

# Low Ash Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107272
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bradford
<b>Inspection number</b>	356124
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 March 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Christine Millett

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>	470
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Alan Sinfield
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sarah Thornton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 January 2008
<b>School address</b>	Wrose Road Wrose, Shipley West Yorkshire BD18 1AA
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 23 lessons or parts of lessons taught by 15 different teachers, held meetings with groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at work in pupils' books, school policies and plans, data tracking pupils' progress, records on safeguarding, health and safety, and attendance. The inspectors analysed questionnaires from pupils and staff as well as those from 104 parents and carers.

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

- Establish the effectiveness of the school's work to promote pupils' good personal development.
- How the curriculum has developed to meet the needs of all learners.
- The success of actions taken by senior leaders and the governing body to ensure the school continues to have good capacity to improve.

## Information about the school

Low Ash is a larger than average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. Very few are from other minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is currently below average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is also below average. The school has received several awards including Investors in Pupils, Activemark and Healthy School status. There have been a number of changes to the senior leadership team since the previous inspection. The school operates a daily breakfast club for its pupils.

**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

Low Ash Primary is a good school. It has many strengths. Pupils enjoy school and are pleased to consider themselves as ambassadors for Low Ash. One young pupil spoke proudly of, 'the good teachers who want you to do your best'. The school provides a safe and welcoming environment where pupils feel valued. They are confident that adults can help them overcome any problems. Pupils' safety has a high priority and good safeguarding arrangements are in place. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school, a sentiment that is echoed by parents and carers. A wide range of partnership activities make a strong contribution to pupils' good achievement and well-being. Pupils' experiences of different cultures and beliefs are well developed through the curriculum, charity work and links with other schools. Knowledge of life in other parts of the United Kingdom is promoted well.

Children get off to a good start in Nursery and do well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Progress from Year 1 to Year 6 continues to be good. National data regarding pupils' attainment in recent years show it to be average. The school's own tracking systems show that attainment is rising as a result of good teaching, with a noticeable increase in the number of pupils reaching the higher levels. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. However, their rates of progress are slower as they do not always understand what to do next in order to improve. Assessment is regular and frequent analysis of outcomes takes place. Work is marked regularly and, overall, provides satisfactory guidance on how pupils can improve. There are some inconsistencies across the school, in the ways in which teachers observe and question pupils during lessons in order to reshape tasks or provide explanations to improve learning. The good, topic-based curriculum provides all pupils with a wide range of experiences designed to give them opportunities to practise and apply their basic skills including those in information and communication technology (ICT).

The effective headteacher is supported well by senior leaders and staff. Changes in the senior leadership team since the previous inspection have been well managed without loss of impetus. The governing body is equally committed and oversees safeguarding procedures well, reviewing constantly practices and procedures. All adults share a clear vision for future improvement, recognising what the school does well. Good use is made of accurate self-evaluation to highlight areas for improvement. The impact of this is clearly evident in improvements since the previous inspection, indicating a good capacity for sustained improvement.

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

- Develop a more consistent approach to the use of assessment to support learning across the school by:

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- increasing the range and frequency of strategies used by teachers during the course of lessons to check pupils' understanding of their work
- using the outcomes of questioning more effectively in order to adapt lessons to how well pupils have learnt
- giving pupils time to talk about their work in relation to their targets and reflect on what is needed to move to the next level
- using feedback and marking to remind pupils of the importance of good presentation
- ensuring that all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, understand how they can improve their work.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

Pupils behave well and develop good attitudes towards learning as they move through the school. They enjoy learning and collaborate well when given opportunities to work in groups or in pairs. The quality of learning seen in lessons during the inspection was good overall. This was particularly well illustrated in an English lesson where pupils collaborated with great enthusiasm and focus on building up a word bank, responding immediately to input from the teacher. As a result, pupils were challenging themselves. Work seen in pupils' books confirmed the school's own analysis of pupils making good progress from Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 2. Recent data analysis shows that most pupils across the school are on track to meet challenging targets. The progress of all pupils is monitored carefully. Many children start school with skills and knowledge that are below national expectations, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Many enter Year 1 in line with national expectations. However, there are year-on-year fluctuations according to the specific needs of cohorts. Overall attainment at the end of Year 6 is average. Attainment at the end of Year 6 in 2010 showed an improvement on the previous year, particularly in English. Pupils in the current Year 5 and 6 are making good progress and are on track to reach or exceed their targets. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are making satisfactory progress academically and good progress in non-academic areas.

Relationships throughout school are good creating a pleasant learning environment for all. Pupils of all ages have a clear understanding of the importance of healthy eating and regular exercise. They respond well to the responsibilities they are given and make positive contributions to the school and local communities. This is seen, for example, in the enthusiasm with which older pupils carry out their roles as play leaders. Younger pupils benefit from this involvement in their playtime. Pupils gain a satisfactory grasp of basic skills, including ICT. The school also provides them with many additional skills and experiences from the world of work such as applying and being interviewed for roles in school and frequent enterprise projects. These alongside average attendance, good punctuality, good manners and positive attitudes ensure good preparation for pupils' future lives. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have a marked sense of right and wrong and enjoy the different cultural experiences the school provides. The school's values encourage pupils to think beyond themselves.

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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>	3
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	3
<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>	3
<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 engage pupils' interest in learning well through the use of interactive whiteboards and other visual aids. Behaviour in lessons is good. Very occasionally, when the pace of the lesson drops, a few pupils lose concentration. The majority of lessons seen were good with some examples of outstanding practice. The staff are working to ensure consistency across the school. Overall, teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons to take into account all levels of ability. Pupils are aware of their targets. They usually know what they need to do to improve their work, although pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are often not as clear about this. The extent to which teachers assess pupils' understanding throughout lessons is variable. Occasionally, opportunities to identify misunderstandings are missed and some pupils have too few occasions to discuss and reflect upon their work before moving on to something else. Other adults in the classroom give valuable support. Untidy handwriting and presentation of work sometimes goes unchecked.

A thorough audit of the curriculum by subject leaders has ensured that appropriate emphasis is placed on promoting basic skills, especially literacy, as well as making links in learning across subjects during themed events. Ongoing evaluation makes certain that the more specific needs of particular groups of pupils are well met. The curriculum provides imaginative opportunities for learning which are popular with pupils. It also provides an

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extremely broad range of enrichment experiences through visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities and French is taught from Year 2 onwards.

Low Ash is a caring school. Pupils feel well supported by the school and know to whom they can turn if they have a problem. They feel safe and know that their concerns are taken seriously. The individual needs of pupils facing challenging circumstances and those with medical needs are well met through close liaison between teachers, support staff and outside agencies.

*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	3
<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?

Members of the leadership team are united in their determination to bring about improvement and much has been achieved since the previous inspection. Systems for analysing and recording pupils' attainment are in place and provide a sharp focus on the achievements of different groups of pupils. As a result, the gap between the different groups is closing. The governing body is dedicated and understands the challenges facing the school. Its members work hard to support the school and are committed to developing their roles in order to improve the school further.

The school development plan focuses on the most important areas for improvement and is clear about how targets are to be achieved. There are effective links with a range of external agencies, including local secondary schools, which support the progress and well-being of the pupils. The school demonstrates a deep commitment to equal opportunities for all. This is seen in the effective links that have been established with external agencies to make certain vulnerable pupils have access to the curriculum both in and out of school. The rigorous monitoring of pupils ensures that any unevenness in academic performance is identified quickly and strategies put in place to bring about improvement. For example, plans are in place to accelerate the satisfactory, rather than good, progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school enjoys a positive relationship with parents and carers, who are kept well informed through a variety of means. Community cohesion is promoted well. The school ensures that pupils understand their local community and the cultural diversity of the United Kingdom through well-established partnerships with other schools. There are some good initiatives to develop an understanding of the wider world such as each class having a focus country each year. Safeguarding procedures, policies and practice are good and systems for assessing risks are well developed. Child protection procedures are securely in place and evaluated and reviewed regularly. The school deploys its resources well and gives good value for money.

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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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</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

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and children thrive in a happy, caring environment. Children settle in quickly as they start school due to the warm relationships that adults quickly establish with them. Adults encourage children to be independent, make choices in activities and develop social skills that ensure good behaviour. Children start school with skills and knowledge that are below age-related expectations, particularly in communication, language and literacy, and social and emotional development. Good teaching and a well-organised curriculum ensure that children's skills are closer to the expectations for their age by the end of Reception. Ongoing assessment means that individual children's progress is tracked regularly and well-targeted support given. Achievements are recorded and shared with parents and carers. Staff have worked hard to provide a bright, attractive and stimulating learning environment which enables children to have fun while making choices about their learning, such as making music using drums or exploring in the 'jungle'. Learning moves easily between the indoor and outdoor areas as it is managed effectively. Well-thought-out activities give all children the opportunities to have fun and learn from each other as was seen at the craft table where children were painting animals and discussing the noises they make. Good leadership is focused strongly on continuous improvement. For example, a current priority is to further extend opportunities for reading and writing across all areas of learning both indoors and out. Staff are vigilant and children's welfare has a high priority. The Early Years Foundation Stage is fully incorporated into school life which ensures a smooth transition from Reception into Year 1. Strong links are developed with parents and carers, who are encouraged to 'stay and play' at the beginning of sessions as well as attend open sessions.



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*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 Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

Less than one quarter of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. However, of those who did respond the very large majority agreed that their children enjoyed school, were kept safe and were very happy overall. Similar numbers believed teaching was good, their child was being well prepared for the future and they were kept well informed about progress being made. A small minority of parents and carers had concerns about the way in which unacceptable behaviour was dealt with. Inspectors considered these views carefully. Throughout the inspection inspectors found that pupils behaved well. The school has all relevant policies and procedures in place and staff are happy to meet with parents and carers to discuss such matters. A very small number of responses raised individual concerns and these were followed up by the inspectors. It was found that the school has effective procedures in place in relation to the issues raised.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Low Ash 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 104 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 470 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	49	47	47	45	8	8	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	46	44	54	52	3	3	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	34	33	60	58	9	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	38	37	51	49	13	13	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	44	42	51	49	8	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	32	31	58	56	13	13	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	27	68	65	8	8	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)	22	21	67	64	7	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	27	65	63	8	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	17	61	59	18	17	4	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	29	54	52	11	11	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	33	32	57	55	7	7	3	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	48	46	47	45	6	6	2	2

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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.**



23 March 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Low Ash Primary School, Shipley, BD18 1AA**

Thank you for all your help when we inspected your school. You were very polite and helped us to understand how you feel about your school. You told us that you go to a good school and we agree. We also found:

- you get off to a good start in the Nursery class and make good progress during your time in the school
- you are working hard and standards at the end of Year 6 are average
- you enjoy coming to school, are keen to learn, though attendance is only average
- you behave well both in the classroom and in the playground
- adults look after you well and make sure you are safe
- teaching is good and teachers try to make lessons interesting.
- you show a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and know how to stay safe
- you take your responsibilities seriously and contribute well to the life of the school and the local community
- your school is helping you prepare well for the next stages in your education.

We think that with your help your school can improve even more and we have asked your headteacher and your teachers to do the following things:

- ask you more challenging questions during lessons and keep checking that you understand your work in lessons
- give you time to talk about your targets and make sure you understand what they mean
- remind you about the importance of neat handwriting and good presentation in your work.

We believe that this will help you all to make more progress and we are sure you will all work hard to make this happen. Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Christine Millett

Lead inspector

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