

Low Road Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107957
Local Authority	Leeds
Inspection number	356268
Inspection dates	22–23 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Kathryn Dodd

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	128
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Mike Tilling
Headteacher	Mrs Sally Sumpner
Date of previous school inspection	10 July 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in eight lessons involving six teachers. The inspectors held discussions with staff, groups of pupils, and with a member of the governing body. The inspectors observed the school's work and reviewed documentation, 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 27 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, 52 from pupils and 15 from staff.

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

- The attainment of pupils, especially in reading by Year 2 and English by Year 6.
- Whether pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress, particularly in reading.
- To what extent efforts to improve attendance are paying dividends.
- The quality of teaching, particularly how well pupils are involved in understanding how they are getting on, and whether the curriculum is adapted well to boost attainment in English, particularly in reading.
- To what extent the federation arrangements impact on driving school improvement, strengthening leadership and the quality of provision, and raising attainment.

Information about the school

The large majority of the pupils at this smaller-than-average school are White British. The proportion of pupils from different minority ethnic backgrounds is increasing. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is also increasing and is well above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils that join the school other than in the Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception class) is above average. All pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. The school is part of a federation with Windmill Primary School. The headteacher, the governing body, and a number of staff share their responsibilities across the two schools. The school has been accredited with Investors in People, Investors in Diversity, the Inclusion Charter mark and has achieved Healthy School Status.

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

This is a good school. In this caring, very safe and welcoming setting, pupils show good attitudes to learning and their behaviour is outstanding. Older pupils are wonderful role models. They are consistently thoughtful, very mature, polite and respectful, and encourage one another to reach the school's high expectations. Pupils say they feel totally safe. These good personal attributes, along with their good academic progress from starting points that are often well below average, ensure that pupils are well placed to be successful in the future. Pupils know the importance of attending school regularly. A minority of pupils, however, do not attend regularly enough and this is affecting their progress. Efforts to promote good attendance with parents and carers are starting to pay dividends, although some opportunities to do so remain overlooked.

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, although adults sometimes miss opportunities to develop children's communication skills because assessment is not yet rigorous enough to ensure that planned activities are always well matched to individuals' needs. Pupils continue to learn well until the end of Year 6, where attainment is broadly average. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels of attainment by Year 6 is rising, particularly in mathematics and writing, though attainment in reading lags behind a little. This reflects the good quality of the teaching and the effective curriculum provided. Pupils of all ages make good progress, and in Years 5 and 6, learning accelerates at a particularly good rate. Contributing to this is the good understanding that older pupils have of what they need to do to reach their challenging learning targets. These practices are not yet as effective with younger children, particularly in reading. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress, particularly in mathematics. This is because teachers make very good use of their assessments of pupils' mathematical abilities to provide work and deploy support staff to good effect. These good practices, however, are not used as effectively to plan activities to develop pupils' literacy skills.

Since the previous inspection, the school has moved forward at a good rate and the capacity to sustain improvement is good. Improvements to the quality of provision, particularly in teaching and in the Early Years Foundation Stage are contributing to rising attainment. A key factor in the school's success is the strong partnership established through the federation, effectively steered by the headteacher. Continual sharing of leadership roles, staff expertise, best teaching practices and resources all combine successfully to enhance the quality of education. Leaders and managers track and analyse pupils' progress regularly and rigorously. Their accurate evaluations enable them to pinpoint appropriate improvement priorities. Leaders know that their next steps are to review and monitor closely the impact of new initiatives aimed at improving attendance and at raising attainment in English, particularly in reading.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attendance further, particularly of the pupils whose attendance falls below 95% by:
 - improving written and verbal communication with parents and carers
 - improving the rigour with which leaders review attendance information.
- Raise attainment further, particularly in English, by:
 - strengthening the procedures to assess children's communication skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage and using this information to ensure the activities provided meet children's precise learning needs
 - making sure that pupils of all ages are clear about the steps they need to take to attain their learning targets, particularly in reading
 - improving the arrangements for assessing the literacy skills of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
 - ensuring leaders closely monitor the impact of new improvement initiatives on raising attainment, particularly in reading.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Achievement is good and pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. In lessons, pupils engage enthusiastically with their learning and behave extremely well. They are attentive, keen to learn, and work at a good pace, both alongside adults and independently. Learning occasionally slows when pupils sit for too long listening to their teacher or when activities lack challenge. Although attainment by Year 6 is broadly average, it fluctuates from year to year. This reflects the small numbers of pupils in each year group and the higher than average proportion of pupils who join the school part-way through their primary education. In 2010, the very large majority of pupils reached the expected Level 4 in English and mathematics. In mathematics, the proportion of pupils reaching Level 5 also exceeded the national picture. Current attainment in reading across the year groups lags behind that in writing. Strategies designed to tackle weaknesses in reading are now well under way, although remain too new to have made a significant impact on attainment.

This is a harmonious school, where pupils of different ethnic backgrounds get on noticeably well together. Opportunities for pupils to engage with diverse groups beyond their immediate community, however, are not yet fully developed. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities, such as acting as 'school councillors' or as 'befrienders'. Pupils' knowledge of how to keep safe, such as when using the internet or within their locality, is impressive. Their behaviour is excellent and they are confident that there is no bullying. Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. They particularly enjoy participating in and leading daily, whole-school, 'wake up and shake up' sessions. Attendance is broadly average and, apart from the few pupils who are persistently absent, is improving at a good rate. Pupils participate in a good range of activities that develop the skills they need for future success, such as working collaboratively and being enterprising.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	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	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
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	2
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?

Effective classroom organisation, skilful use of interactive whiteboards, coupled with teachers' enthusiasm and very positive relationships all make a strong contribution to pupils' good progress. There are examples of outstanding teaching, such as in Years 5 and 6, where very direct, fast-paced, skilful and challenging questioning, along with very high expectations, keeps pupils continually on their toes. When teachers provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on their progress towards reaching their challenging learning targets, learning moves forward at a rapid rate. Teachers' assessments of pupils' achievements are used effectively to influence their planning. In mathematics, for example, carefully-planned activities, along with the sensitive deployment of skilled support staff, enable pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make good progress. Similarly, a well-developed programme of activities to challenge the more-able pupils, along with regular opportunities for pupils to develop quick mental calculation skills, is helping to raise attainment in mathematics.

Curriculum adaptations aimed at accelerating pupils' progress in writing, such as providing more opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in different subjects, are paying dividends, particularly for pupils between Years 3 and 6. A revised programme to teach reading skills is now firmly in place. Opportunities for pupils to read more regularly alongside adults and with other pupils have recently increased. Effective partnerships beyond school, particularly as a result of the federation, extend and enrich the curriculum

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and broaden pupils' horizons, for example when pupils join with other schools for special themed days and residential visits. These contribute significantly to pupils' enjoyment of learning.

Pupils and their families are known very well by staff. Pupils are confident that they feel extremely safe. Well considered arrangements for welcoming new pupils ensure that they settle quickly into school. Close partnerships with external agencies support the school's commitment to helping pupils with additional needs and enable pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make good progress. Efforts to improve attendance are paying dividends although there remains scope to strengthen further the arrangements for communicating with parents and carers, in order to improve attendance at a consistently good rate.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Eliminating barriers to learning, for example by improving attendance and making sure pupils are safe, is a high priority. An extensive building refurbishment programme has recently been completed and the premises are presented, organised and resourced well, and are highly conducive to effective learning. A strong emphasis is placed on the inclusion of everyone, with pupil welfare a priority. Leaders analyse assessment data well to spot any variances in pupils' progress and to ensure pupils do not underachieve. This process influences the school's identification of priorities for improvement. Pupils' improved attainment in mathematics and writing demonstrates the success of this approach. Even so, leaders do not make the most of this information to track the achievement of pupils with below-average attendance. Initiatives aimed at raising attainment in English further, particularly in reading, have recently been introduced, although their impact has yet to be fully evaluated.

Safeguarding procedures, particularly the arrangements to ensure all staff and the governing body are well trained, are good. The governing body makes an effective contribution. It has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas needing development. The governors play an instrumental role in ensuring the potential benefits from the federation partnership are realised. Staff say that the school has become a place where their contribution is valued highly. This is reflected in the many opportunities for professional development and the good quality of teaching. Partnerships with parents and carers are good. They contribute effectively to school decision making and are keen to take up opportunities to learn about how they can support learning at home, for example in reading. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion. It has a

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clear understanding of the school's context and of the challenges facing the local community. This is why, despite the increasingly diverse pupil population, the school is a harmonious community. As a result of thorough self-evaluation, however, leaders have rightly identified scope to develop further the effectiveness with which it promotes community cohesion, particularly further afield to ensure pupils develop a good understanding of religious diversity. Actions to do so are developing at a good rate.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
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	2
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	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Learning gets off to a successful start and children make good progress from their well-below average starting points. Even so, by the start of Year 1 the proportion of children reaching age-related expectations is usually below average. The extremely warm and very caring relationships between adults and children, along with the bright, lively, well-organised and resourced learning environment, both indoors and out, ensure that children enjoy learning and feel very safe. Good attention is given to ensuring the welfare needs of children are met. This, coupled with the effective partnerships established between home and school, ensures children settle in quickly. Children's personal, social and emotional development is good. Adults plan a wide range of opportunities to develop children's independence, and to help them to understand routines and boundaries and to behave very well. As children work and play alongside adults, learning moves forward at a good rate. Adults provide good opportunities for children to talk about their learning; this boosts their speech and language skills and effectively challenges their thinking. Opportunities to entice children to engage in activities that will promote their reading and writing skills, particularly during times when children can choose what and where they learn, are sometimes overlooked. Similarly, procedures to assess children's communication skills are not yet rigorous enough to ensure that planned activities always match their varying needs. Nevertheless, since the previous inspection good leadership and management have

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successfully enhanced the quality of provision, particularly the teaching and the curriculum, which are now good. As a result, the proportion of children that are reaching the goals expected nationally by the start of Year 1 is increasing.

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	2

Views of parents and carers

Although a below-average proportion of questionnaires was returned, parents and carers expressed their overwhelming support for nearly all aspects of the school's work. They particularly value the good quality of care and support offered when their children join the school part-way through their primary education. They indicate that the school is particularly successful in developing their children's confidence.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Low Road 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 27 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 128 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	22	81	5	19	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	23	85	4	15	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	21	78	6	22	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	89	3	11	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	21	78	6	22	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	63	9	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	63	10	37	0	0	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)	17	63	9	33	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	81	4	15	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	67	6	22	0	0	1	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	67	7	26	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	18	67	7	26	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	23	85	4	15	0	0	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	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.



24 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Low Road Primary School, Leeds, LS10 2PS

Thank you so very much for the extremely warm welcome you gave us when we inspected your school. We thoroughly enjoyed our time with you and finding out about your views. You go to a good school. By Year 6, your attainment is similar to that expected for your age, and you make good progress. We were particularly pleased to:

- see your excellent behaviour and how mature, polite and courteous you all are
- find out that you know so much about how you can keep safe both in school and in your local area and that you feel totally safe
- see everyone taking part enthusiastically in 'wake and shake up' and telling us that you know this keeps you healthy and also helps you get ready to learn
- find that you know just how important it is to come to school every day and that you want to because you enjoy school so much.

We have asked that some improvements are made. These are to make sure that:

- some of you come to school more often than you do at present
- the activities offered to children in the Nursery and Reception classes give them more chances to develop reading and writing skills
- you are all clear about what you need to do to reach your learning targets, particularly in reading
- those of you that need extra help with your learning are always given work that is just right for you, particularly in literacy
- adults with special responsibilities check even more carefully that the changes they are making to how you learn are helping you to learn more quickly, especially in reading.

You can help by making sure that you always check what you still have to do to reach your learning targets and by reading regularly at home. Of course you should make sure that you all come to school every single day.

Yours sincerely,

Kathryn Dodd

Lead Inspector

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