

Unsworth Primary School

Blackley Close, Unsworth, Bury, Lancashire BL9 8LY

Inspection dates

5–6 December 2017

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Outstanding |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Good |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Outstanding |
| Outcomes for pupils | Good |
| Early years provision | Outstanding |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Good |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The governors, headteacher and school leaders are highly committed and know the school well. They have the skills, experience and ambition to drive forward further improvements.
- Leaders ensure that the well-crafted and broad curriculum provides an extensive range of opportunities to develop pupils’ knowledge.
- Pupils’ behaviour is excellent. They treat each other with respect and care, demonstrating an exemplary awareness of equality, diversity and empathy.
- Parents are enabled to be strong partners in their children’s learning. They greatly value the many ways in which staff ensure that their children receive support with the learning process.
- Children get off to an exceptional start in Reception and make rapid progress. The indoor and outdoor learning environments are exciting and stimulating. However, the outdoor provision could be further developed to extend the children’s skills in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The majority of pupils, including those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged, make good progress from their starting points.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is consistently good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge. However, on occasions, tasks are not matched closely enough to pupils’ abilities.
- Pupils’ personal development and welfare are exceptional. Pupils have high levels of confidence and this is expertly promoted by caring staff through a wide range of opportunities.
- Pupils enjoy learning. They welcome opportunities to improve their work and appreciate the support they receive from the wide range of staff who work with them.
- Teachers plan creatively and pupils’ responses show good imagination. Focused questioning by staff enables pupils to reflect on their learning, which supports the strong progress they make.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that tasks are more closely matched to pupils' abilities to provide the challenge needed for pupils to make substantial and sustained progress in all year groups.
- Build upon the range of early reading, writing and mathematics prompts and activities in the outdoor learning area of Reception.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher and senior leadership team demonstrate clear ambition for all staff and pupils. Leaders' improvement planning highlights the importance of professional development for all members of staff to enable them to excel. Very strong systems and structures are in place to ensure that teaching is consistent across classes. As a consequence, there is a strong sense of identity throughout school, which is encapsulated in the school's mission statement: 'Together we build understanding.' Leaders are justly proud of their core values, which are displayed around the school building.
- Strong leadership is a clear strength of the school. Members of staff at all levels share their skills within and beyond the school. Many undertake research projects to develop their understanding of teaching and learning. Staff have opportunities to share their findings with teachers in this and other schools. For example, the physical education (PE) and sports leaders have created a new assessment system which enables teachers to check the progress and attainment of pupils. They have shared this system with staff within school and with leaders at other schools. The system ensures that the progress and attainment of all pupils in PE are accurate.
- Leaders place great emphasis on the focused training of new members of staff. Performance is carefully managed and a broad range of training opportunities are provided. Leaders ensure that opportunities are available for staff to share skills. Such expertise has resulted in many leaders, including the headteacher, leading training in other schools. For example, the Reception classroom is used as a training base for other schools in the local authority and the Reception leader trains others in teaching phonics.
- The curriculum is designed to meet the needs and interests of all pupils within school. The headteacher notes that: 'Inclusion is at the heart of all that we do.' The curriculum is broad and balanced and there is great emphasis placed upon the creative arts and sport. In this way, leaders ensure that all pupils within school have opportunities to achieve. Subject themes guide teachers and pupils through the content of learning. This ensures that a consistent approach to teaching is evident in all classes and learning is structured in an effective manner.
- Pupils enjoy a wide selection of extra-curricular activities. Leaders ensure that these cater for a broad range of pupils' interests, including sport, gardening, art and singing. Each year, the school choir joins with choirs from other local schools to sing at church. These events raise funds for charity. Pupils sing in school with great enthusiasm. One pupil noted: 'Singing makes me feel like part of a family.'
- Leaders at all levels place great emphasis on the care and well-being of pupils. There is a broad range of enrichment activities in place to support pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development (SMSC). Tolerance is at the heart of the school's ethos. As a consequence, pupils speak with conviction about diversity. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to celebrate festivals from a variety of faiths and pupils undertake fundraising activities for several charities. Displays around school further exemplify leaders' passion for equality. An appreciation of a wide range of cultural

issues, which prepare pupils for life in modern Britain, is expertly woven through the curriculum.

- Parents speak very highly of the school. They are overwhelmingly positive and complimentary about the quality of care shown towards their children. Leaders ensure that parents have a wide range of opportunities to develop the skills necessary to support their children's learning. For example, on the second day of the inspection, parents and grandparents of pupils in the school's Speech and Language Resourced Provision took part in an open morning where they were able to develop their understanding of the ways in which their children learn. One parent who responded to Parent View noted, in relation to the Speech and Language Resourced Provision: 'Unsworth has supported my little boy fantastically. His needs have been met exceptionally well.'
- Leaders make excellent use of additional funding they receive for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. The leaders with responsibility for special educational needs (SENCOs) are highly effective, demonstrating clear knowledge and experience in this area. As a consequence, provision for these pupils is strong and they make strong progress. One parent, reflecting the views of others, noted on Parent View: 'They always help where they can. The SEN team is excellent.'
- Leaders have a very clear understanding of the barriers to learning faced by some pupils. They use pupil premium funding very efficiently to ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve well. The headteacher has received focused training in this area. This ensures that disadvantaged pupils receive effective support in areas such as attendance, homework, teaching and access to enrichment opportunities. In 2017, the progress of disadvantaged pupils by the end of key stage 2, was above that of other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The physical education and sports premium funding is used extremely effectively to provide specialist sports coaches. These coaches help teachers to improve their own sports teaching and also organise clubs and competitions. A wide range of after-school events are provided for pupils to further develop their love of sport. As a consequence, the school has received a gold award for sporting achievement.

Governance of the school

- Governors work in an extremely effective manner with other leaders. They provide a broad range of challenge and provide clear, accurate and strategic direction.
- Governors have a detailed understanding of the school's effectiveness because they undertake a wide range of monitoring activities. This enables changes to be made to support school improvement. For example, the transition of children into Reception has improved following governors' efforts to seek the views of parents on this matter.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective, including all protocols and practices for record-keeping.
- Leaders, including governors, undertake a broad range of training to ensure that the welfare and safety of all pupils is highly effective. As a consequence, staff have a clear

understanding of their responsibilities. Pupils are happy and able to explain the many ways in which they feel safe within school.

- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Effective procedures are in place to ensure that pupils behave very safely in school. They move around in a calm and orderly manner, demonstrating commendable levels of politeness and consideration towards others.
- The headteacher is a member of a schools' safeguarding group within the local authority. As a consequence, she provides accurate and up-to-date advice on safeguarding measures to staff both within and beyond her school. Leaders produce case studies to evaluate their systems to protect vulnerable pupils in areas such as attendance.
- Leaders are aware of the importance of online safety for pupils and have worked hard to develop pupils' awareness within this area. Pupils understand how to stay safe online and have a clear awareness of the potential dangers in this area.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Effective teaching, across subjects, including reading, writing and mathematics, has a good impact on learning. Progress is clearly evident in books where pupils are encouraged to write imaginatively across a wide range of subjects both in school and for homework.
- Teachers work hard to ensure that the movement of pupils from one year to the next is smooth. There is a detailed handover of information about pupils to ensure that no time is wasted at the beginning of each year. Systems at the end of each key stage are efficient. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for the next phase of their learning.
- Teachers provide pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum. They ensure that the content equally supports those pupils with complex needs as well as other pupils. All teachers plan thoroughly, through an exciting themed approach which guides both teachers and pupils through the content of learning. Learning blocks begin with an exciting event and end with a final 'product'. Such events excite pupils and motivate them to learn. For example, during a whole-school enquiry into sketching, an artist visited school to talk to the pupils about drawing. The pupils all produced pictures which were framed and displayed in a 'pop up' gallery in a local shopping centre.
- Teaching for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is strong. There is a larger-than-average number of pupils who have an education, health and care plan throughout school and leaders and teachers plan effective programmes of work to support their needs. Leaders ensure that a thorough and individualised form of assessment is undertaken for these pupils and information is used well to provide subsequent support. Funding is used effectively to purchase new resources and to employ additional staff. The school's Speech and Language Resourced Provision offers additional support to pupils with speech and language difficulties. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment of pupils who attend this resourced provision is also strong. As a consequence, these pupils make good progress from their initial starting points.
- The assessment leader has created an online assessment system which is used well throughout school and within other schools in the locality. It enables leaders to identify

groups of pupils whose performance is below that of others. As a result, leaders are able to provide additional support for classes where they identify groups with lower than average performance. The assessment system also allows staff to analyse the progress and attainment of pupils with accuracy. They use this to pitch work to pupils' needs. However, occasionally, this is not effective and tasks are not matched closely enough to pupils' abilities, which limits the overall level of challenge.

- The teaching of phonics is consistently good across classes. Teachers use sophisticated language to move pupils' learning forward. As a result, the number of pupils who pass the phonic screening test at the end of Year 1 has been above, or in line with, the national average over many years.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' attitudes to learning. As a result, pupils take pride in their work and have excellent work ethics. Teachers inspire their pupils who highlighted a love of reading and of mathematics when talking to inspectors. Pupils are very competent in their ability to talk through the various stages of their learning and enjoy seeing the final results of their learning as a 'product'. This is a result of the structure of the curriculum. Pupils note that they enjoy learning and welcome opportunities to improve their work. In reading lessons, for example, pupils are given regular opportunities to work together to discuss texts that they are studying. In Year 2, pupils were able to read out and perform a narrative poem. Their work was improved by the constructive advice given to them by their peers. However, when spoken to by inspectors, some pupils commented that challenge was not always strong in some lessons.
- Leaders ensure that teachers and teaching assistants have secure subject knowledge in a wide range of subjects, including English, mathematics and the creative arts. This enables them to address areas that require further improvement. For example, pupils undertake more focused problem-solving activities as a result of staff training in mathematical reasoning.
- Leaders have re-structured the writing curriculum following the last inspection. This ensures a clear progression of skills. The teaching of grammar and punctuation has been further developed to ensure that focused teaching takes place each week. Teachers gain the stimuli for writing from other areas of the curriculum. Pupils can discuss the structure of their writing in detail with other pupils and with adults. Leaders ensure that writing forms a large part of homework activities across many subjects in the curriculum.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils are confident, happy and self-assured. They clearly care for each other and are keen to offer help and support in lessons. They show great respect for, and interest in, the ideas of others.
- Pupils enjoy the many opportunities given to them to care for others as play leaders and representatives of groups such as school and class councils. They also enjoy opportunities to meet with councillors from other schools. Teachers note that the ethos

of the school is to give pupils a clear voice. Leaders of PE and sport enable sport leaders in Year 6 to plan, teach and evaluate lessons in sport for younger pupils. Pupils are very proud of this responsibility.

- The parent support adviser knows the local community extremely well and uses her training and links with outside agencies to great effect when supporting the needs of individuals. As a consequence, she offers effective support to pupils in a broad range of areas, including mental health.
- Pupils feel safe. They note that instances of bullying are very rare and where bullying does occur, adults deal with it immediately. Pupils are proud of the fact that school councillors work with adults to keep everyone safe. Pupils are very clear about the importance of protecting themselves when they are online. The strength of this work was rewarded through a recent e-safety quality mark award.
- The curriculum provides a broad range of opportunities to educate pupils on the need for a healthy lifestyle. Pupils are clear that health is linked to staying active and to taking part in sport.
- Lunchtime and after-school activities provide many opportunities for pupils to learn new skills and to make new friends.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. This is because leaders weave SMSC throughout the curriculum and pupils receive specific teaching on issues such as respect and empathy.
- Pupils are exceptionally polite and thoughtful. They wear their uniform with pride and engage confidently in meaningful conversation with adults. Pupils understand that respect is of great importance. They have the highest respect for equality and diversity. Those spoken to noted that there is 'no normal'. One point of view summed up the views of others as: 'You should never feel uncomfortable about who you are.'
- Leaders ensure that pupils attend school regularly. The attendance of all groups of pupils is broadly in line with the national average and persistent absence rates are well below the national average.
- Pupils behave in an equally strong manner across the school. This is because leaders ensure that all staff pay attention to the varying needs of their pupils. Additional activities are provided to ensure that behaviour support is available to all who require it.
- Behaviour during unstructured times is exemplary. This is because staff have high expectations of pupils and older pupils have equally high expectations of younger pupils. Playground routines are strong and playground leaders effectively support the games played by others.
- Staff and pupils are currently working towards the rainbow award for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) awareness. They take part in a broad range of work around this area. For example, all pupils were involved in the creation of a display which exemplified LGBT values.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Current pupils make consistently good progress across almost all year groups. Where progress is less than expected, leaders provide effective support. As a result, pupils develop secure knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Over time in key stage 1, pupil's attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is good. The proportion of pupils who achieve the standards expected for their age usually compares well to the national average. This is also the case for the proportion of pupils who reach the higher standards in key stage 1. This represents good progress from pupils' starting points on entry to the school which are often lower than expected for their age.
- Pupils' most recent attainment at the end of key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics is strong for almost all groups of pupils. From pupils' starting points at the end of key stage 1, this represents good progress across key stage 2.
- Leaders use funding and resources very effectively to meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils. As a consequence, this group of pupils make strong progress from their earliest starting points. The school's most recent performance information shows that pupils' achievement at the end of key stage 2 has improved and is currently higher than that of their peers.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress. This is because additional government funding is used effectively. This is the case in the Speech and Language Resourced Provision and in other classrooms because extra teaching and focused support enable pupils to achieve well.
- The most able pupils work at a high level throughout school. At the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2, this group of pupils reach levels which are in line with and sometimes above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils make good progress in reading. They read regularly in school. There is a range of fiction and non-fiction books available in the school's library. Pupils enjoy classical literature and they are able to discuss their favourite books with understanding and enthusiasm.
- Inspection evidence, including in pupils' books, shows that improvements in writing enable pupils to make strong progress across the curriculum. As a result, the school's most recent performance information shows that writing attainment for most groups of pupils is in line with or above the national average at the end of key stage 2. A similar picture is evident in most classes throughout school.
- Progress is also good in mathematics. Pupils are confident in completing a range of different calculations. Teachers encourage pupils to think deeply and apply accurate problem-solving skills.
- Pupils work in subjects other than English and mathematics is of a high standard. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of their work. There are effective links between subjects. For example, pupils in Year 6 undertook a design and technology project on structures. During this work, they were able to develop their skills in mathematics, history and writing, together with information technology, design technology and science.

- Pupils' strong achievement and excellent personal development ensure that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The leadership and management of the early years is outstanding. Leaders are forward thinking and strive to gain external support and validation for their work.
- Leaders make very effective use of additional funding to ensure that disadvantaged children receive the additional support necessary to progress. This ensures that additional adults support the needs of these children. As a consequence, disadvantaged children make very good progress.
- Transition arrangements into Reception are a great strength of the provision. Leaders are aware that children enter the Reception Year from a very wide range of nurseries. Members of the early years team place great emphasis on knowing each child individually. They visit each nursery and every family at home to build up a clear picture of each child's strengths and areas for development.
- Assessment is highly effective in the early years. Children's progress is closely checked and monitored. Leaders and staff use an online assessment system so that children's development is shared with parents. The early years team is highly successful in engaging parents in their children's learning. One parent, reflecting the views of many, noted that the early years leader was a highly regarded practitioner.
- Safeguarding arrangements for the early years are effective and are a strength of the provision. Children's behaviour is exemplary. Children are highly motivated and eager to learn. They play in a very cooperative manner and are very helpful towards one another. Staff enjoy a very strong rapport with the children and there is a very clear culture of care. A high level of vigilance ensures that children remain safe while providing opportunities for independence and self-care.
- Teaching in the early years is inspirational and responsive to children's needs. Effective use of praise builds on children's ideas and suggestions and teachers have high expectations for learning. The quality of questioning is exceptional and responses drawn from children are of a high standard. Children are fully engaged by their learning and are keen to talk to adults.
- A high proportion of children have, historically, entered Reception with skills and understanding that are below those typical for their age in areas such as communication, language and literacy, together with personal, social and emotional development. During their time in Reception, these children make rapid progress. This is because leaders meticulously check the progress of these children and provide them with a curriculum which is exciting and enriched by wider experiences. For example, a policeman visited the early years to talk about how the police help and protect people. He shared with the children a variety of the equipment that he uses. By the end of Reception, the proportion of children who reach a good level of development has in recent years been above the national average.
- Leaders very effectively identify and support children who have SEN and/or disabilities. Focused support is given to these pupils from both teachers and teaching assistants. As a consequence, these children make excellent progress from their initial starting points.

- Teachers ensure that the transition from Reception to Year 1 is smooth. They work very closely together to ensure that learning flows seamlessly from one setting to the next. For example, teachers ensure that pupils in Year 1 have access to similar learning opportunities as the Reception class to further develop their skills in preparation for their new curriculum.
- Provision for children’s learning inside the classroom is of a high standard. The indoor environment is highly stimulating with a rich and varied range of activities. The outdoor area also includes much which excites and engages children. However, it is not fully exploited to extend the children’s reading, writing and mathematics.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 105317 |
| Local authority | Bury |
| Inspection number | 10032324 |

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 227 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mrs S Gaskell |
| Headteacher | Mrs C Reynolds |
| Telephone number | 0161 766 4876 |
| Website | www.unsworth-primary.co.uk |
| Email address | Unsworth@bury.gov.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 2–3 July 2013 |

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is slightly below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have a special educational needs statement or an education, health and care plan is well above the national average.

- The school provides a specially resourced provision, for pupils who have SEN, for up to 14 pupils with speech, language and communication needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. Some shorter visits to classes were undertaken with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher on the first day of the inspection.
- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in the Speech and Language Resourced Provision.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, key stage leaders, subject leaders, teachers, teaching assistants, the business manager, the special educational needs and/or disabilities leaders and the parent support adviser.
- The lead inspector carried out a detailed scrutiny of current progress and attainment information for all groups of pupils.
- Inspectors looked at examples of pupils' work from across the curriculum and talked with pupils about their work. They listened to pupils read and talked to them about the books they enjoyed and those they are currently reading.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents, including school improvement plans, the school's own self-evaluation, safeguarding records, information about pupils' attendance, school visit reports, governor reports and minutes, expressions of thanks from parents and other visitors, curriculum information, school-to-school support documents and PE reports.
- Inspectors observed behaviour at the start of the school day, during lessons and in assembly. Inspectors spoke informally to parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors took account of 35 responses to Ofsted's online survey (Parent View). They also considered 30 responses to the staff questionnaire and 44 responses to the pupil questionnaire.
- An inspector talked with pupils informally at playtime and movement in and around the school building was observed.
- Inspectors met with pupils to discuss aspects of learning and behaviour and safety.
- The lead inspector met with a representative of the local authority who is the school's improvement officer.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body and two other governors.

Inspection team

Gill Pritchard, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Doreen Davenport

Ofsted Inspector

John Daley

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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