

Poplars Farm Primary School

Poplars Park Road, Off Kings Road, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD2 1LQ

Inspection dates 12–13 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The Early Years Foundation Stage gives children a good start to their education. They enter with skills below those expected for their age, particularly in language and communication, and make good progress.
- Pupils make good progress as they move through the school and they leave with attainment broadly in line with what is expected for their age.
- Teaching is good because teachers provide activities that are carefully adjusted to meet the needs of different abilities.
- Teaching assistants are very well prepared and give effective support. They use activities and resources well to interest pupils. Questions probe and extend their learning.
- Pupils have exemplary attitudes towards their learning. They enjoy school, understand how to keep themselves and others safe and are kind, caring and very polite to each other and to adults. They behave outstandingly well.
- Attendance has risen and is now slightly above average.
- Through the very good teamwork of the deputy headteacher, acting senior leaders and teachers the school has run smoothly while awaiting the recent arrival of a new headteacher. Improvement, particularly in the use of data and the development of better systems to track and check pupils' progress, has improved both the quality of teaching and achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their independence and to manage their own learning.
- Teaching, although good overall, does not yet enable all pupils to make outstanding progress. Teachers do not always provide enough ideas to stimulate learning, especially in writing.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.
- Inspectors observed 12 lessons and parts of lessons including two joint observations with the headteacher and two with the deputy headteacher. Inspectors analysed pupils' work and heard pupils read in Years 2 and 6.
- A meeting was held with pupils from Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, and opportunities were taken to talk to children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Members of the school council accompanied an inspector on a tour of the school and Year 6 pupils discussed their work with an inspector.
- Meetings were held with eight members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority and members of staff including the headteacher, deputy headteacher, and curriculum and phase leaders.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents including data on pupils' progress, the school's evaluation of its progress, the local authority's most recent evaluation of the school's performance, the school's development plan, documentation relating to teachers' performance over time and records relating to behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors took into account 12 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), the responses of 20 parents to a recent school survey and 20 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Pamela Hemphill, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Steve Rigby

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Poplars Farm is an average-sized school.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational need is below average.
- An average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium which provides funding for children in the care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and the children of military personnel.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average.
- The school meets the government's floor standard, which is the minimum expected for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher is newly appointed to the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching so more pupils make better than expected progress by:
 - developing greater independence in pupils and taking more opportunity to give them greater responsibility for managing their own learning
 - enriching pupils' experiences consistently in all classes so they have more ideas to use in their learning, particularly in writing.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- The achievement of pupils is good and improving. Almost all parents who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View) consider their children to be making good progress and lesson observations during the inspection confirm this. Pupils' progress from their starting points has improved and is now good. Although progress has improved well, there are some inconsistencies which remain and because of this pupils' achievement is not yet outstanding.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills below those expected for their age, particularly their speaking and listening skills. They make good progress and catch up well because of the exciting and well-structured activities available indoors and outside and good teaching of letters and sounds; as a result, they are well prepared for Key Stage 1.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics during Key Stage 1 because of teaching that is good and some that is outstanding. Very imaginative approaches to teaching and good blending of sounds and letters are improving reading.
- Good progress is sustained in Key Stage 2 and overall attainment is average in English and mathematics. An above-average proportion of pupils made expected progress in English, and in mathematics in 2012 this number was well above the national average. More current Year 6 pupils are predicted to make better than expected progress and the picture is even stronger in Year 5.
- Most pupils have secure basic numeracy skills but not enough time is allowed for them to be independent when applying their skills. Many write well-structured stories but some lack the skills to be imaginative because lessons do not always inspire them.
- The progress of pupils supported by the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, is good, and better in reading. This is better than for other pupils in the school. Attainment in mathematics is well above that of similar pupils nationally and all met the expected level in 2012. Attainment was lower in English, especially writing. The school has given more attention to this group and the gap in writing is closing.
- The school promptly identifies the needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and ensures they are effectively supported in small groups. Pupils are making increasingly good progress.
- The attainment of pupils for whom English is an additional language is slightly below the national average in English and well above average in mathematics. Early assessment of their needs, whenever they join the school, and good teaching and support to extend their vocabulary and confidence in English have accelerated their progress. All of these pupils made expected progress between Key Stages 1 and 2 in 2012 and this is increasing to good progress, especially in Years 4 and 5.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is good and enables pupils to make good progress.
- Most lessons meet the needs of all pupils. Tasks are carefully adapted to ensure that disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are fully included. They benefit from many activities for discussion between pupils and for developing their ideas.
- In a mathematics lesson pupils worked in a small group and found, accurately, fractions of money through a practical activity supported by a teaching assistant who understood their individual needs well. The teacher involved all pupils fully in answering questions and sharing their ideas.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage teachers and teaching assistants ensure there are stimulating activities inside and outdoors so children make choices and initiate their own learning. They move freely and safely between Nursery and Reception classes because they

have been taught to keep themselves and others safe.

- The teaching of literacy and numeracy is effective. Letters and sounds are taught well and the good use of practical activities enhances numeracy skills. Occasionally, teachers provide too much support or do not give pupils enough time to be independent. This slows the pace of learning, especially in making decisions such as in the methods to use when solving problems. Tasks do not always stimulate pupils' imagination and some have difficulty in coming up with good ideas for their writing.
- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy across subjects and there is much evidence of this in topic work, for instance where pupils used mathematics in work on the cooling rates of liquids.
- In one literacy lesson outstanding teaching enabled pupils to make outstanding progress in their understanding of writing because:
 - the pace was brisk and the work built upon what pupils had already learnt
 - the enthusiasm of the teacher, a visit to learn about the stars and planets and use of a fantasy video clip inspired children so they were eager to discuss their ideas and to write
 - the teacher used good questions to make pupils think about a character and features of a story so they could ask questions
 - pupils wrote their questions in good sentences with accurate spelling
 - the work was carefully adapted so that pupils working at different levels were supported by resources or an adult to produce good work.
- Teachers manage behaviour effectively and lessons run smoothly. Pupils enjoy working with others on challenging activities.
- Teachers make it clear to pupils what they are going to learn and also tell them what they need to do to be successful. Marking and feedback in lessons are very accurate and make it clear what pupils need to do to improve. In one class this was even better because pupils assessed their own work at the beginning and end of the lesson and identified their own progress in learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- All pupils spoken to said poor behaviour rarely happens because lessons are interesting and they want to learn.
- Pupils, parents, teachers and other adults expressed very positive views about the standards of behaviour in the school and this was reflected in what inspectors saw in lessons, in assembly, in the playground and during lunch, where it was almost always impeccable.
- Teachers and other adults are excellent role models because they display respect and care for others and have high expectations for behaviour at all times.
- Pupils say they feel safe and enjoy school. This is shown by their attendance which has improved to the national average. Some pupils have been rewarded for their 100% attendance and others for their improved attendance in the weekly celebration assembly and the school is working hard with pupils and parents to ensure more pupils do so.
- There is no evidence of bullying and no exclusions in the school. Pupils are fully informed about all types of bullying and say it is not a problem in their school. They show high levels of respect and caring for others; this is a strong part of the school's ethos and is seen in the way they work well together in groups and pairs in lessons and in the polite way they speak to adults.
- Pupils take responsibility for their own safety and that of others in lessons, at play and in a range of other situations, for instance recognising how to keep themselves safe on the internet.
- The school uses its weekly celebration assembly most effectively to reward good behaviour and the contributions pupils make to their school community.

The leadership and management are good

- The school's leadership and governance have been effective in ensuring the issues identified at the previous inspection have been tackled. Leaders and teachers now give closer attention to the progress pupils make. The new headteacher is ably supported by the deputy headteacher, a strong team of leaders and governors, who all share the same high ambitions for the pupils.
- Teamwork amongst staff is strong and they have developed more effective tracking to check pupils' progress. This information identifies those needing extra help so that they catch up with others. Managers and teachers have half-termly meetings to scrutinise pupils' progress. Teachers need to explain any lack of progress and are now held to account for the progress of pupils in their class.
- Teaching is monitored and staff informed of how to improve. This has raised the quality of teaching, with only a few inconsistencies remaining. This includes the need to ensure all lessons inspire pupils.
- Teachers are set targets based on their performance and pupils' progress. Salary awards are allocated based on achievement of these targets. Training opportunities are tailored to the needs of teachers and there are opportunities to work with other schools to share good practice and training, particularly through the local achievement partnership.
- The school's curriculum is balanced well and covers all subjects. It promotes reading well and pupils have good access to books in classrooms and in the library. Pupils in Year 6 say they read daily and always have a book in reserve.
- The curriculum includes opportunities for pupils to celebrate their own culture as well as learn about the diversity of the world they live in. Visits and visitors extend this knowledge and this promotes equality of opportunity in the school. The school has introduced 'international breakfasts': two parents recently provided an Arabic breakfast to over one hundred families who attended. It was so successful in bringing the school community together that a 'continental breakfast' is already planned to continue to promote cultural understanding.
- The local authority has provided light-touch support for the school since its previous inspection, which is to reduce as it has high confidence in the capacity of the school's leadership to continue to raise standards.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are knowledgeable about the school and have challenged it successfully to raise standards since the previous inspection. They analyse data, assessment information and regular reports which give them a good understanding of achievement across the school. They understand the quality of teaching and check that teachers improve their practice before salary awards are allocated. Governors have received training in the use of data and have recognised in their action plan the need to extend this even further. Governors ensure that pupil premium funding is appropriately spent, as evidenced by the narrowing of the gap to the level of others in the school. The governing body ensures safeguarding meets the statutory requirements and that the school budget is managed efficiently.

What inspection judgements mean

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	107247
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	405091

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	239
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dal Thiara
Headteacher	Christine Moran
Date of previous school inspection	15 March 2011
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