

Sunny Bank Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105289
Local Authority	Bury
Inspection number	336468
Inspection dates	11–12 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Kathleen McArthur

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	196
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Gordon Hubert
Headteacher	Mr M Green
Date of previous school inspection	2 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited eight lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at teachers' planning, documentation for safeguarding pupils, school assessment records and test results, local authority reports and plans for future development. In addition, inspectors analysed 31 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, 11 from school staff and 66 from pupils.

- the consistency of pupils' progress throughout the school
- the monitoring of teaching and learning
- pupils' involvement in assessing their own learning so that they know how to improve their work
- the contribution of leaders and managers to the evaluation of the school's performance and planning for improvement.

Information about the school

This average size school serves a residential area on the edge of the borough of Bury. About a quarter of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups, with Pakistani heritage as the largest group. A small number of pupils speak English as an additional language. Entitlement to free school meals is well below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than average. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of the Reception class. The school offers before- and after-school clubs. There have been a number of staff changes since the last inspection and a new deputy headteacher appointment. The school holds a number of awards including Healthy Schools, Heartstart and an Activemark.

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

This is a good school, where pupils from all backgrounds are treated equally and work in harmony. Inspection findings match the school's own judgment of its effectiveness.

Parents are extremely pleased with the education and care their children receive, and one commented: 'The school endeavours to get the best out of every child'.

Staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and motivate them to become enthusiastic learners. Pupils rise to the challenge and their achievement is good. The Early Years Foundation Stage gives children a good start to their learning. Good teaching throughout the school builds effectively on this, so that pupils make consistently good progress and attain above average standards. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English in addition to their home language progress as well as their classmates due to the good quality support they receive.

The Healthy Schools and Activemark awards demonstrate commitment to ensuring that pupils know how to keep fit and healthy. Pupils are proud of their school and fully supported their school council members in making a school-wide New Year resolution 'To be a better friend to all'. Good care, guidance and support for every pupil ensure that they feel very safe and trust staff to help with any problems. In turn, they are caring and considerate towards each other and always polite to adults. Pupils respect the cultural differences and diversity represented in school, and they participate in many local events, including the annual 'Children of Bury Sing', the carnival and Remembrance Day parades. The school is building international links, exchanging pictures, teddy bears and e-mails with a school in Canada. The well balanced curriculum includes imaginative links between subjects, enhanced by visits and visitors.

Good leadership and management, firmly focused on school improvement, have successfully raised the quality of teaching and learning. Staff morale is high. The commitment of staff and governors, fully supported by parents, has successfully established an ambitious vision and raised expectations of what can be achieved. Consequently, since the last inspection standards and provision have improved, giving the school good capacity for further improvement. Community cohesion arrangements are satisfactory. The school works well with the local and wider community, but does not plan its promotion of community cohesion systematically nor does it measure the impact of any actions. All leaders and managers contribute effectively to improvement planning, evaluate their areas of responsibility and produce action plans. However, curriculum leaders have few opportunities to observe and support the way their subjects are taught.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- - Enhance the professional role of curriculum leaders by extending their skills in observing lessons and supporting teaching and learning in their subject areas.
- - Plan more systematically the promotion of community cohesion and rigorously evaluate its impact.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

All groups of pupils achieve well and reach challenging targets. Pupils' keen attitudes show how much they enjoy learning. Their progress and attainment in English are strengths in both key stages. Sustained improvement in writing over the last four years reflects the impact of a whole-school determination to drive up standards. Attainment is more variable in mathematics. School analysis has identified the need to sharpen pupils' calculation skills, and a robust programme to achieve this is now in place. Pupils' work and inspection evidence indicate that good progress continues and that overall standards remain above average in both key stages.

Pupils work hard at a good pace, usually concentrate well, display a real interest and try their best. Behaviour is good around school and often exemplary in lessons. Pupils say they feel very safe, are adamant that bullying is not a problem and talk knowledgeably about protecting their safety on the internet. They know what constitutes a healthy diet, but are less sure of why some types of food are beneficial; they enjoy the many physical opportunities on offer. They are keen to represent their classmates as school councillors, to develop a vegetable garden and to help the wider community through charity fundraising. Attendance is above average, reflecting pupils' enjoyment and good parental support. Pupils' generally well developed skills in literacy and numeracy and their positive, trustworthy conduct when working together give them a good basis for their future education and to develop into reliable citizens.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a keen sense of right and wrong and show consideration for others. They talk enthusiastically about different cultures and festivals, for example recent Eid celebrations. They reflect quietly on the world during school assemblies and help to protect their environment by recycling materials.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ 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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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: 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	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

'Teachers help me learn and support me' and 'Teachers make lessons fun' typify pupils' comments. Most lessons feature good use of 'talking partners' and resources including information and communication technology (ICT). Open questions and high expectations challenge pupils of all abilities and the planned activities are well matched to particular needs. However, pupils are not always encouraged to present their written work neatly. Well-informed teaching assistants provide good support, especially for pupils with additional needs and those learning English. There is some imaginative teaching. For example, the 'trading game' effectively developed collaborative skills in Year 4. Good assessment and tracking systems give a clear, accurate view of how well pupils are doing and where extra help is needed. Feedback, both orally and through teachers' marking, generally helps pupils improve their work.

Varied learning experiences ensure that pupils gain good academic and personal skills. Carefully planned and adapted lessons and effective support ensure pupils of all abilities and needs make good progress. Pupils use ICT to extend their learning in other subjects. Some innovative cross-curricular examples were seen: for example, in Year 3's work on 'The Snow Queen' which linked literacy, mathematics and art. Pupils enjoy a wide range of enrichment activities. High quality art work is displayed in some areas but generally pupils' work, in particular their writing, is not used to celebrate success and enhance the learning environment. Good use is made of local resources: for example, Year 5 pupils researched Victorian Unsworth by visiting graves at a local church and talking to the church warden. Pupils and parents praise the popular range of after-school activities on offer.

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A typical parental comment was 'The school feels like a family'. Parents agree with pupils that the school is safe and secure, and this enhances learning and well-being. Well organised provision for pupils with additional learning needs enables them to progress well and external support and advice is sought where needed. Good transition procedures enable pupils to move confidently between classes and on to the next stage of their education. Particularly strong links with the local high school enable pupils to experience exciting activities, such as bricklaying.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's open, inclusive style ensures the commitment of staff and governors. Senior leaders' good management of teaching and learning, including monitoring and shrewd staff deployment, has resulted in consistently good quality teaching. Governance is good. Governors accurately analyse the school's needs and their carefully calculated decision to re-instate the post of deputy headteacher has impacted strongly on school improvement. Subject leaders contribute enthusiastically to action planning and curriculum development. They monitor planning but have limited experience or skills to observe and support other staff, hindering their impact on raising standards.

A very personalised approach really engages parents in the work of the school. This was confirmed in the overwhelmingly positive response in school surveys and inspection questionnaires. Parents feel staff are approachable and the majority say that they receive good guidance about how to support their child's learning. For example, meetings were held to inform parents about the teaching of letters and sounds and preparation for Year 2 teacher assessments and the Year 6 national tests. A range of good partnerships, including local residents and businesses, high schools, churches and support services, effectively broaden and support pupils' experiences and well-being. The school celebrates pupils' diverse backgrounds. Effective procedures successfully ensure that they all experience equal opportunities. For example, the progress made by different groups of pupils is consistently tracked to ensure that they are progressing well. Good arrangements for safeguarding and protecting pupils meet current requirements. The promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory, pupils mix happily and respect each other's cultures and there are imaginative, mutually supportive links with local community groups and businesses. However, these activities are not planned systematically nor evaluated to assess their impact. The school gives good value for

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money.

These are the grades for 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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills typical for their age, although they are weaker in language and calculation. As a result of good teaching, they make good progress in all areas of their learning. The great majority reach the expected levels for their age by the time they move to Year 1, and a significant minority exceed them.

A warm welcome from caring staff ensures that children feel safe and secure. They settle quickly on the carpet each morning, eager to tackle new 'target words', letter sounds or numbers. The skilled staff team build on children's natural curiosity and interests, such as mini-beasts or dinosaurs. Despite limited classroom space, well planned learning activities challenge children to explore and investigate. These activities are carefully balanced between those led by adults and those that the children choose for themselves. Careful tracking of children's progress shows staff just how well each child is progressing. They take every opportunity to develop reading and writing skills, so that children make rapid progress in these areas. Children's writing is displayed so that they, and their parents, can see how well their skills are improving. This clearly stimulates the children to try even harder.

Children love being outside, extending their learning in the fresh air. They were especially keen to go out during the snowy weather, building dens and checking the depth of the snow. They become increasingly independent by taking responsibility for dressing themselves in coats, hats, gloves and boots, which helps them to know that it

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is important to look after their health by keeping warm in winter. Good leadership, firmly based on good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements, has a successful vision to improve provision for every child.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parents who returned the questionnaire gave very positive responses to all the questions, showing a high level of satisfaction with the school. They were particularly happy with:

- their child's progress
- how well the school keeps them informed about progress
- the degree to which the school keeps their child safe and teaches them how to be healthy
- the good quality of teaching.

There were only a few negative comments and the inspection found no evidence to support these.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sunny Bank 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 31 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 196 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	20	65	10	32	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	23	74	8	26	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	17	55	13	42	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	19	61	12	39	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	22	71	8	26	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	55	12	39	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	13	42	17	55	1	3	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)	13	42	15	48	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	18	58	11	35	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	9	29	20	65	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	48	15	48	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	19	61	11	35	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	23	74	8	26	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 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"> ■ 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 pupil's 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.



13 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sunny Bank Primary School, Bury, BL9 8EQ

The inspectors would like to thank you for welcoming us so warmly to your school. You certainly didn't let the snowy weather stop you from being sensible, especially as you had to stay indoors all day. Well done! We know you enjoy school because you attend regularly and work hard, and your good behaviour is a credit to your parents and teachers. Your parents told us that they are very pleased with your school. This is what we found out about your school:

- Sunny Bank is a good school, with good leaders, governors and teachers.
- You make good progress and reach standards that are above average.
- The Reception class gives children a good start and they really enjoyed working outside in the snow.
- Lessons are interesting and you enjoy all the extra activities and clubs, especially going on visits and having visitors into school.
- You told us you feel safe and the school teaches you how to look after yourselves. The staff care for you well, and you know you can talk to them about any problems.
- You are kind and caring and work hard to help others.

We have asked your headteacher to:

- make sure that those teachers who are in charge of subjects have the skills to check how well those subjects are taught
- better plan ways in which you can link up with a wider range of children from different backgrounds to learn about each other and for your teachers to find out more about how well this is working.

We are sure you will continue to help the staff by working hard, taking good care of yourselves and enjoying everything you do

We send our very best wishes.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Kathleen McArthur

Lead Inspector on behalf of the inspection team

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