

Pikes Lane Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 105161 |
| Local authority | Bolton |
| Inspection number | 377188 |
| Inspection dates | 1–2 December 2011 |
| Reporting inspector | Steven Hill |

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

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|--|---------------------------------------|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 439 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Ruth Speak |
| Headteacher | Louise McArdle |
| Date of previous school inspection | 11 March 2009 |
| School address | Gibraltar Street Bolton BL3 5HU |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Nineteen lessons were observed, taught by 17 teachers. Meetings were held with staff, groups of pupils and representatives of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a variety of documentation, particularly that related to keeping pupils safe, and to tracking their progress. They analysed responses in questionnaires completed by staff, pupils at Key Stage 2 and those received from 128 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Inspectors examined whether different groups of pupils are making similar progress, concentrating on those of Black African heritage, who had not scored as highly as their classmates in recent national assessments.
- The team investigated whether boys are making enough progress in writing at Key Stage 2.
- The inspectors checked to what extent the more-able pupils are sufficiently challenged in lessons.

Information about the school

This is a large primary school in an urban area. Virtually all the pupils are from different minority-ethnic backgrounds and speak English as an additional language. The largest groups have Indian or Pakistani heritages, but others come from a variety of different backgrounds, with those of Black African heritage constituting the largest of these. Increasingly, the school is admitting pupils in different age-groups who are newly arrived from overseas and speak little or no English when they start. A good proportion of the latter pupils are of Somali heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly similar to that in most schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average.

The school provides for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in a single integrated unit. This approach is new since the previous inspection. Reception children attend school full-time, and Nursery children attend part-time.

There has been considerable disruption to staffing since the school's previous inspection, with a new headteacher starting in May 2011 after a period of temporary leadership. At the time of the inspection, a new deputy headteacher had yet to take up post. An extensive building and renovation programme over the last couple of years is drawing to a close.

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

Pikes Lane provides a good education for its pupils. All members of staff work together very effectively, under the strong guidance of the new headteacher, ensuring that pupils make good progress, despite the disruption caused by building work and staffing changes. All groups are making good progress, including those of Black African heritage. Careful monitoring of provision, and incisive tracking of the progress of individuals and groups, give a clear oversight of the school's strengths and weaknesses. A collective sense of purpose and a shared vision for the future mean that strengths are consolidated and weaknesses addressed purposefully. The main issues identified at the previous inspection have been tackled well. In particular, the more-able pupils do better because they are given challenging tasks in class. This track record of success demonstrates the school's good capacity to improve in future.

The school is a happy and harmonious community where pupils' behaviour is excellent and they feel extremely safe and enjoy learning. Outstanding care, guidance and support underpin this strong picture, and pupils are extremely confident that the staff and their friends will support them if they have problems. The school is particularly successful in ensuring that pupils new to the school, often speaking little English at the start, are helped to settle happily so that they make friends and soon make the same good progress as their classmates. A recent focus on raising attendance has been successful, with above-average levels so far this term, after several years when attendance has been average.

By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is in line with national averages. This represents good progress, given their generally very low starting points when they begin in Nursery or Reception. More pupils now attain the higher Level 5 in national assessments by the end of Year 6 than at the last inspection. In the last few years, however, boys' results in writing have not been as good as those of girls. A concentration by teachers, on providing engaging and meaningful tasks in writing, has succeeded in improving all pupils' progress, but particularly that of boys. Across the school last year, boys made the same good progress as girls in writing and have started to make up lost ground. More boys in Year 6 are now on target to reach the higher levels in writing by the end of this academic year.

A key to the good progress is consistently good teaching. Almost all lessons feature good teaching and enable different groups of pupils to learn well, although only a

few lessons are outstanding and a small minority of satisfactory teaching remains. Teachers are particularly good at engaging pupils' interest in lessons and then providing work that is matched to their different needs. Good use is made of data on pupils' progress to ensure that any individuals who need extra support receive it. The marking of pupils' work is done conscientiously, with some excellent examples in English of pupils being shown how to improve, but this is not consistent between classes, and is generally weaker in mathematics. A recent review by the school accurately identified this issue and plans are in place to rectify this.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment to be above average and consolidate pupils' good progress by:
 - helping teachers to provide a greater proportion of outstanding lessons and fewer that are satisfactory
 - implementing plans to give pupils more consistent feedback in marking their work, to help them improve in future, especially in mathematics
 - raising attendance to be above average by building on the effective measures introduced this year
 - ensuring that boys consolidate the improved progress they have made in writing recently.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

| |
|---|
| 2 |
|---|

Pupils achieve well and greatly enjoy their learning. For example, in a lesson with Year 4, they all made good progress in their understanding of the features of a story as they responded thoughtfully to the teacher's challenging questioning and collaborated well to discuss different characters. In a mathematics lesson, pupils in Year 5 made good progress in their multiplication skills as they tackled work that was carefully matched to their different needs. All groups do well because their progress is monitored carefully and action taken to help any in danger of falling behind. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals make the same good progress as their classmates. A seeming weakness in the attainment of Black African pupils stems almost entirely from the fact that many of these pupils join the school midway through their primary years, many speaking little English when they start and some having little previous experience of schooling. The school's detailed records show that, after a slow start when they begin to learn English, many make very good progress towards catching up with their classmates, achieving extremely well in the light of their starting points. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress because they receive work that is tailored to their particular needs and are given skilled support and challenge from teachers and support staff.

Pupils have a good understanding of healthy eating and a balanced diet, and enjoy the variety of exercise available in lessons and in extra-curricular clubs. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their good progress is greatly supported by their excellent behaviour and their positive attitudes to learning. They have extremely good relationships with each other and with staff. Pupils are polite, friendly and sensible and show care and concern for each other. They take a good part in the life of the community, giving their views confidently through the

school council. Pupils contribute strongly to the school's harmonious ethos through the support they give to each other informally, as well as the formal contribution made as prefects or peer mediators, for example. All this contributes to pupils feeling very safe in school, as does their secure understanding of how they can keep themselves and others safe. Pupils' strong collaborative skills, high levels of independence and positive attitudes to work, together with improved attendance and their good progress in basic skills, mean they are well prepared for their future lives, in school and beyond.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 2 |
| Taking into account: | 3 |
| Pupils' attainment ¹ | 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 | |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 1 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 1 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attendance ¹ | 3 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |

How effective is the provision?

Good classroom management is based on good relationships, clear expectations and well-established routines. As a result pupils work hard and a good pace to learning is maintained in most lessons. Teachers are increasingly skilled at using assessment data to ensure that pupils are given tasks that are challenging but manageable, so all learn well. Occasionally, work is too hard for some pupils, so that their learning slows. A strength of many lessons is how adults monitor pupils' ongoing progress, giving support if any are confused and challenging others to refine their thinking and improve their work. The monitoring of the progress of different groups and individuals ensures that extra provision is made for any who start to fall behind in their learning. This is a particular help in ensuring that pupils new to speaking English, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress.

The curriculum is lively and interesting with a good range of enrichment activities provided. Good links between different subjects make learning more meaningful and enjoyable. Good use is made of information and communication technology, observed when pupils used a variety of features of word processing to write interesting accounts of their visit to a museum. The wide range of extra-curricular activities is greatly enjoyed by pupils. The school is innovative in adapting the curriculum to meet the wide variety of needs that are identified, although the impact of some recent changes has not yet been evaluated.

¹The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Positive moral and social values are continually reinforced by staff in lessons and in day-to-day interactions, and particularly in assemblies. The school makes very good use of outside agencies, as well as the expertise of its own staff, to provide help to individuals with particular emotional and social needs, as well as to those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school is very proactive and effective in ensuring that the different groups represented in the school feel involved and their views represented. The involvement of families of Somali heritage, for example, has been greatly increased recently, helping pupils overcome some barriers to learning. A strong focus on attendance is showing very positive results this term, with pupils keen to win the class award for the best weekly attendance.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 2 |
| Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 2 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 2 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 1 |

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has welded together a team that works together very effectively for the benefit of all pupils. This has meant that, in the absence of some key staff, colleagues have successfully taken on extra responsibilities and ensured continuity in provision and learning. Regular monitoring of teaching enables constructive feedback to colleagues to help them improve their practice. The much-improved tracking systems for pupils' progress have helped the school to accurately identify any weaknesses in the achievement of individuals or groups, and staff have been successful in addressing these. Along with a determination to eliminate any discrimination, this has ensured that the provision to promote equal opportunities is good, with any gaps in performance between different groups being reduced.

Governance is good. There are good systems to give members of the governing body a clear overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This means they are well placed to hold the school to account for its performance, and do so. They are fully involved in promoting safeguarding and have ensured that procedures are good. Pupils' safety and well-being are successfully given a high priority. Links with a variety of relevant agencies are strong and supporting documentation is of good quality, and gives clear guidance to staff.

Good links are in place with parents and carers and they are very supportive of the school. Parents and carers are given good information about school life and events, as well as about their own children's progress, so that they can contribute to their learning. There are good links with other institutions that help extend the curriculum; for example, work with Bolton College increases the range of scientific and sporting opportunities available to pupils. Similarly, partnerships with a range of agencies contribute strongly to the learning and well-being of all pupils, but especially those with particular needs.

The school promotes community cohesion well, particularly within its own diverse population, with different groups getting on well and valuing each other's views and traditions. This is being successfully extended beyond the immediate community through a partnership with a school with a contrasting intake, as well as an emerging link with a school in China.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

The good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage unit mirrors many of the strengths in the rest of the school. Children settle very happily and quickly establish positive relationships with staff. Good induction arrangements, including opportunities for parents and carers to 'stay and play' with their children, help establish children's enjoyment of learning and great feelings of security. For both Nursery and Reception children, a wide range of different, practical hands-on activities generates enthusiasm and interest, both indoors and out. The exciting range of activities available outside, and children's many opportunities to access them, are a major improvement since the school's previous inspection. The adults are very skilled at intervening in children's play, to extend their thinking, and helping them to learn more. A good balance is maintained between children's opportunities to choose activities for themselves and those directed by adults. A particularly successful example of the latter is when children split into different groups to learn about how the sounds of English relate to how they are written. These sessions are tightly matched to children's different needs, have a brisk pace and lead to good progress. Children make good progress in all areas of learning, although many begin from very low starting points, so their attainment still lags behind national averages at the end of Reception. The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well. Staff continually evaluate and refine the provision, for example in their current trialling of new assessment arrangements. These are working well and the adults are making good use of the information to plan activities that are matched to children's needs and interests.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage | 2 |
| Taking into account: | 2 |
| 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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |

Views of parents and carers

The response rate to questionnaires was average and the vast majority of parents and carers are very positive about the school and what it provides for their children. They particularly value that their children are safe and happy in school and are also very positive about the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of leadership and management. Of the few negative replies, there was very little to suggest a trend of dissatisfaction in particular aspects. Any concerns were checked against inspection evidence, which strongly supports the positive views of the majority. A few parents and carers express some concerns about the progress their children are making, or about how their children's particular needs are met. The inspection evidence suggests that all groups of pupils are making good progress in relation to their starting points, with the attention that the school pays to meeting individuals' different needs being a major strength.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Pikes Lane 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 128 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 439 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 86 | 67 | 42 | 33 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 77 | 60 | 49 | 38 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 68 | 53 | 56 | 44 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 53 | 41 | 66 | 52 | 7 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 60 | 47 | 65 | 51 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 54 | 42 | 68 | 53 | 5 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 55 | 43 | 69 | 54 | 2 | 2 | 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) | 52 | 41 | 60 | 47 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 56 | 44 | 61 | 48 | 7 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 50 | 39 | 69 | 54 | 5 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 42 | 33 | 74 | 58 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 61 | 48 | 61 | 48 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 71 | 55 | 55 | 43 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

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 all 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

| Type of school | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools | 43 | 47 | 10 | 0 |
| Primary schools | 6 | 46 | 42 | 6 |
| Secondary schools | 14 | 36 | 41 | 9 |
| Sixth forms | 15 | 42 | 41 | 3 |
| Special schools | 30 | 48 | 19 | 3 |
| Pupil referral units | 14 | 50 | 31 | 5 |
| All schools | 10 | 44 | 39 | 6 |

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support. |
| 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.



5 December 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pikes Lane Primary School, Bolton, BL3 5HU

Thank you for your warm welcome and all your help when we inspected your school. We enjoyed talking to you and watching you learning in lessons. You told us that you enjoy school and feel very safe there, and we could see why. Your school is providing you with a good education. The adults are particularly good at keeping an eye on how everyone is doing, so that if anyone needs extra help, then they get it. We were particularly impressed by your excellent behaviour and by how sensible and polite you are. You get on really well together and help make the school a happy and safe place to be. You learn a lot about keeping healthy and join in exercise enthusiastically. You work hard in lessons and concentrate well.

You are making good progress because the teachers are good at helping you to learn. You reach average standards by the end of Year 6 and the staff are keen for you to do even better. We have agreed that this should be the priority for the next year. In a few lessons you make outstanding progress when the teachers make learning whizz along, and we have agreed with them that they are going to try to have more lessons like this. Until the past year or so, boys did not make as much progress in writing as girls. Last year this improved a lot, and we have asked the adults to help the boys keep this up in future. Your attendance is usually average and we would like you to keep up the improvements you have made this term, so that it is above-average in future. In your books, teachers sometimes give you excellent advice about how to improve your work in English. However, this is not consistent, and is not so good in mathematics, so we have asked the staff to improve this. We hope that you carry on enjoying life at Pikes Lane and keep on trying to be the best.

Yours sincerely

Steven Hill
Lead inspector

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