support this, the school is currently developing the expertise of middle managers to enable them all to play a full part as monitors and evaluators. Governors carry out their duties well. They play a full part in strategic and financial planning and are purposeful as critical friends in challenging the school to do its best.

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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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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

15 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Boundary Primary School, Blackpool, FY3 7RW

Mrs Webster, Mr Stafford and I felt privileged to visit your good school this week. We appreciated very much the warm welcome, courtesy and help that you gave us.

What we really liked about your school:

- the improvements in English, mathematics and science standards for 7 and 11 year olds over the last couple of years
- the good support for pupils with extra learning needs and the good progress they make
- the strong moral and social development that leads to good behaviour, good attitudes to school and work and strong relationships
- the good range of activities that enrich your academic and personal development, including the ones before and after school
- the contribution you all make to a safe and caring ethos in the school, such as the way the 'pals' help the less confident in the playground
- the good leadership of your headteacher and the governing body.

To make your school even better, we have asked the staff to improve the quality of your writing. We have also asked them to give you more opportunities to use your writing and mathematics skills in many of the subjects that you study. Finally, we have asked staff to ensure that the assessment and marking of your work will be similar in all classes, so that the marking gives you a clear idea of how well you are doing and what else you need to do to improve further. We are certain that you will want to be very helpful by continuing to work hard, always doing your best and following the advice from your teachers.

Good luck and best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

John Heap

Lead Inspector