

Lightcliffe CofE VA Primary School

Wakefield Road, Lightcliffe, Halifax, HX3 8SH

Inspection dates 1–2 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- This is a happy school and the vast majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress from their starting points and enjoy attending.
- Attainment in mathematics is well above average when pupils leave the school and they achieve well in both reading and writing.
- Good teaching and the use of attractive resources engage pupils' interest and help them to achieve well.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make good progress in all areas of learning as a result of well organised and imaginative teaching. They develop their ability to speak and listen particularly well.
- The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is reflected in the good behaviour around the school and in classrooms. Pupils are courteous and welcoming. They enjoy their learning and are keen to do well.
- Attendance is consistently above average. This is a caring, supportive school where pupils are known as individuals and feel safe and secure. Instances of bullying are rare.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a good understanding of how to improve teaching and raise achievement for all pupils. This is shown by the increased focus on observing teaching and the introduction of a rigorous system to check the rate of progress of every pupil. Consequently, the school is well placed to further improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress in English, although good, is not as rapid and sustained as it is in mathematics.
- Teaching is good rather than outstanding. In some lessons there are not enough opportunities for pupils to work on their own and work is not always precisely matched to pupils' individual abilities.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons taught by 16 members of staff. Three lessons were carried out as joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with staff, pupils and members of the governing body. A meeting was also held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors considered the school’s self-evaluation and development plan. Additionally, records of pupils’ progress, arrangements for safeguarding and documentation on the monitoring of teachers’ performance were scrutinised.
- Inspectors analysed the 26 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors also spoke to parents as they brought their children to school. Staff questionnaires were also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Ray Biglin, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Kath McArthur

Additional Inspector

Sally Hicks

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than most primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and being supported at school action is below average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- A small proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and English is the first language of the vast majority of pupils.
- The present headteacher was in post at the time of the previous inspection. The Chair of the Governing Body is relatively new and took up his post 12 months ago.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - giving pupils more opportunities to work independently as well as listening to the teacher
 - increasing opportunities for staff to share best practice
 - increasing the pace of some lessons and making sure that work is always closely matched to pupils' individual needs.
- Ensure that pupils achieve as well in English as they do currently in mathematics by:
 - using the system to check on each individual pupil's progress to make sure that they are making consistently good or better progress through Years 3 to 5.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- When children join the school they possess the skills that are typical for their age and, in some cases, with skills that are more advanced. As a result of consistently good teaching, the Early Years Foundation Stage children make good progress, particularly in their personal development and communication skills. They enter Year 1 having, in most cases, exceeded what is expected of them for their age.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are confident and enthusiastic learners and quickly develop their ability to link together letters and the sounds they make as the result of well-planned and interesting teaching. Good use is made of a stimulating outside area and children move confidently between it and indoors. Children were very excited to see pictures of each other carrying out experiments to explore gravity.
- This good progress continues across Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 2 the vast majority of pupils are exceeding national averages in all subjects, including reading.
- Pupils make good progress in reading because the school places a strong emphasis on developing reading skills from the moment they enter the Early Years Foundation Stage and begin working on their letters and sounds. All pupils are encouraged to read widely and as one child said, 'I read to everyone at home.'
- Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 2 and by the time they leave Year 6 they have attained standards that are above average in English and well above average in mathematics. This difference is caused by less rapid progress in English across Years 3, 4 and 5 which the new checking system is beginning to highlight.
- Pupils clearly enjoy their lessons, particularly when they are given the opportunity to work creatively and independently, for example, when they wrote a poem about one of Henry VIII's wives.
- The school has been successful in closing the gaps between how well pupils are doing compared to similar pupils across the country. Analysis of data confirms that there is no significant difference in the achievement of different groups of pupils, including those receiving the pupil premium funding and those with disabilities and special educational needs.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching, including that of English and mathematics, is typically good and some outstanding teaching was observed. Consequently, pupils are making good progress and achieving well. Teachers have a caring approach and enjoy strong relationships with their pupils.
- Teachers generally have high expectations of pupils who consistently respond well to the challenges and as a result, pupils develop very good attitudes to learning. When asked to work cooperatively and share ideas they quickly get on with the task.
- Teachers manage their classrooms well and generally plan their lessons effectively. In the best lessons, activities were carefully matched to pupils' individual needs. However, sometimes, in some Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2 classes teachers are too prescriptive in their planning and do not give pupils sufficient opportunities to work independently and pursue their own lines of inquiry. Occasionally, teachers talk too much which slows the pace of learning.
- Pupils particularly enjoy lessons where there are opportunities to work things out for themselves and activities are fun. In one class, pupils were enthralled by the teacher first demonstrating, and then giving them the opportunity to test how far cars would travel down a ramp.
- There is a good range of resources available to encourage pupils to enjoy their learning. On a number of occasions inspectors observed interactive whiteboards being used well. In one lesson, the teacher used this resource to quickly demonstrate when pupils had successfully matched a

range of fractions.

- Teachers monitor pupils' progress carefully and books are regularly marked with helpful advice about how to improve. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants and given extra guidance and encouragement through a range of additional teaching sessions. Similarly, pupils in receipt of the pupil premium are carefully supported by the additional member of staff this funding provides.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is typically good both in classrooms and around the school. The school is harmonious and pupils fully understand the importance of good behaviour. They are courteous and kind and were always helpful if an inspector was walking in the wrong direction.
- Pupils are very supportive of one another. In an assembly they listened extremely well to those presenting and, without exception, they paused for thought and bowed their heads in quiet reflection.
- The vast majority of parents, staff and pupils agree that behaviour is good and that if there are any incidents of inappropriate behaviour they are dealt with quickly effectively. There is a behaviour management system in place which is clearly understood by pupils and consistently applied by staff.
- There are few instances of bullying and pupils are fully confident that the staff take any such occurrences seriously and, therefore, feel safe, secure and are cared for well. They understand the different kinds of bullying that may occur, including cyber and homophobic bullying and know how to deal with them appropriately.
- Attendance is consistently above average and pupils are rarely away for any significant length of time. There have been very few pupils excluded over the last three years.

The leadership and management are good

- Strong and ambitious leadership from the headteacher and other senior managers has led to pupils achieving well over a sustained period of time. Self-evaluation is accurate. The effective way in which teachers' performance is managed ensures that staff are given clear targets to improve their teaching skills and the progress of their pupils. Teachers receive good quality training and guidance to help them improve their skills further. However, there are too few chances to share some of the outstanding teaching practice seen during the inspection with other staff.
- All leaders are committed to equality of opportunity for all and the tackling of discrimination as shown by the good progress made by all groups of pupils. Although the school has recently introduced a new system to check on pupils' progress, it is not being fully used to ensure that pupils' progress in English through Years 3 to 5 is accelerating as quickly as it is in mathematics. The subjects studied by pupils are rich and creative and encourage pupils to make connections across different areas of life. The school continually offers pupils different and varied experiences. For example, Year 6 pupils presented their business ideas to local bankers. Every Friday afternoon a range of extra activities are available, including some which raise pupils' awareness and knowledge of other cultures.
- A wide range of additional activities are available at lunchtime and after school. Music, including a very popular choir, and sport are particular strengths of the school. This range of activities alongside the Christian spirit in the school makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils regularly come together in assemblies for prayer and reflection. The joyous nature of their singing is testament to their happiness in school.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils are securely in place and fully meet statutory

requirements.

- The local authority provides light touch support and carries out an annual review of the school's performance to check if any extra support is required. Since September, the local authority has brokered the establishment of a local network of schools, including Lightcliffe VA Primary, who are looking to support one another in improving further.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the governing body have a wide range of relevant experience and are fully supportive of the headteacher and school. Governors have a good understanding of how the school is performing and as result are able to provide suitable level challenge to senior leaders. For example, they are aware that pupils' attainment in English needs to be raised to that of mathematics. Governors working alongside an external person are actively involved in the checking on the staff's and headteacher's performance, setting clear targets for improvement. The governing body carry out regular checks to make sure that pupils are kept safe and are investigating ways to improve safety on the road adjoining the school. Governors ensure that safeguarding requirements are fully met. School finances are well managed and the governors have used the extra pupil premium money to employ a learning support assistant to work with pupils who are at risk of falling behind. This has been instrumental in helping to raise achievement in mathematics for pupils in Years 4 and 5.

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	107572
Local authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	403040

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	421
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Greenwood
Headteacher	Charles Woodbridge
Date of previous school inspection	3 March 2008
Telephone number	01422 202235
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