

# Ballifield Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107047
<b>Local authority</b>	Sheffield
<b>Inspection number</b>	377521
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Jane Hughes

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	487
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Robert Strafford
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sheila Haigh
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 November 2006
<b>School address</b>	Handsworth Grange Road Sheffield S13 9HH
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## Introduction

### Inspection team

Jane Hughes  
Gillian Hunter  
Anthony Buckley

Additional inspector  
Additional inspector  
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days notice. The inspectors observed 17 teachers teaching 22 lessons or part lessons, of which one was a joint observation with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made short visits to a few 'support lessons' where specialist help is provided by trained teaching assistants. Discussions took place with groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and school staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a number of documents, including the school development plan, records of monitoring, evaluation and safeguarding, and pupils' progress data. Inspectors analysed 181 parental and carers' questionnaires as well as others completed by pupils and staff.

## Information about the school

This school is a larger-than-average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and few are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The percentage of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average. The school meets the current floor standard. The school has achieved Investors in People and Healthy School status. It also has the Activemark and Leading Parent Partnership awards.

The headteacher joined the school in 2008. There has been significant staff turbulence over the last three years. The school runs its own breakfast club.

**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

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key Findings

- This is a good school. Pupils achieve well because of good teaching promoted by effective leaders. Pupils, parents and carers have highly positive views of the school. They acknowledge the strengths that have been maintained and the improvements made. The school is not outstanding because teaching is not outstanding and pupils do not learn as rapidly or attain as well in writing as in reading or mathematics.
- Pupils' achievement is good. Pupils learn and progress well. Attainment is broadly average overall in English and mathematics by the time pupils leave Year 6, although pupils' progress in writing is slower and their attainment is below that in reading and mathematics. The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a good start for children, with a successful focus on developing children's language and social skills.
- Teaching is good and increasingly outstanding. Meticulous tracking of each pupil's attainment ensures good quality support in lessons for all pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Some inconsistencies remain, particularly in marking and expectations for presentation of work, where teaching is satisfactory.
- Almost all pupils behave well. They say they thoroughly enjoy school. Most parents and carers confirm that any instances of poor behaviour are dealt with efficiently. The school is a caring and harmonious community. Pupils feel safe here.
- Senior leaders, the governing body and staff are highly ambitious for the school. Self-evaluation is accurate. The management of teaching is effective and regular professional development opportunities contribute to improvement. While the curriculum is good and evolving, it does not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to increase their awareness of diversity in Britain and around the world

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

- Eliminate remaining inconsistencies within the overall good quality of teaching in order to raise attainment and accelerate further pupils' progress, particularly in writing by:
  - ensuring teachers provide regular comments to pupils on how to improve their work
  - ensuring teachers place sufficient importance on improving pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work
  - ensuring pupils pay closer attention to their literacy targets when writing in other subjects.
  
- Increase the impact of leadership and management on the curriculum by:
  - developing further pupils' use of basic skills in all curriculum subjects in meaningful contexts
  - broadening opportunities for pupils to increase their awareness of diversity in Britain and around the world.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils' attainment is average in English and mathematics. Pupils' current work, monitoring information and data show that pupils' progress is good and their attainment is rising rapidly in reading and mathematics but more slowly in writing. Gaps between pupils' performance and that nationally are narrowing in response to the good quality teaching pupils experience here.

Children enter the school with skills below, and increasingly well below, those expected for their age. This is particularly the case in relation to their personal, social, emotional, communication, language and literacy skills. Children enjoy a good start to school in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Over the last two years, they have made good progress by the end of reception so that the proportion of children reaching a good level of development has been above the national average. Children benefit from the high expectations of adults and the wide range of interesting and challenging activities. This has not always been the case. The outdoor learning environment has been completely redesigned and now meets children's needs well.

All groups of pupils, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs who receive well-targeted support, and those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, make good progress from entering the nursery to the time they leave the school. By the time pupils leave school, they apply skills appropriate to their age in oracy, literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). This supports their future success. Almost all parents and carers confirm inspection findings that their children achieve well.

By the end of Year 2, pupils' reading skills are broadly average. Pupils build well on their secure knowledge of letters and sounds gained in Nursery and Reception classes. By the time pupils leave the school in Year 6, their reading skills are average and developing well. Pupils are increasingly fluent readers who know how to break down unfamiliar words into

discrete sounds and then accurately blend these sounds together. Weaker readers have effective one-to-one or small group support to help them hone these skills.

Pupils are confident and eager to learn. In Year 6, for example, pupils clearly enjoyed roles playing prosecution and defence lawyers concerning a theft charge. They developed coherent arguments for or against the suspects. Regular opportunities to use ICT in lessons engage pupils well in their learning, particularly the boys. Pupils listen carefully to instructions and try hard to complete tasks. Teachers' successful professional development ensures that pupils understand the value of developing strategies to learn. As a result, they are not upset if they make a mistake and are quick to ask for help when stuck. Pupils who attend the nurture setting develop confidence and self-esteem. During the inspection, they followed instructions to make a rocket. This activity involved reading, measuring, identifying shapes and motor skills. They also overcome significant barriers to learning such as erratic attendance.

## Quality of teaching

Key strengths within teaching support the good progress pupils make. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who returned the inspection questionnaire also confirmed that their children are taught well.

Adults are highly motivated and knowledgeable and engage pupils well in lessons. They use rigorous questioning to check and consolidate pupils' knowledge and redirect the learning focus as required. Staff pitch work well to provide good levels of challenge. Some inconsistencies characterise more ordinary teaching. Here, teachers occasionally talk for too long. Few insist that pupils pay sufficient attention to their handwriting and presentation. The quality of teachers' marking varies. All marking celebrates success but some lacks sufficient information about what pupils need to do next to improve. Pupils regularly assess how well they and their classmates are doing and show a clear understanding of their targets. Pupils' work in a range of subjects shows that teachers do not regularly remind pupils to think about their literacy targets when writing in other subjects.

Teaching implements the planned curriculum well. There is a growing focus on linking pupils' skills across various curriculum subjects, although there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their basic skills in all curriculum subjects in meaningful contexts. Adults and pupils embrace new technologies to support learning. For instance, pupils often work with 'netbooks', happily consolidating their literacy and numeracy skills through games and puzzles.

Teachers, teaching assistants and pupils enjoy high quality relationships. This reflects the good development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development overall, although the latter is less well developed. Pupils enjoy their time in school and this is reflected in their positive attitudes to learning and their eager responses. All adults set good examples to pupils about how to treat others with respect. Nonetheless, planned opportunities for pupils to learn about diversity in Britain and around the world are less frequent. Adults who work with children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are knowledgeable about the learning, development and welfare requirements for children this age.

## Behaviour and safety of pupils

Parents, carers, pupils and staff are very positive about behaviour and confirm that it is good. A few register concerns about how well bad behaviour is addressed. Inspection findings confirm that procedures are regularly monitored by senior staff so that rare instances of inappropriate behaviour are speedily addressed. The school is highly inclusive and supports very effectively an increasing number of pupils with specific needs, particularly through bespoke nurture provision.

Pupils behave well both in lessons and around school. They are very aware of different forms of bullying and know how to cope with these. They recognise the importance of cyber safety. Pupils are confident to approach adults in school with any concerns. Parents and carers of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are almost always positive about how well the school meets their children's needs. Typical comments include that 'this is an excellent school and we are overjoyed with our child's progress'.

Attendance is above average. The successful breakfast club provides a positive start to the school day. The nurture facility supports improving attendance. For instance, the attendance of one pupil in regular receipt of nurture has improved from 90% to 98%.

## Leadership and management

The headteacher brings abundant ambition, vision and strategic overview to the school. The effective senior leadership team ensures that high professional standards are pursued throughout the school's work. Since the school's previous inspection, good practice and performance have been consolidated and the pace of improvement has accelerated. Senior leaders have faced significant challenges in refreshing staffing and coping with extended staff absence. Insistence on high quality professional development for all staff, permanent or temporary, has maintained the strong momentum of improvement.

Senior leaders link challenging targets for staff to pupils' outcomes through effective performance management and accurate evaluation by leaders at all levels. Recently, eight staff have undertaken a year-long piece of continuous professional development training focused around how children learn. This recognises the value of collaborative learning styles for pupils and is sustaining improvement. The leadership and management of teaching and learning are firmly and effectively focused on improving classroom outcomes.

The governing body works alongside senior leaders to set the strategic direction for the school. It rigorously challenges and evaluates all aspects of the school's performance as well as the impact of its own work. There is no complacency as leaders, managers and the governing body inject a sense of urgency as they set challenges for the future.

The effectiveness with which adults promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination is good. There is no discriminatory practice and the school follows up carefully rare instances of any type of bullying. Rates of progress between different pupils and year groups are similarly good. Successful nurture facilities promote an inclusive ethos.

The school engages parents and carers well in school life. Increasingly, they are keenly involved in their children's learning. They say that the school provides well for their children.

The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced and meets pupils' needs well. It is still evolving so as to develop better pupils' key skills through different subject areas.

Partnerships with other schools and outside agencies, coupled with trips out, visitors into school and various extra-curricular opportunities, enrich pupils' learning.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils collaborate effectively and follow the rules. Reflective assemblies enhance pupils' personal development. Pupils say that following some assemblies they are aware that 'people are kinder in the playground'. However, pupils' awareness of British and global diversity is less well developed.

The school meets requirements with regard to safeguarding. Record keeping is meticulous. Staff identify risks and pupils are helped to recognise potential hazards in their lives. In view of the clear strengths in leadership, teaching, pupils' achievement and the improvement since the previous inspection, the school provides good value for money. It has good capacity for further improvement.



## 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



7 March 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Ballifield Primary School, Sheffield, S13 9HH**

Thank you for your friendly welcome and help when we inspected your school. We enjoyed listening to your opinions and seeing you at work. I am writing to tell you what we found out.

You go to a good school. Almost all your parents and carers agree. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes do well. In Years 1 to 6, you make good progress in your work, although we think you could do even better, particularly in writing. Overall, you develop skills that are at the national average. This is because teaching is good and some is outstanding. Your headteacher and the other adults are keen to see you all do as well as possible and to build on the many improvements they have already made to your school. You told us that you feel safe in school and that behaviour is good. We saw the same!

Part of our job is to see what your school could do better. We have asked your headteacher and all the adults to make sure that when they mark your work, they give you clear guidance on how to improve. We have also asked them to make sure you all know how important it is to present your work neatly and to take care with your handwriting. We would also like your teachers to help you to think about your literacy targets when you are completing other work, such as your interesting 'Learning Challenges'. Finally, your school is going to make sure you learn more about the different cultures to be found in Britain and across the world.

You can help to improve your school by continuing to work hard, concentrating on your handwriting and how to set your work out tidily.

On behalf of the whole team, I wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Jane Hughes  
Lead Inspector

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