

# Old Earth Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107530
<b>Local Authority</b>	Calderdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	356173
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 December 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kathryn Dodd

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>	379
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ms Kate Thornton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Paul Reynolds
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 October 2006
<b>School address</b>	Lower Edge Road Elland West Yorkshire HX5 9PL
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 18 lessons involving 15 teachers. They held discussions with staff, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and with parents and carers. The inspectors observed the school's work, including a review of improvement plans, the systems for tracking pupils' progress, the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and a sample of pupils' work. The inspectors analysed 166 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, 86 from pupils and 18 from staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- Whether pupils' attainment is above average, particularly in mathematics.
- The rate of pupils' progress, particularly in mathematics and writing and, if it is consistently good.
- How well teachers use assessment information to plan activities that match pupils varying learning needs and to what extent pupils are involved in understanding how well they are getting on and know their next steps.
- How well the curriculum is adapted to boost achievement in writing and in mathematics and, to challenge more-able pupils.
- The rigour with which senior leaders and the governing body review pupils' progress and monitor the quality of provision, and whether this leads to an accurate evaluation of the school's effectiveness.

## Information about the school

Almost all the pupils at this larger than average-size primary school are White British. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for a free school meal is below average, as is the proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities. On-site provision includes Little Earth, which offers nursery provision for up to 32 children aged two to five years of age. The nursery operates wrap-around care for children attending the school. This includes an out-of-school club for up to 56 children aged from three to 11 which operates before and after school, and during school holidays. The education of children attending Little Earth formed part of this inspection and its quality is judged in this report. The school has been accredited with an extensive range of awards. These include Investors in Pupils, Gold Standard for Extended Services, Basic Skills Quality Mark, and the International Schools Award. It has also achieved Healthy School Status and has been accredited as the `Greenest School in Calderdale.

**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

Old Earth is a good school, which is held in high regard by the community. Many parents and carers endorse that they are 'extremely proud' that their children attend this school. They say that staff, including in Little Earth, are 'extremely dedicated and motivated' and that their children 'just love coming to school' because of the many enriching opportunities it offers beyond lessons. The extent of this reflects in the plethora of awards with which the school has been accredited. Outstanding partnerships forged with parents and carers and with others, particularly Little Earth, help to strengthen the quality of education on offer and to provide wrap-around care. The way in which each child is cared for and nurtured shows in the warmth and care that radiates from everyone and as a result, pupils say they feel safe. Pupils, too, are proud of their school and are eager to contribute positively towards it. This clearly reflects in pupils' consistently excellent attendance, their good behaviour and mature and sensible attitudes to learning.

Outstanding leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage and Little Earth have successfully strengthened the quality of provision since the previous inspection, which is now outstanding. As a result, the rate of children's progress in these settings is accelerating and, from their usually below average starting points on entry, they make at least good and sometimes outstanding progress. Between Years 1 and 6, pupils make good progress to reach above average attainment by Year 6. This reflects the overall good quality of teaching and the effective curriculum. In English, progress is good because teachers make effective use of assessment information to provide well-matched activities and to direct their questions so that individuals of all abilities, particularly more-able pupils are challenged. Pupils are clear about what they need to do to reach their learning targets, particularly in writing. This, along with the many opportunities provided across different subjects for them to practise their writing skills, contributes to their good achievement. Such practices, however, are not as consistently evident in mathematics, and as a result, progress, although good overall, is uneven.

Leaders and managers work effectively as a team to drive forward improvement and the capacity to improve further is good. Their recent successes are evident in areas such as improving attainment in writing, strengthening provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and extending the range of exciting and enriching learning experiences. Leaders evaluate accurately the school's effectiveness, recognising its many strengths and pinpointing a few remaining weaknesses. This stems from a careful and regular review of pupils' progress, which, in turn, identifies necessary improvements. Leaders are already taking steps to boost achievement in mathematics. Even so, senior leaders and the governing body do not yet always monitor provision with sufficient rigour to ensure that it is always at least good or to pinpoint precisely what further actions can be taken to drive improvement.

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

- Accelerate pupils' progress in mathematics, by:
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise their mathematical skills as part of work in other subjects
  - making sure pupils are clear about their precise learning targets and the next steps to attain them
  - ensuring that teachers make consistently good use of assessment information to plan activities and tailor questions to challenge pupils of varying abilities.
- Increase the rigour with which senior leaders and the governing body monitor the quality of provision so that the actions needed to drive improvement forward are identified even more precisely.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Achievement is good. Between Years 1 and 6, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress. In most lessons, pupils are attentive, keen to learn and behave well. Pupils work at a good pace, particularly when working alongside adults, in pairs or collaboratively. Most pupils respond well to teachers' questions, although occasionally their concentration drifts when the activities provided are insufficiently challenging. In recent years, attainment in English has been rising and is above average. In mathematics, although attainment is also above average, fewer pupils reach the higher levels than in English. Pupils make good overall progress in mathematics from their previous starting points, but the rate of progress is uneven across year groups. It is particularly good in Year 6.

Pupils' enjoyment is reflected in the enthusiasm with which they participate in, and talk about, all that is on offer. Pupils, particularly the older ones, relish opportunities to take on responsibilities, for example, as 'Eco-Warriors' or as 'Power Police'. They develop a keen sense of awareness of environmental issues, such as when growing fruit and vegetables in the school garden. They are well aware of how their actions can contribute to sustainability, for example by saving energy. Pupils develop a very good understanding of the diversity of cultures in other countries. Opportunities for pupils to engage with others from diverse groups within British society are, however, more limited. Pupils' good understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles mirrors their eagerness to take part in a wonderful range of sporting activities, such as gymnastics and orienteering. Pupils say they feel safe and are confident there is always someone on hand to help them if they feel worried. Pupils are mature and confident speakers. This, along with their consistently excellent attendance and good personal qualities demonstrates that they are well prepared to be successful young adults of tomorrow.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

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

## How effective is the provision?

Teachers' enthusiasm, good organisation, very positive relationships, effective use of praise and the careful deployment of skilled support staff all make a strong contribution to pupils' good progress. In English, high-quality marking ensures that pupils are clear about how they can improve their work. In Year 6, learning accelerates because teachers' expectations are very high. Furthermore, assessments of pupils' achievements are used very effectively to influence teachers' planning, to ensure adults direct appropriate questions that challenges pupils thinking, and to keep pupils on their toes. These best practices are yet to be seen consistently through all the classes, particularly in mathematics.

The good curriculum places a strong emphasis on broadening pupils' everyday experiences. This shows in the excellent range of extra-curricular activities, trips, visitors and themed weeks. Close partnerships with six schools across Europe and another in Sri Lanka ensure that pupils develop a very good understanding of the varying global cultures. Successful adaptations to the writing curriculum, such as, providing more regular and exciting opportunities to write creatively, including as part of work in other subjects, are helping to raise attainment. In mathematics, opportunities to move learning forward at a good rate are sometimes missed when pupils complete worksheets that lack challenge and do not match closely enough to pupils varying needs. Similarly, opportunities for

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pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills in different curriculum subjects are sometimes overlooked.

The quality of care, guidance and support is good. Making sure that pupils are well cared for and enjoy learning, is at the heart of the school's work. High quality pastoral support is evident in day-to-day practice. Close partnerships with parents and carers and with external support agencies mirror the school's commitment to helping pupils with additional needs and enables pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make good progress. Excellent support for pupils attending the out-of-school club reflects in the regular and detailed communication between staff from both Old and Little Earth regarding all aspects of individuals' welfare and learning.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

In their quest to drive improvement forward, leaders forge outstanding partnerships with parents and carers beyond school. Extensive partnerships with other schools and with several local businesses help to extend the curriculum, which contributes significantly to pupils' enjoyment of school. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive as evidenced in the significant funds they raise each year. Written communication between home and school through newsletters and the website for example, is excellent. Regular consultation, such as in making changes to school lunch provision, ensures parents and carers contribute very effectively to driving improvement.

A good emphasis is placed on the inclusion of all pupils in everything the school has to offer. Pupils' welfare and encouraging them to participate in a whole range of activities are kept in firm view. Strategies to promote equality of opportunity help to improve achievement, such as in writing. There remains more to do, however, to address the uneven rate of pupils' progress in mathematics. The overall leadership and management of teaching and learning are good. Since the previous inspection, leaders have successfully strengthened the quality of teaching, especially in English. They know that they now need to address a few remaining weaknesses in mathematics with the same rigour.

Safeguarding procedures, particularly those to ensure that staff and the governing body are well trained, are good. Leaders and the governing body are now focusing, rightly, on strengthening some aspects of their record keeping. Arrangements to safeguard children in Little Earth are outstanding. This is reflected in excellent quality assurance systems, in thorough daily risk assessments and the very detailed knowledge of everyone in meeting children's welfare needs. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion. Pupils learn in a very harmonious school community and good links are established within

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the locality. Opportunities for pupils to learn about different cultures around the world are extensive. Governance is good. By visiting school regularly, such as part of the ‘adopt a governor’ initiative, governors develop a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They offer effective support, especially in financial management and, offer constructive challenge. However, the governing body accepts that it could have more detailed knowledge about the quality of teaching.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children's learning gets off to an extremely successful start. They make at least good and sometimes outstanding progress. By the start of Year 1, the proportion of children reaching and exceeding the nationally expected levels is usually similar to that expected, but is increasing. The extremely warm and caring relationships between adults and children, along with the bright, vibrant, very well-organised and resourced learning environment, ensure that children quickly develop a real thirst for, and joy of, learning. Children's personal, social and emotional development is outstanding. Adults make the most of opportunities to encourage children to develop the personal qualities they will need to be very effective learners. Children respond promptly, for example, when they hear the ‘listening bell’, and are eager to respond to instructions from adults. Teachers and support staff, including in Little Earth, work extremely closely together to assess children's very small steps in achievement. They meticulously and accurately record children's daily achievements and plan very carefully their next steps. Consequently, learning builds very effectively on what children can already do. Staff, including in Little Earth, provide an excellent balance of opportunities for children to learn independently and under the direct guidance of adults, both indoors and outside. Children's good and increasingly outstanding progress reflects outstanding leadership and management. Leaders ensure provision improves at a rapid rate, and in doing so forge outstanding



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partnerships with parents and carers. They have, for example, responded very quickly to the priority to raise attainment in mathematics, with opportunities to develop mathematical skills now consistently and skilfully threaded through many activities offered. Leaders, in conjunction with Little Earth managers have developed very rigorous systems to ensure welfare is of a very high standard. All staff are trained to a high level and as a result, are well equipped to meet this standard. Consequently, children learn within a very safe and secure setting.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

## Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers who returned questionnaires and those that talked with inspectors are extremely supportive of the school's work. They particularly appreciate the quality of education provided in Little Earth and in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where they say their children, 'come on in leaps and bounds'. Parents and carers appreciate the extensive range of extra-curricular opportunities. Many commented that, as a result, their children 'can't wait to get to school every single day'. A very small minority in the questionnaire indicated that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors found the arrangements to deal with behavioural issues to be effective.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Old Earth 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 152 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 379 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	116	76	35	23	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	122	80	28	18	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	96	63	54	36	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	88	58	58	38	3	2	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	109	72	42	28	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	91	60	57	38	3	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	99	65	52	34	1	1	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)	94	62	51	34	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	93	61	57	38	2	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	98	64	44	29	5	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	81	53	68	45	2	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	115	76	34	22	2	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	125	82	24	16	1	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



9 December 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Old Earth Primary School, Elland, HX5 9PL**

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us when we inspected your school. We would like to thank all of you who spent time talking to us. You answered all our questions so thoughtfully and politely. We really enjoyed finding out your views. You go to a good school. By Year 6, your attainment is above that of pupils in most schools, particularly in English and you make good progress.

We were particularly pleased to:

- find out that you know just how important it is to look after the world, by saving energy and growing your own fruit and vegetables
- hear about all the exciting things you take part in, in addition to your lessons, such as, clubs, trips and visitors coming in to talk to you. No wonder you enjoy coming to school so much
- see you rehearsing your Christmas Nativity, singing so joyfully, remembering all your words and speaking so clearly. It is because you develop good skills such as these that you are well prepared for moving on to secondary school.

So that your school becomes even better, I have asked your headteacher to make a few more improvements. These are to make sure that:

- you all make good progress in mathematics by giving you work that makes you think really hard, making sure that you all know your targets and by giving you more chances to practise your mathematical skills in your other subjects
- adults with senior responsibilities and the governing body improve how they check on how well you are learning.

You can help by telling your teacher if your work is too easy and by checking all the time what you still have to do to reach your targets. Finally, I send my best wishes to you all for a very Happy Christmas and I hope that you enjoyed performing your Christmas Nativity. I am sure all your parents and carers were extremely proud of you.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Kathryn Dodd

Lead inspector

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