

# Broad Oak Community Primary School

Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	130259
<b>Local Authority</b>	St. Helens
<b>Inspection number</b>	293614
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 April 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul Bamber

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	425
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Cllr T Shields
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Melanie Hignett
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 September 2002
<b>School address</b>	Brunswick Street Parr St Helens Merseyside WA9 2JE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01744 678182
<b>Fax number</b>	01744 678180

---

<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 April 2007
<b>Inspection number</b>	293614

---

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Most of the pupils who attend this much larger than average sized school live in an area of considerable social and economic disadvantage and of high unemployment. Over half are entitled to a free school meal. The vast majority come from White British backgrounds and very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion with a statement of special educational need or who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. The school is currently led by the deputy headteacher during the long term absence of the headteacher.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Broad Oak is providing the pupils with a satisfactory standard of education.

It provides a good quality of care and support for all pupils but especially the relatively high proportion who are more vulnerable. The school's effective partnerships with external agencies contribute well to this aspect of its work. Because of this good provision, pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They behave well, enjoy lessons, enthusiastically take responsibility and embrace a healthy lifestyle. The attendance of pupils has improved little since the last inspection. This remains well below average because a small minority of pupils attends infrequently despite the school's best efforts to persuade them and their parents otherwise.

Children in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception classes) make good progress because they are taught well and have a well balanced, stimulating curriculum. Since the last inspection, pupils' overall achievement in Years 3 to 6 has dipped due to some weaknesses in teaching and periods when a full management team was not in place. Over the last 18 months the school has taken rigorous action to eliminate weaknesses in teaching and to ensure an effective leadership structure. As a result of better teaching and more rigorous tracking of pupils' progress most now achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 to 6. This is not the case for some more able pupils in these year groups who underachieve because teaching is not challenging enough for them. Standards in mathematics and science are broadly average in Years 1 to 6 but are below average in English. Pupils' weak spelling and poor use of punctuation together with too few opportunities provided for them to develop their speaking skills contribute significantly to these lower standards. Within the overall satisfactory quality of teaching there are some lively lessons to which pupils respond positively. In these instances their achievement is better. Pupils' enthusiasm for school is enhanced by many enriching experiences. Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted through visitors to the school and visits in the local and wider community. Pupils use information and communication technology in many forms adeptly and especially benefit from and enjoy using the interactive whiteboards to clarify their learning.

The quality of the school's leadership and management is currently satisfactory and improving. After a period when key senior positions were vacant, a new fully staffed structure is in place, allowing needed improvements to be implemented. Not all of these have had time to impact fully on standards and provision but the recent improvement in the achievements of many pupils in Years 3 to 6 is testament to better leadership and management. These recent improvements have led the school to make a rather optimistic evaluation of the quality of several areas of its work. Although improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory overall, attendance and standards in English are still in need of improvement. The one year's evidence of improvement in pupils' achievements in Years 3 to 6 signifies a satisfactory capacity to improve, rather than good as the school judges. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the achievement of more able pupils throughout the school.

- Improve pupils' speaking skills, their spelling and their use of punctuation.
- Improve the poor attendance of a small minority of pupils.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Children enter the school with well below expected attainment especially in their communication, language and literacy skills and in their mathematical development. The well balanced curriculum and the effective teaching they enjoy enables children to make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage. As a result, they enter Year 1 with above average standards in their physical and creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Their personal, social and emotional skills are as expected. Despite making good progress through the Foundation Stage children enter Year 1 with below average standards in English and mathematics.

Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 to 6. There have been wide variations in the rate of progress between individual classes due to the differences in the quality of teaching. These are now being eliminated through effective action at senior management level, so that the progress pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those of average ability now make is more uniform. Nevertheless, some more able pupils underachieve because the work they are set is not difficult enough for them. The much lower than average proportion of pupils reaching higher levels in the Year 2 teacher assessments and in the Year 6 national tests reflects this weakness. The school sets suitably challenging targets that it now meets with more success than in the recent past.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are sensitive to the different beliefs and lifestyles of others, look after each other well, understand the difference between right and wrong and relate well to each other and adults. The vast majority of pupils enjoy life at Broad Oak. Pupils move quietly and safely around the school building and play sensibly in the playground. Older pupils promote good citizenship by helping and supporting younger pupils. Bullying is not tolerated and is dealt with swiftly and effectively. Pupils know how to stay safe. Although there is no school council to provide formal mechanisms for pupils to voice their opinions, they feel confident in approaching staff with any issues they wish to discuss. Pupils understand the benefits of eating healthily and taking regular exercise. In Year 6, pupils develop a good understanding of the workplace through effective business links.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Relationships are good and as a result, pupils behave well, enjoy and have positive attitudes to their work. Teaching assistants are well-briefed and provide good support for pupils, especially the most vulnerable, enabling them to learn as well as others. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge and where teaching is most effective, use this to good effect to set challenging targets and to pose questions that make pupils think. For example, this was observed in the Foundation Stage where children were

asked questions about making painted hand prints: 'What would happen if you mixed two prime colours?' In these instances the pace of learning accelerated. However, where teaching is less effective, lessons lack rigour and work is not set at the right level to meet the needs of all pupils in the class. This particularly inhibits the progress of the more able pupils. In other lessons, opportunities to enable pupils to consider and reflect on the development of their language skills are lost. The quality of teachers' marking varies. There is some very good practice that helps pupils considerably to make improvements in their work. Elsewhere marking lacks focus and contributes little to pupils' better achievement.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum satisfactorily meets requirements and the needs of most pupils. Nevertheless, there are some weaknesses in the provision for the more able and for extending pupils' speaking skills. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and offers a wide range of stimulating experiences that children enjoy. Pupils with learning difficulties are now well catered for because of recent improvements in their individual education plans. The curriculum is enriched by regular use of visits and visitors and creative use of the school time. For example, events such as 'The Big Wide World Week' focus pupils' attention intensively on the wider and international communities. Pupils are taught a modern foreign language and choose from a healthy menu of extra-curricular activities including rugby and ballet. Regular circle time sessions provide pupils with opportunities to discuss issues of importance to them, thus developing their personal, social, emotional and health education well.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school takes good care of all pupils and supports them well. They trust staff and know who to turn to if they need help. Pupils greatly appreciate the help and support that teachers give: 'They're kind to you, make you feel safe and teach you lots of things'. The pastoral manager through her close links with families and external agencies supports pupils sensitively when they are upset or troubled. Despite attendance being below average, the school makes great efforts to encourage the poor attenders to come to school more often. This is gradually improving attendance. Parents and carers appreciate the extensive induction arrangements when their children start and leave school. The recently introduced systems to track pupils' progress and to set individual targets have yet to fully impact on raising the achievement of the more able pupils. Systems to protect and safeguard pupils are well-established.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

In the absence of the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other senior managers have continued to lead the school satisfactorily and implemented planned improvements sensibly. These have included more rigorous checks on the quality of teaching and of pupils' work, action plans that link changes in practice to the expected outcomes in pupils' learning and staff training that is closely matched to identified needs. However, leaders and managers have still to address the underachievement of the more able pupils, to sufficiently raise standards in English and to improve the very poor attendance of a tiny minority of pupils.

The school has a satisfactory view of its strengths and weaknesses and manages its performance well. For example, the monitoring of pupils performance has led to pupils making better progress than in the past. The school has worked successfully to establish and strengthen partnerships with parents, the community, with other schools and with the local authority. These have enhanced pupils' experiences, for example, their economic awareness and their knowledge of healthy lifestyles. The school's leadership is most successful in creating a positive atmosphere and stimulating environment that encourages pupils to enjoy learning and to become effective young citizens. The governing body works well and has not been afraid to encourage tough action to eliminate weak teaching and to strengthen leadership and management.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>
--	-----------------------

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	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**

I would like to thank you very much on behalf of myself, Miss Kenna and Mr Martin for making us welcome during the days we spent in your school. We very much appreciated the way in which you talked so enthusiastically about your work and the other interesting things the school provides for you.

At the moment the school provides you with a satisfactory education. It cares and supports you well, especially those of you who find your work quite hard or who have difficulty settling down in lessons. Because of this you feel confident and safe, enjoy learning and try to improve your work. It is clear that you like the visits you make out of school and learning from the many different visitors who come into school to talk and work with you. Many of you seemed very confident using the interactive whiteboards in your classrooms. The adults who run the school have made some good improvements recently and this means that more of you are achieving as you should.

However, there are some things that I have asked the school to do to help make it even better. Some of you who find your work easier than others need to be helped to achieve higher standards. Those of you who are in Years 1 to 6 should be helped to improve your work in English, by having more opportunities to practise your speaking and by spelling and using punctuation more accurately. Some of you could help with this by taking more care when you copy words down from the whiteboards and from displays. Finally, there are a small number of you who do not come to school often enough and I have asked the school to work even harder to encourage you to attend regularly. Thank you for helping us with the inspection of your school. We hope that you continue to enjoy school and work really hard.