

Ley Top Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107241
Local Authority	Bradford
Inspection number	356115
Inspection dates	12–13 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Roger Gill

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	301
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Robertshaw
Headteacher	Mrs Jan Pollard
Date of previous school inspection	7 July 2008
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The team observed teaching and learning in 13 lessons, taught by 11 teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors, parents and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of evidence including the school's documents for self-evaluation, safeguarding of pupils, the tracking system used to monitor pupils' progress and the work pupils were doing in their books. Inspectors studied the 29 questionnaires completed by parents and carers as well as those from pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Attainment in the school to see if standards are average after a dip in 2010.
- The progress made by different groups of pupils, particularly higher attainers, those from minority ethnic heritages, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those looked after in public care.
- The consistency of teaching because it is a key feature in the school's own self-evaluation.
- The school's provision for community cohesion in the light of significant changes in the school's population and locally.
- The school's capacity to sustain recent improvements based particularly on the current levels of attainment and rates of progress in key subjects.

Information about the school

Ley Top is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. There are above average, and rising, numbers of pupils from minority ethnic heritages including those learning English as an additional language. An average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is below that found nationally. Since the school's previous inspection in 2008, it has experienced significant changes in staffing and periods of long-term illness among established staff. The number of pupils joining and leaving the school partway through their education is higher than is typical nationally. The number of pupils on the school's roll has increased since it was last inspected, and there has been considerable disruption while new accommodation has been established.

There is a Children's Centre on site, which is not managed by the school's governing body. This facility was inspected separately, at about the same time, and its report will be available on Ofsted's website.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Ley Top is a satisfactory school. In the very large majority of cases pupils make sound progress, despite the sizeable changes and potential barriers that have occurred since 2008. The headteacher, senior leadership, committed governing body and enthusiastic new staff have all played their part in making sure that the school did not fall below a satisfactory level of provision during testing times.

Some good aspects of the school have a positive influence on pupils' personal qualities. Care, guidance and support and the school's thorough systems for safeguarding its pupils are good aspects, which lead to pupils feeling safe. They cope well with the minority of their peers who are troubled by emotional disturbances knowing that, 'everyone has to learn that their behaviour affects others and that poor behaviour is not fair'. The school engages well with parents and carers in ways that involve them in their children's learning. A small number of parents say that some children could have done better recently. Inspectors find that despite average attainment overall, more able pupils and those with special educational needs could reach higher levels of attainment.

Attainment is broadly average overall by the end of Year 6, and in reading and mathematics, but standards in writing are below average. Despite satisfactory teaching, inconsistencies exist between classes in how well pupils learn. These partly arise because of the disruption caused by staffing difficulties. The school has worked hard to minimise the effect of these changes, which began last year. There are some good lessons but not yet enough for teaching and learning to be good overall. Not all pupils are sure about how to reach their next level of attainment. The assessment of pupils' learning is not used well enough to ensure that lessons are planned precisely enough to meet the needs of all groups of pupils. In the Early Years Foundation Stage there is insufficient use of assessment data to evaluate the effectiveness of initiatives when planning for the future.

Leaders and managers have a sound knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development, which is expressed in well written documents of self-evaluation. The leadership team is relatively new but possesses a firm understanding about what to do to raise attainment by the end of Year 6 now that the school is more stable. The recent improvements in pupils' personal qualities such as behaviour, their involvement in school life and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development demonstrate that leaders can bring about change. The school, therefore, has a satisfactory capacity to sustain and improve on its positive characteristics.

Up to 40% of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit from an Ofsted inspector before the next section 5 inspection.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in English and mathematics further by:
 - increasing attainment in writing to at least match that in reading and mathematics
 - making sure that more able pupils and those with special educational needs are set work at an appropriate level of difficulty and challenge.
- Eliminate inconsistencies in teaching so that the large majority of it is good by:
 - using assessment of previous learning more rigorously when planning lessons
 - making sure that all pupils know how to reach the next level of attainment.
- Improve the use made by leaders in the Early Years Foundation Stage of information about children's learning when making plans for the development of provision.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils enjoy learning and achieve satisfactorily from starting points that were below typical levels for older pupils, but are well below for children entering the Early Years Foundation Stage now. When learning is at its best, pupils are joyful about their work. For example, a group of pupils were buoyant in a Year 3/4 mathematics lesson, because the calculations had been broken down into small steps so well that, 'I am getting it now', was the general consensus. Similarly, in Year 2, pupils' faces shone with pride about how well they were doing in an atmosphere of excitement and challenge. Learning and progress are satisfactory overall because some barriers to good achievement balance these positive features, which cause pupils' progress to slow down. When, for example, more able pupils have to complete the same work as other pupils before they can tackle harder work even though this is largely unnecessary. In some cases, some pupils with special educational needs progress too slowly because learning is not brisk enough and pupils are not taught how to manage their own successes. Overall, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve satisfactorily as do other groups of pupils such as those of minority ethnic heritage and pupils looked after in public care. This is because any lack of challenge in some lessons is balanced by spurts of progress in others and the school has a team of experienced teaching assistants who make a positive contribution to pupils' learning and welfare.

The school promotes some good personal qualities in the pupils. The school council is proud of its contribution. Some members spoke with pleasure about how, 'It is important for us to get things done because we are role models in school.' Behaviour is good. Pupils are rightly proud of how safe they all feel. Levels of attendance have improved well to reach average levels. The school has worked productively with parents and carers in this respect. Pupils know about how to lead healthy lives and try hard to practise what they have learnt. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, although pupils' understanding of faiths and cultures is only just developing at a national and international level.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ 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?

Satisfactory teaching provides carefully planned lessons in which pupils learn at a regular pace. Often teaching engages pupils well, creates an inclusive atmosphere and makes learning fun but pupils' progress is not better than satisfactory. This is because teaching does not always take sufficient account of gaps in knowledge and understanding among the majority of pupils and this leads to inconsistencies across the school. A number of measures have been introduced to raise standards in writing but, as yet, these have not produced appreciably higher attainment, partly because pupils are not fully confident in discussing what is required to write complex sentences that include the full range of punctuation.

Assessment, although satisfactory overall, is often not sharp enough at the end of lessons to spot exactly what individuals or groups of pupils need to do in the next lesson. This causes plans for the next day to be too general, not attending in detail to pupils' specific needs. Marking is thorough and leaves pupils with some useful tips about necessary improvements. However, pupils are still not yet fully confident about what they need to do to raise their attainment to the next level.

The curriculum is satisfactory. There is a sound promotion of basic skills beyond which a wide range of activities has a positive effect on pupils' personal qualities. For example, pupils in Year 6 gain a great deal from working with a local secondary school on challenging topics, such as 'Humanutopia, that call into question the responsibility of all

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humans on this planet. Growing vegetables, researching solar panels for the school, preparing for links with schools in South Africa and studying famous people in their area such as Titus Salt all have a favourable influence on pupils' development. The good care, guidance and support provided for pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable and their families ensure that everyone can benefit from these interesting activities. Pupils who join or leave the school partway through their education are helped to settle quickly and, over time, they make the same progress as their classmates.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior colleagues have coped well with all the recent difficulties. Their ambition and drive have been good in developing among pupils, some personal qualities such as their good behaviour. Achievement in classes is satisfactory and rising following the dip in attainment in 2010. Governance is satisfactory. There is a need to induct several new governors but, by contrast, there is a core of longer serving members, including the Chair and vice-chair who know the school very well. Equality of opportunity is promoted soundly and discrimination is not tolerated. Despite the positive care provided, there are some groups of pupils who could do better in their learning, which means that provision for equality of opportunity is only satisfactory. The school's procedures for safeguarding pupils are good. For example, risk assessments are thorough and pupils are involved in considerations of safety in their role as break time team officials.

The school's positive ethos, its links within the local community and its productive partnerships are most beneficial to pupils' development. Moreover, the engagement of parents and carers is good. Exciting initiatives to promote national and international perspectives on faith and culture are in place but they are too new to have produced good outcomes, which is why community cohesion is satisfactory overall.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
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	3
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	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall, most children make good progress, although an increasing number of children join with skills below those expected for their age. Despite ending their Reception Year at below expected levels, children achieve well, particularly in the sounds that letters make, calculating with numbers and their general confidence in learning. The close-knit and well-qualified team of staff, which liaises well with parents and carers, operates well to discuss how children have learnt and what they might do next. Learning is skilfully planned with these insights in mind. Strong relationships between adults and children create an atmosphere of good behaviour and well-considered safety. Adults are diligent when it comes to probing children's thinking, thereby advancing their learning. For example, they ask relevant mathematical questions when children have freely chosen to fish for numbers or, in a more structured situation, draw out children's knowledge of rhymes and letter sounds when listening to a story such as, 'The Smartest Giant in Town.'

The good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, which includes purposeful teaching, leads to interested children who learn well. The move back into permanent accommodation has been managed well. Overall effectiveness is not yet better than good, however, because leadership does not yet analyse information about children's progress to form judgments about how well the provision is influencing learning overall. Therefore, the school cannot, for example, assess the benefits from its close working with the Children's Centre or know precisely in which areas some fine-tuning is required. This lack of evaluation prevents the formation of an action plan for the Early Years Foundation Stage that can be discussed by the senior management team as a whole.

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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	3

Views of parents and carers

There was a low return of questionnaires but those that inspectors received show that a very large majority of parents and carers hold positive views about their children's education overall. There are a few negative opinions, which are primarily about whether children are making enough progress. Inspectors endorse the positive views expressed by parents and carers, and found that in 2009/10, the disruptions did cause a period of slower learning for many pupils. Progress is a little quicker this year but some groups of pupils could do even better if teaching was more consistent.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ley Top 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 29 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 301 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	17	59	11	38	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	18	62	10	34	1	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	13	45	15	52	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	10	34	15	52	4	14	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	17	59	9	31	3	10	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	14	48	12	41	2	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	13	45	13	45	2	7	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)	9	31	12	41	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	11	38	14	48	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	34	15	52	1	3	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	9	31	13	45	1	3	1	3
The school is led and managed effectively	12	41	13	45	2	7	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	14	48	13	45	1	3	1	3

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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



14 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ley Top Primary School, Allerton, BD15 7PQ

My colleagues and I thoroughly enjoyed our two days with you. We discovered what makes Ley Top special for you, for example: the school council's desire to get a solar panel and moral challenges such as, 'Was Titus Salt a villain or a hero?' These are just some of the things that stick in my memory. Your questionnaires, which were very positive in most cases, showed some of you have reservations about how safe you feel and behaviour. However, when we spoke to groups of you it was clear that you feel safe and that it is only a very small minority of pupils, with emotional difficulties, that affects your ideas about safety and behaviour. Many of you agree with this typical comment from an older pupil, 'Everyone has to learn that their behaviour affects others and that poor behaviour isn't fair.'

You go to a satisfactory school that has managed well in recent months when many staff have changed, classrooms have been temporary and pupils have come and gone rapidly. Nevertheless, your progress is back on track this year. You have all done well to cope with these changes.

We have asked your school to do three things to improve. Your teachers must help to raise standards in English and mathematics for more able pupils and those with special educational needs, and in writing generally. Teaching should be consistently good, particularly in the way that lessons are planned and in the way that you are informed about how to reach higher levels. Leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage should use assessments of children's learning to show how the school needs to develop from year to year. You can help in these things by understanding precisely how to reach the next level in your learning.

Best wishes to you all.

Yours sincerely

Roger Gill

Lead inspector

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