

# Ackton Pastures Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108241
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wakefield
<b>Inspection number</b>	362714
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 February 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Christopher Keeler HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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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>	280
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr John Hesketh
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Mandy Pickles
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 July 2007
<b>School address</b>	College Grove Whitwood, Castleford West Yorkshire WF10 5NS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01977 723030
<b>Fax number</b>	01977 723030
<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@acktonpastures.wakefield.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out at no notice by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. The inspectors visited 14 lessons and held meetings with members of the interim executive board, staff, pupils and a representative of the local authority. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of evidence, including the school's data about achievement and progress, monitoring records and the school improvement plan.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. Inspectors looked in detail at the progress the school has made against the areas for improvement identified at the previous section 5 inspection, which are as follows.

Ensure the governing body fulfils its statutory duties in ensuring that all safeguarding requirements are met.

Increase the rate of pupils' progress and raise standards in English, mathematics and science by:

- strengthening the quality and consistency of all teaching to ensure pace, rigour and challenge for pupils in all lessons
- developing assessment procedures and practice through better use of information about pupils' performance to drive and secure improvement ensuring pupils always know what they must do to improve.

Develop leadership, management and governance by:

- ensuring that monitoring by subject leaders is rigorous, regular and focuses sharply on pupils' learning, and that findings are translated into actions to bring about rapid improvement
- establishing rigorous evaluation procedures in all areas of the school's work to help leaders develop a clear view of where improvements are most needed so that these can be rigorously pursued
- ensuring that the governing body holds the school to account through challenge, support and setting a clear direction for its work.

## Information about the school

The school is an average-sized primary school. Leadership is provided by an acting headteacher. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/ or disabilities is above that found nationally.

The school was placed in special measures in September 2009 because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school were not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement. In January 2010 an acting headteacher was appointed to the school and an interim executive board was established by the local authority. A deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2010.

**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**

**2**

## Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. Ackton Pastures Primary School is a rapidly improving school that provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. It is improving because the senior leadership team has a clear view of what needs to be improved and wastes little time in ensuring that all pupils receive their entitlement of a good quality education. From low starting points compared to those typically expected for their age, all pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as they move through the school from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Year 6. While attainment is low it is rapidly improving, particularly in mathematics where standards are now above the national average by the time pupils leave the school. Standards in English, particularly writing, remain below the national average, although they have steadily improved over the past three years. Pupils' behaviour is good overall and in some cases outstanding, especially during lessons and assembly. Positive attitudes to learning underpinned by good relationships between adults and pupils mean that pupils enjoy their learning, feel safe and progress well.

The major reason why pupils are making good progress is that the quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers display high expectations as they challenge pupils and provide well-matched activities that capture their imagination. Good use is made of assessment to ensure that pupils are able to access the curriculum according to their learning needs. The curriculum is appropriately balanced and is enriched by a range of visits, visitors and after-school activities. Insufficient attention is given to developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of world religions. Recent attention has been given to providing pupils with opportunities to apply basic literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. However, this aspect is not being effectively monitored and evaluated to determine the extent to which it is raising attainment. A feature of the school is the high level of care afforded all pupils. Pupils report that bullying is rare. However, should it arise they are confident that it would be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Strong leadership provided by senior managers, including a proactive interim executive board, is characterised by high expectations and a steadfast determination to secure improvement. Rigorous self-evaluation by leaders and managers has led to a more accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This in turn has helped staff to focus on key areas in need of improvement. The response to and changes brought about as a result of being placed into special measures in September 2009 demonstrates that the school's capacity to drive sustained improvement is good.

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

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

- Raise attainment in English, particularly writing, by:
  - - ensuring pupils are increasingly aware of strategies they can use to evaluate and improve their own work
  - - developing pupils' speaking and listening skills in all lessons.
- Monitor the provision and evaluate the impact of planned opportunities for pupils to apply literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects of the curriculum.
- Extend pupils' awareness, knowledge and understanding of world religions.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

<b>3</b>
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Pupils start school with skills that are well below those typical for their age, particularly in language and personal and social skills. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and this continues through to Year 6. An analysis of school-held data, a scrutiny of pupils' work and their contribution in lessons clearly indicate this good rate of progress. Attainment is low but rapidly improving. By the time pupils leave Year 6 their attainment is below average in English and above in mathematics. The school monitors pupils' progress closely and the data indicate that this trend of improvement is on track to continue. In a number of year groups there is still some catch up required from previous underachievement. The good support offered to vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, ensures that they also make good progress as they move through school.

Pupils feel safe, enjoy school, are enthusiastic about their learning and take pride in their work. Pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) well to support their learning and this has become the accepted norm in the majority of lessons. Behaviour in and around the school is good. Pupils listen attentively during lessons, work well together and demonstrate courtesy and respect when talking to adults. Pupils demonstrate a satisfactory awareness of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. The school provides opportunities for pupils to undertake responsibilities in relation to the day-to-day running of the school. The recently established school council is beginning to make a contribution to the school community by, for example, purchasing games to use during wet playtimes. However, members' understanding of the skills involved in decision making is less well developed. The school's concerted effort to improve attendance since the time of the last inspection has also been successful and it is now broadly average. The level of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. The school acknowledges the need to extend pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness. Pupils' average attainment combined with good behaviour and developing good attitudes to learning reflect the satisfactory extent to which they are acquiring skills that will enable them to contribute to their future economic well-being.

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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>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
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>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</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?

The overall quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly since the previous inspection. It is generally good and in some cases outstanding. This is the major reason why pupils are making good progress. Typically, teaching is conducted at a good pace, expectations of pupils are high and teachers display good subject knowledge and engage the pupils in their learning. A significant feature is the way in which pupils are encouraged to share their thoughts with each other and discuss questions posed by the teacher. Good use is made of assessment to ensure that work set correlates to pupils' learning needs. Robust tracking systems are in place to identify those pupils who are not making sufficient progress. Intervention programmes are successful in accelerating pupils' progress because they are well taught. Marking is evaluative and informative, pointing out to the pupils how they may improve. Sometimes, pupils do not understand the strategies that are suggested to help them. Good relationships between adults and pupils sustain their interest and enhance positive attitudes to learning.

The broad and balanced curriculum has been developed recently to enable the teaching of topics across a range of subjects. The main aim of this development is to capture the imagination and interests of pupils. As a result, learning is more 'hands-on' and pupils are given more opportunities to reflect on their own learning. Pupils are finding this new approach interesting and fun. Visits to places of interest and visitors are used to enrich the curriculum. Opportunities for pupils to practise and apply basic literacy and numeracy skills

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in other subjects have been established but this is in its infancy. The quality of this work has not yet been monitored and evaluated with regard to the extent it is enhancing pupils' progress. The development of pupils' speaking and listening skills linked to the use of standard English is not always a high priority in all lessons. Pupils do not have a sufficient understanding of world religions. Care, guidance and support are real strengths of the school. Pupils acknowledge that 'all adults look after us'. Good links exist with external agencies to secure effective support for pupils, particularly those who are vulnerable.

*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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has provided clear direction for all staff. The school development plan is an effective vehicle for securing improvement. A very strong sense of teamwork has emerged with all staff focused on the school improvement agenda set by the headteacher. The determination of staff to work together to raise achievement by improving the quality of teaching and learning has successfully brought the school out of special measures. Middle leaders, particularly those responsible for the core subjects and key stages have improved significantly since the previous inspection. By checking the quality of provision, monitoring progress and working alongside staff they have acquired an accurate view of what needs to be done to raise standards. The interim executive board has provided good support and challenge in equal measure, and its members have played a major part in bringing about improvement. The support they have given to developing the skills and confidence of middle leaders is a good example of the impact of the partnership between the school management and the board. Parents and carers are kept abreast of what their children are doing but the school recognises that parental links could be extended further. Any difference in the progress of particular groups is identified early and action taken to eradicate underachievement. This reflects the school's effectiveness in ensuring equality of opportunity. The school has satisfactory plans to promote community cohesion. A strong sense of community exists within the school but further work is required to develop pupils' awareness of the community beyond the school. Arrangements for safeguarding are good and well documented.

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*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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children's skills are well below expectation when they enter the Nursery. The quality of teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Good use is made of assessment to ensure that activities are well matched to children's learning needs. Adults are skilled at taking what the children are interested in doing and extending and challenging their learning further. This is why children make good progress in all the areas of learning and are well prepared for the transition to Key Stage 1. Induction arrangements and transition procedures are thoughtfully considered; consequently, children settle quickly. Children talk happily to visitors and explain what they are doing with confidence. Relationships between staff and children are good and children are encouraged to behave well. The two classes provide well-organised and attractive learning environments, which provide a good range of activities that stimulate children's imagination. The outdoor areas are well resourced and leaders have worked hard to ensure constructive learning opportunities are available. The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is reflective and ambitious, risk assessments are secure and staff deployed very effectively to ensure children make the most of every learning opportunity.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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	2



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Stage

## Views of parents and carers

Questionnaires for parents and carers are not normally distributed by Ofsted for special measures monitoring inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

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

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

## 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](http://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"><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.**



7 February 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Ackton Pastures Primary School, Castleford, West Yorkshire, WF10 5NS**

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed watching you at work and talking to you throughout the two days. I would particularly like to thank those of you who talked to me about the school during your lunchtime. You were extremely helpful and enabled me to get a good picture of Ackton Pastures.

In September 2009 a group of inspectors came to the school and decided that it required special measures. This meant that it could do a lot better. I am pleased to tell you that Ackton Pastures no longer requires special measures and is a satisfactory school.

You are taught well and are making good progress in your lessons. Your behaviour is good and this means you listen during lessons which helps you to learn. All adults look after you well and this means you feel safe and secure. The school is well led and because of this I am sure you will go from strength to strength.

I have agreed with the headteacher that three things need to be done to help the school improve further. First, raise your standards in English, particularly in writing. Second, check that you are using what you have been doing in your literacy and numeracy lessons in your topic work. Finally, provide more opportunities for you to learn about different religions.

Thank you again for your help. Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Keeler

Her Majesty's Inspector

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