

Thackley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107221
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	377551
Inspection dates	15–16 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Terry McDermott

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	412
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Annmarie Malcolm
Headteacher	Nicola Howe
Date of previous school inspection	26 January 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 21 lessons and observed 12 teachers. They held meetings with groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body. They observed the school's work and looked at its methods for tracking pupils' progress; a range of school documents, including policies, minutes of governing body meetings, monitoring records, an extensive sample of pupils' work; and reports from the School Improvement Partner. Responses from 138 parents or carers to the Ofsted questionnaire were received and considered, along with questionnaires completed by staff and pupils.

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

- Whether the quality of teaching in mathematics and English is inconsistent since the school's data appears to suggest that pupils' progress at different rates in those subjects.
- The rate of progress pupils make across the school.
- The quality of self-evaluation and whether areas requiring improvement, noted in the previous inspection, have been tackled successfully.

Information about the school

Thackley is much larger than the average-sized primary school. A much lower than average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average. All pupils speak English fluently. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below average, although the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is in line with that usually seen. The school has achieved Healthy School status and holds numerous awards including the Eco School award, the Activemark award and the Inclusion Charter Mark.

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

1

Main findings

This is a good school. It is improving rapidly. Several aspects of the school's work, previously judged good at the last inspection, are now outstanding. These include: the extent to which pupils feel safe; their behaviour; the quality of care, guidance and support; the leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage; the effectiveness of the school's partnership working; the effectiveness with which leaders embed ambition and drive improvement. Governance, attendance and the school's promotion of community cohesion, are now good. These are ensuring cumulatively increasing benefits for all pupils.

Pupils are quite sure that bullying does not take place and they can explain clearly and confidently why they are safe. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is only good because their understanding of life in multicultural Britain is less than it might be. All groups of pupils are making good progress from starting points that are usually close to the national expectation. Some are making outstanding progress. The causes of previously inadequate progress have been eradicated, although some of their legacy can still be seen in pupils' average attainment at the end of Year 6 in 2011. There is no underachievement by any group of pupils, although pupils' progress at a somewhat faster rate in mathematics than they do in English. This is evident in the school's reliable and accurate assessment and tracking system.

The quality of teaching is consistently good in English and mathematics and across all other subjects. Some outstanding learning was seen by all inspectors. Excellent relationships between adults and pupils are a strong feature of all lessons. Pupils regularly share their ideas to deepen and clarify understanding for all. However, there are some minor inconsistencies. In a small number of lessons, for example, teachers sometimes give unnecessarily extended explanations to which pupils listen patiently. Pupils' learning is then not as rapid as it might be. The curriculum is good and provides some memorable experiences to widen horizons, raise aspirations and inspire ambition. Modern technologies are underexploited as tools to assist learning and encourage pupils' independence. The school's procedures for care, guidance and support to help any pupil overcome uncertainties and difficulties are meticulous and very effective. Adults in the school know pupils and their families very well, and are quick to discern when pupils may be having difficulties. Well organised, swiftly implemented, and closely evaluated actions provide outstanding support for pupils, in particular for those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable.

A strong team spirit and sense of pride pervade the school, among adults and pupils alike. Whole-school self-evaluation is accurate because it is linked to learning outcomes for all pupils. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses very well and knows what to do to improve pupils' attainment and progress still further. When coupled with the successful actions taken to bring about improvements highlighted in the previous inspection, this means that the school's capacity to improve further is outstanding.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment further and increase progress by making more effective and consistent use of modern technologies to enhance pupils' learning opportunities.
- Provide pupils with a wider range of experiences to ensure that they have good knowledge and understanding of other cultures and faiths in Britain today.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils of all ages and levels of attainment are attentive in lessons. Strong foundations laid down in the Nursery and Reception classes are sustained and developed well as pupils move through the school. Their excellent behaviour is readily apparent: they sustain concentration well and work hard at any task they are set. They respond with enthusiasm when given opportunities to work independently. They quickly do as they are asked and listen closely to each other's views. For example, in an outstanding Year 5 lesson on 'The Biscuit Project,' pupils became completely absorbed, working largely without adult supervision, in allocating tasks amongst themselves to design the packaging to make their particular biscuits attractive to customers. They discussed their reasoning maturely and in detail, gave constructively critical peer assessments and arrived at consensual agreements by negotiation. The quality of learning and depth of understanding gained were most impressive. All pupils were fully involved, and their progress was excellent.

Children join the school in the Reception class with skills that are usually close to those expected for children of a similar age, although there are variations from one year to the next. By the time they left Year 6 in 2011, pupils' attainment was broadly average from a below average starting point. This represents good progress overall, even though this particular group of pupils made restricted progress in their middle years in school. Achievement throughout the school is now consistently good and improving, with very little disparity between classes. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to their classmates because of the skilful and dedicated support they receive in helping them learn in small steps. The small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make equally good progress because they are included fully in the life of the school.

Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their above average, and rising, rates of attendance and their excellent behaviour. They say that they feel

completely safe here, and can explain why this is so. They say there is no bullying, though they know what to do if it might occur. They enjoy taking on responsibility, whether as members of the elected school council, as members of the 'Children's Monitoring Team', or as reading buddies for younger children. The strong community spirit in the school is typified by the way in which all pupils and many staff wear the school's distinctive purple uniform with such pride. Pupils' cultural development is weakened by their relative lack of understanding of other faiths and cultures. By the time they leave school at the end of Year 6, pupils have developed into polite, mature and confident young citizens. Because their personal attributes are so strong, and because they come to school so regularly, they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good. Some outstanding learning was observed. Classrooms are colourful, vibrant and well-resourced places of learning. Relationships between adults and pupils are excellent, and underpin pupils' excellent attitudes to learning. Teachers and other adults are well deployed to ensure that their skills make the biggest possible impact on pupils' learning. This is done very successfully through teaching pupils in groups of similar ability and withdrawing some pupils from the class to teach them in small groups. Detailed and extensive scrutiny of pupils' books shows that learning is always good and sometimes outstanding over time. Marking is regular and gives good advice to pupils on how to improve their work. Teaching assistants are well deployed and play a very important role in supporting all groups of pupils to make at least good progress over time.

The well thought-out curriculum is one reason why achievement and personal development are good. It links subjects together in themes with a strong focus on building pupils' basic skills, particularly in mathematics, along with respect for the individual. It does not make the most of opportunities to use information and

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

communication technologies to consolidate or extend pupils’ learning. All pupils in Key Stage 2 have the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument. Many extra-curricular activities, including some taking place out of term time and off site, as well as residential visits and interesting visitors, help bring learning to life, and raise pupils’ awareness of the difficulties faced by other people. Strong links with a group of local schools enables pupils to have experiences which would normally be beyond the scope of the school’s internal resources.

The school knows the pupils and their families very well. Strong links between school and home are established early, and are sustained and grow over time. This allows the school to identify and address any personal issues which might arise. Arrangements for supporting those pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable are excellent. They ensure that these pupils are able to access all the school has to offer, and make the same good and improving progress as their peers. This work is recognised by parents and carers with comments, such as ‘My son has special educational needs, and the school is fantastic at helping him work to the best of his ability. The communication between home and school is brilliant, and school is always ready to hear our views’. Transition arrangements are very well managed and ensure that pupils transfer into school, from one class to another and on to secondary education, with the minimum of disturbance.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The dynamism, energy, and relentless aspiration of the headteacher are at the root of this school’s transformation over the past four years. She has built a strong team of high-quality practitioners around her, all with the ambition to do their very best for the children in their care. Staff morale is high and all adults are fully committed to driving the school further forward.

The school has outstanding partnerships which strongly and increasingly support pupils’ learning and well-being. The wide range of continuing professional development opportunities, additional curriculum experiences, and extended out-of-school activities are enabling the school to sustain its improvements.

Adults promote equality for all pupils well through their accurate tracking of the progress made by different groups of pupils, thus ensuring that no group or individual underachieves. There is no evidence of discrimination in this inclusive, happy and harmonious school. Safeguarding procedures are implemented well. They are regularly updated and rigorously applied. The school site is very secure.

There have been significant changes in membership of the governing body in recent times. Members are knowledgeable, active and working closely with the school to set its strategic direction. They know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well, and are strong when holding the school to account for the outcomes it reaches.

Community cohesion is promoted well within and outside the school. The school's leaders have a thorough understanding of the needs of the community they serve. Excellent partnerships with other local schools support pupils' learning very well, and make transition arrangements straightforward. Links to help pupils understand the wider world better are under review and firm plans exist to link with schools in the Gambia and South Korea. Direct links to schools of a different character within Britain are not as well developed.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
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	1
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children join the nursery class with knowledge skills and understanding usually in line with the normal expectations for their age. Regular and reliable assessments show that children make good progress in every area of learning as they move through the Nursery and Reception Years. This is because teaching, learning and overall provision are good. Sometimes, teachers focus so tightly on the group they are working with that they are not always able to ensure that children's self-chosen activities are as productive as they might be.

Very effective links with parents and carers ensure that children settle easily into a happy and caring environment for learning. Adults focus on helping children to become confident and independent and they are very successful in this. They are calm, patient and very caring, providing good role models from which children learn rapidly how to play and work together in harmony. Children behave sensibly, sharing their thoughts, ideas and their toys very well. They take good care of each other and their environment. This solid foundation of excellent personal and social development sets the tone for the continuing excellent relationships between adults and pupils as they move through the school.

Welfare requirements are met fully, and this ensures that pupils are safe and secure. Excellent leadership ensures that assessment records are maintained meticulously, and are used to inform day-to-day planning which is based securely on what children have already learned or can do. Parents and carers speak highly about the wealth of information they receive so that they can support children’s learning at home. Moreover, very subtle leadership and management skills are used to ease and support transition from ‘area based’ nursery groups to ‘school based’ Reception classes, an arrangement which does not give scope for all children to move from one to the other. For this additional reason, leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are outstanding.

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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

About one third of parents and carers responded to the Ofsted questionnaire. This is close to the usual rate of return. The very large majority expresses strongly positive views about most aspects of the school’s work. Parents and carers are almost unanimous that the school keeps their children safe and that their children enjoy school. Small numbers of parents and carers held differing views about one aspect or another of the school. Inspectors looked into these matters, some of which related to individuals. The outcomes of these deliberations helped to inform the compilation of the report.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Thackley 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 138 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 420 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	91	66	45	33	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	87	63	49	36	2	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	59	43	67	49	9	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	71	51	53	38	12	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	75	54	54	39	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	72	52	60	43	3	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	68	49	68	49	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)	48	35	78	57	4	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	65	47	65	47	6	4	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	54	39	67	49	7	5	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	55	40	60	43	6	4	8	6
The school is led and managed effectively	66	48	53	38	9	7	4	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	85	62	47	34	3	2	1	1

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 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 2010/11 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.



17 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Thackley Primary School, Bradford, BD10 8PJ

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful to us when we inspected your school recently. We were really impressed with your consistently outstanding behaviour, your good manners, the confident and polite way you speak with each other and with the adults in school, and with your obvious respect for each other.

We found that Thackley is a good school, which continues to improve rapidly. The school already has some outstanding features. These include: the excellent care guidance and support it provides for all of you, the aspiration and drive for improvement which runs through the whole school, and the high-quality partnerships the school has with others in the locality. The school is helping all of you to make good progress, and some of you to make outstanding progress.

Nonetheless, we also found that the school could do some things even better than it already does, so we have asked the adults in the school to:

- make sure that all of you get more opportunities to use computers and other modern technologies to help your learning move forward even more quickly
- give you more direct experiences of other cultures and faiths so that you are able better to understand the complexities of life in multicultural Britain today.

Please continue to come to school as often as you do, and to be the courteous, friendly and helpful young citizens you already are.

Best wishes to you all for the future.

Yours sincerely

Terry McDermott
Lead inspector

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