

# Markland Hill Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105159
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bolton
<b>Inspection number</b>	336436
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 October 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Geoffrey Yates

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	285
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Stephen Palmer
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Janet Coysh
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 February 2007
<b>School address</b>	Markland Hill Bolton Lancashire BL1 5EJ
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons and held meetings with senior managers, a governor, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at the school development plan; policies, including those relating to safeguarding and equal opportunities; and questionnaires completed by parents and carers, pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the achievement of pupils, especially of the more able
- standards in science
- the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- how good are the outcomes for pupils as a result of the school's 'Every Child Matters' provision.

## Information about the school

The school is larger than average and draws its pupils from a residential area on the outskirts of Bolton. A very large majority of pupils are White British, the remainder representing a range of other heritages. All pupils speak English well. The percentage of pupils who receive free school meals is very low as is the percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has won many awards including the Healthy Eating award. Some pupils attend the off-site after-school care facility that is not managed by the school. This provision is the subject of a separate inspection and report. The school has an Early Years Foundation Stage unit for children aged four to five years. At the time of the inspection a major building project was taking place.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

The school provides a good standard of education for its pupils. This reflects the clear vision of school leaders which promotes pupils' personal and academic success. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and attendance is well above average. The school provides a wide range of interesting activities for pupils, which contribute to their considerable enjoyment of school. Pupils contribute well to the community and demonstrate a good commitment to adopting healthy and safe lifestyles.

Pupils get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress. Standards in English and mathematics in Year 6 have been well above average for a number of years, both at the expected and higher levels. However, standards in science, especially those of more-able pupils, have not been as high. Pupils' progress is good overall. While pupils do achieve well, the poor presentation of their work and handwriting belies its actual quality. Teaching is good overall. In the many good lessons pupils are totally involved in learning and are challenged to use their skills well. While no teaching is inadequate, there is some variation in quality. For example, in a minority of lessons teachers do not set clear objectives and this means that pupils are less sure about what they should learn. This slows the pace of learning. While the questions asked by staff in these classes are of a good quality, teachers do not always ensure that all pupils fully understand before moving on to the next part of the lesson.

The school has a good capacity to improve. This is because its self-evaluation is robust and accurate and the school is well led by the headteacher and other leaders. As a result, there are effective plans to bring about further improvements, which are already well underway. The impact of these can be seen in the higher standards achieved in the national tests in 2009. However, while there are signs of improvement in science, more-able pupils still do not achieve as well as they should in the subject. Teaching assistants provide good support for the effective learning. The use of visiting staff including a sports coach enhances provision further. The school tracks pupils' progress effectively and pupils are involved in setting targets for improving their own work. Given its track record of continuing improvement and the maintenance of above average standards and effective provision, the school demonstrates a good capacity to sustain improvement.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Take all necessary steps to ensure that teaching is consistently good or better by:
  - ensuring that lesson objectives are always focused on developing pupils' learning and that pupils fully understand what they should learn and whether

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they have achieved the set objectives

- better use of questioning to probe pupils' understanding of what is being taught.
- Raise the achievement of more-able pupils in science by:
  - giving them more challenging opportunities to use and develop their scientific knowledge and skills.
  - Improve the way in which pupils present their work, including their handwriting, so that it is consistently good.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Pupils' well above average attendance demonstrates that they really enjoy school. They achieve well because they respond positively to the good variety of learning experiences provided. All groups of pupils achieve good outcomes. Apart from their poor presentation, they show commitment to the task in hand and work at a good pace. The rising trend in attainment in Year 6 over the past three years has been sustained in the most recent 2009 unvalidated tests and almost all the current Year 6 pupils are already working within and beyond the levels expected of 11-year-olds in English and mathematics. In science, more-able pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Behaviour is exemplary. Relationships are very positive and pupils say they feel very safe in school. Pupils respond well to the school's provision to teach them how to lead healthy lives, not only in wanting to take plenty of exercise but in eating more fruit and vegetables. As one pupil explained, 'We like chocolates and sweets but know fruit is better for us.' Pupils show strong spiritual, moral and social awareness. Pupils mix easily with others and there are very few disputes which they cannot resolve themselves. They show great respect to those they meet from different backgrounds, and they have a good understanding of cultures different from their own. The small numbers of vulnerable pupils, such as those with physical or social and emotional difficulties, indicate that they are well cared for and helped to develop independence and to play a full part in the life of the school.

Pupils are very enthusiastic about playing their part in the work of the school and in contributing locally. They act, for example, as monitors who keep a careful eye on other pupils during assemblies. With their good attitudes to work, very good basic skills, excellent attendance and very good teamwork, pupils have the skills necessary for a successful future.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Good-quality relationships between staff and pupils and the lively way in which most lessons are presented are major strengths in teaching. There is good support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and teaching assistants contribute skillfully to supporting their learning. In the best lessons pupils are really challenged to use their skills well. For example, in one lesson pupils confidently and accurately applied their data handling skills in interpreting a graph. While most teaching is good, there is some variation across the school. Where teaching is less than good, learning objectives for lessons are not focused sufficiently on developing pupils' skills. In these classes opportunities are missed to use questioning well to probe pupils' understanding. Recent improvements in the quality of information regarding the progress of all groups of pupils have meant that staff have a clearer understanding of what needs to be done if pupils are not making the progress of which they are capable. This information is generally used well, resulting in pupils' good progress.

The school has successfully developed a curriculum that is relevant to the pupils and that links areas of study to key skills. There is a good international dimension to the curriculum that includes links with Hong Kong. Music provision is a strong feature of the curriculum and there is a satisfactory range of after-school clubs. Pupils say that extra activities are one of the best things about school. For example, Year 6 pupils were bursting with enthusiasm to talk about the residential visit they had just experienced. Good attention is paid to the key skills of literacy and numeracy in all subjects.

Excellent aspects of the care, guidance and support the school provides include the systems to support excellent attendance and pupils' outstanding behaviour. Partnerships

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with outside agencies to help pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are good. Equally effective is the school's own programme to support those pupils who have emotional difficulties, who have especially good support from the learning mentor.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

There is a very strong shared sense of purpose for continuous improvement among leaders and managers, which stems from effective leadership by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The building programme has been managed effectively with interruption to the school kept at a minimum. The school has an effective school development plan, identifying clearly what needs to be improved. In particular, concerted efforts in improving the curriculum have proved successful. Checks on the quality of teaching and learning are thorough and the information gathered is used to help to drive up standards. However, while teaching is good overall, this is not consistently effective throughout the school. The governing body shares in many aspects of leadership and management and provides good support. The views of parents are canvassed and discussed. Governors have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are very much involved in shaping the direction of the school.

At the time of the inspection, safeguarding procedures were extremely thorough. These are updated and staff are trained regularly. The school makes very sure that pupils are safe in its care. There is robust checking on staff and vigilant scrutiny of the safety of the school site, particularly important while the current building work is taking place. The school works well with the local community. Visits further afield give pupils an understanding of their national heritage and international links promote their understanding of other cultures, thereby promoting good community cohesion. School leaders take effective steps to ensure that equality is promoted and discrimination is tackled. The school ensures that all pupils have good opportunities to participate in school activities and outings, for example in the weekend prior to the inspection all Year 6 pupils took part in a residential visit.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter school with skills and knowledge above the levels typical of children of this age. Under the very caring and nurturing ethos in the recently improved Early Years Foundation Stage unit, children settle quickly and become confident learners. This is a direct result of good-quality teaching. By the time children enter Year 1 most exceed what is expected nationally of them in all areas of learning. Children's outstanding behaviour and very good relationships with others are major features of their well-developed social skills. The quality of provision in the two classes is good. Good use is made of the newly created outside area to promote learning. There are good links with parents and carers, who support their children's learning well at home. Children's more formal learning is well planned and purposeful and they have appropriate opportunities to follow their interests in self-chosen activities, which they do with enthusiasm. For example, learning was clearly fun for those children involved in searching for bugs in a tray of foam. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed with a clear focus on children making good progress, being well cared for, and on close teamwork.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2



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## **Views of parents and carers**

Questionnaires were returned by 77 parents and carers. Of these over three quarters were happy overall with the school's work. A minority of parents and carers expressed a range of concerns about behaviour, bullying, their children's progress, the way classes are organised, how well the school meets their children's needs and how well the school communicates with parents and carers.

Inspectors do not share parents' and carers' concerns about these aspects of the school's provision.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Markland Hill Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 77 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 285 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	47	61	28	36	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	45	58	30	39	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	20	26	42	55	10	13	2	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	20	26	32	42	15	19	6	8
The teaching is good at this school	22	29	36	47	11	14	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	22	29	39	51	9	12	2	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	38	45	58	1	1	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	17	22	36	47	10	13	4	5
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	29	29	38	11	14	6	8
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	29	37	48	8	10	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	22	38	49	11	14	3	4
The school is led and managed effectively	15	19	36	47	13	17	4	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	29	38	28	36	13	17	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



21 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Markland Hill Primary School, Bolton, BL1 5EJ

Thank you for the very friendly welcome you all gave the inspectors when we visited your school recently. I know at times the building work going on has caused disruptions to the school but you have coped really well. Well done everybody!

We really enjoyed our time with you and joining you in lessons. I am pleased to tell you that the inspectors agree with your school that you receive a good standard of education. Many of the Year 6 pupils told us how much they enjoyed the residential weekend prior to the inspection.

I agree with you that all the adults working in your school make lessons interesting and that if you need help you get it. You make good progress in your work and attain standards that are high for your age. You work very hard in lessons and behave outstandingly well; you are very polite. You told me that you feel safe in school and that if a problem occurs an adult will sort it out quickly when you tell them about it. Staff take good care of you. The school council is busy on your behalf and does a good job. I have asked your school to make sure you all present your work well. The quality of what you write is good but sometimes it is hard to read and not set out well. There are a couple of other things I have asked your school to do. These are:

- to make sure that all the teaching you receive is of a good quality, as most of it is
- to make sure that those of you who have the potential to achieve really well in science are able to, by being given more challenging opportunities to use and develop your skills.

I hope you keep on working hard so you can continue to play a big part in ensuring that your school continues to be successful. Also, keep up your excellent attendance record. It is a long time since I have been in a school where attendance is so very high.

Yours faithfully

Mr Geoffrey Yates

Lead inspector

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