

Hey-with-Zion Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Rowland Way, Lees, Oldham, Lancashire, OL4 3LQ

Inspection dates 21–22 March 2013

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.

- Children settle down quickly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress because learning is so interesting and they are well looked after.
- Pupils reach standards that are well above national averages because teaching quality is good, and sometimes outstanding. Pupils, including those who are disabled and those with special educational needs, make good progress from their broadly average starting points in Year 1.
- Leadership and management are good. The leadership of the headteacher, in particular, inspires all staff in striving to achieve the best for their pupils.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils are good. Pupils say they feel safe and an overwhelming proportion of parents agree. Pupils' consideration and courtesy to each other and adults are a joy to see. Their social development is outstanding.
- This is a good and improving school where the achievement and well-being of its pupils is at the heart of the school's spiritual and moral purpose.
- The exciting curriculum broadens pupils' knowledge and equips them with good skills in literacy and numeracy to prepare them well for their future.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of teaching is variable in Key Stage 1. Some teaching requires improvement because it is not closely focused enough on the individual capabilities and interests of each pupil.
- When explanations are unclear pupils are not sure precisely what is required from them and their interest flags.
- Pupils' progress in Key Stage 1 varies. School systems to identify how well pupils are doing are not followed by all staff and, consequently, a small number of pupils are not supported quickly enough to improve their progress.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with half a day’s notice and took place over two days.
- The inspectors observed 20 lessons; five of these were joint observations with the headteacher. Shorter visits to classrooms were made to check the quality of pupils’ work and inspectors listened to children reading.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, two members of the governing body, a parent, pupils and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 46 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to reflect parents’ views. The questionnaires completed by 26 staff were taken into account.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and scrutinised various documents including the school’s evaluation of its effectiveness, tracking of pupils’ progress, pupils’ work, the governing body’s records of meetings and performance management documents.

Inspection team

Marie Cordey, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Kathy Thompson	Additional Inspector
Fiona Dixon	Additional Inspector
Gary Kirkley	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, including pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is below average.
- The number of pupils who need extra help (either at school action or school action plus or who are undergoing assessment for a statement of special educational needs) is below average.
- Nearly all pupils are from White British backgrounds. A very small number are from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The school exceeds the current government floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good and better teaching in Key Stage 1 to further raise expectations of pupils' performance and, consequently, their attainment by:
 - ensuring that the abilities and interests of every pupil are taken into account when planning lesson activities
 - engaging pupils further in lessons by involving them more in their learning and making sure that explanations and instructions are clear and understandable
 - focusing on pupils' use of basic skills in literacy and numeracy across subjects, especially to solve mathematical problems and develop writing at length
 - using school systems that identify pupils' starting points and their capabilities so that each pupil is suitably challenged to achieve their potential and make consistently good progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make fast progress because they are curious about their learning. They are thrilled when they can practise their letters and numbers outdoors, for example, because it carries on from their earlier learning. Children are stimulated by lots of activities to encourage them to speak confidently and improve their physical development.
- Pupils make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress from Years 1 to 6 to reach standards that are well above average. They are set challenging targets because leaders demand the highest quality of teaching from staff. Occasionally, school systems are underused in Key Stage 1. When this happens pupils are not consistently challenged to achieve their best work. By way of contrast pupils make rapid progress in Year 6, for example, because they are driven to expand their knowledge, aim high and check their work.
- Pupils' achievement in mathematics is a particular strength of the school. More-able pupils, in particular, reach standards above Level 6 and some of them are taking a GCSE in mathematics. Pupils' basic skills in mathematics, adding up, taking away and times tables, are learned from an early age. These are, mostly, carefully built on so that pupils are confident when using these skills to solve more difficult problems in mathematics. Teaching is linked to pupils' own experiences so that they appreciate how valuable mathematics is in their everyday lives.
- While standards in English are above average they are not as high as those in mathematics, especially at the highest level. Writing is not quite as well developed as reading, especially when writing at length or when writing factual accounts. Spelling, punctuation and grammar skills are well developed overall and pupils are skilful and accurate in their writing. Occasionally, pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy are not developed consistently well. Some pupils in Key Stage 1 do not practise these skills enough in other subjects. Consequently, they have not got a solid grasp in the basics to use when problem solving in mathematics or writing at length.
- The curriculum is much improved. Most pupils practise their basic skills in number and in spelling, punctuation and grammar in other subjects. They particularly enjoy science because they can develop their mathematical skills in scientific experiments and attempt to prove or disprove their teacher's statements. There is a wide range of extra activities available, particularly in music and sport. Pupils value extra English and mathematics clubs after school and in the holidays.
- Pupils who are disabled, those with special educational needs, the very small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals achieve well. Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium achieve as well as other pupils. Individual and small-group support and good-quality teaching help pupils to raise their standards. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals attain higher standards in English and mathematics than for similar groups nationally.
- Pupils are well prepared for their future because of a good grasp of basic skills, well-above average standards and a desire to learn.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage relish linking sounds and letters. These are presented in words that children know and respond to, such as the names of animals and their own names. They sing, rhyme and sound out parts of words confidently and are keen to go on to link letters and sounds in more sophisticated words. The chance to practise early reading is repeated in many activities indoors and out. Children find letters in number activities, such as hopscotch, and in stories and role-play activities, for example. The outdoor facilities have been improved and leaders have planned further opportunities for children to develop their language skills outdoors.
- The quality of teaching is good and there are examples across the school of outstanding

teaching in all year groups. The best-quality teaching is seen most consistently in Year 6 where pupils thrive in an atmosphere of intellectual thought and high expectation. Their grasp of basic skills in literacy and numeracy is solid and teaching encourages pupils to use this knowledge to explore, research and refine their learning. They are encouraged to become reflective and thoughtful through working independently as well as in small groups. Typically, teaching is interesting, enjoyable and challenging. Most pupils make good progress because they understand what is required from them and are involved in their learning.

- Occasionally, pupils' progress slows when they are not sure what to do, and they become less engaged in their learning because explanations and instructions are unclear. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is less effective when planned activities are not matched closely enough to each pupil's ability, especially for more-able pupils in English. At these times teachers tend to speak to the whole class when it might be more helpful to speak to one group, for example those who are ready to move further forward or those who require more explanation.
- Teaching assistants provide valuable support, in small groups or individually, for pupils who need extra help. They are involved in lesson planning with the class teacher and so they know precisely what is required from them to best support pupils.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and helps them to improve their standards. Pupils follow the helpful advice in their books because teachers check that pupils understand how to make their work better. Teachers adapt their planning during the lesson and for future lessons to take account of how well individual pupils are learning.
- Pupils are proud of the displays of their work in the classroom and around school. They are eager to talk about the school and their subjects because they are pleased about their achievements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are happy to be in the setting because they are treated as unique individuals. They learn to share and consider other children because they are secure and valued. They welcome opportunities to speak to each other and adults because they know that their comments are listened to and appreciated.
- Pupils are unfailingly polite and welcoming. They are confident and sociable young people. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are keen to learn because lessons are mostly crafted to match their abilities and interests. Occasionally, they become restless when the teacher speaks at length or when they are not sure what is expected from them.
- Pupils overwhelmingly say that they feel safe in school. They say that they are well cared for and that 'we know all about keeping safe on the internet', for example. Pupils are aware of how bullying can take different forms but were very clear that bullying is 'not something that happens in our school'. They know who to turn to if they are worried. The vast majority of parents agree that behaviour is good. A very small number disagree and the school is determined to act on any concerns. Pupils' behaviour during the inspection was never less than at least consistently good.
- Pupils become more and more confident and articulate as they move through school. Their outstanding social development reflects their courtesy, confidence and ease in social situations. They take their responsibilities seriously, such as on the school and 'Eco' councils or when looking after younger pupils. Inspectors commented on how delightful it was to speak with pupils.
- Pupils enjoy school life and their parents help them to arrive on time. Their attendance is in line with the national average.

The leadership and management are good

- Pupils' standards improve year on year because of the high expectations of the headteacher. Pupils are set challenging targets that are regularly checked to ensure pupils are progressing well. Weaknesses in teaching have been tackled successfully because of well-thought-out

support and challenge and rigorous management of teachers' performance. Targets for teachers' performance are based on demonstrating that teaching is consistently good and leads to pupils making good progress. Professional training is closely matched to school priorities and the individual requirements of teachers to further improve their performance.

- Knowledgeable and thoughtful leaders know their school well. They are aware of what they do successfully and what they need to do in order to improve it further. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is a priority for improvement. The school's success in raising standards consistently, especially in mathematics and for more-able pupils, and in improving teaching demonstrates the capacity to improve further.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage leader shares her ambitions with staff, who work hard to secure good progress for children. Middle leaders are very involved in training and supporting staff so that subject teaching is of a good quality. All leaders regularly check how well pupils are doing and act quickly to provide support for any pupil who is in danger of underachieving. Ambitions for pupils' care and for their achievement come from an inspirational headteacher who has succeeded in spreading that ambition to staff.
- Most groups of pupils achieve well and this reflects the effectiveness of the school's commitment to equality of opportunity. Pupils have a clear sense of what is right and what is wrong and a sense of fair play. They appreciate the many parts of the school where they can pause, reflect and pray. They value the many additional activities provided for them, such as visits to museums, residential trips and the many after-school clubs. Pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is promoted well. Their social skills are exceptionally well-developed. Pupils are taught to respect people from different backgrounds than their own. Links with schools abroad increase their understanding of different religions and cultures. The school is planning to provide more opportunity for pupils to gain first-hand experiences of people from different ethnic groups.
- The local authority has provided 'light touch', effective support to help the school to improve.
- Arrangements to safeguard pupils meet statutory requirements and staff and governors take part in appropriate, regular training to update their knowledge.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is good and provides effective support. The governing body is active and involved in the day-to-day-life of the school and this is appreciated by pupils and by staff. Governors make themselves aware and knowledgeable about the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. They use this information when supporting leaders to tackle weaknesses in teaching and to reward good performance. Governors attend meetings regularly and routinely question the school's performance. They are diligent in their management of finances and their prime focus is to use funds to help raise pupils' standards. Additional money, such as the pupil premium, is considered carefully and spent wisely. This is reflected in good outcomes for pupils.

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	105694
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	402985

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	290
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Malcolm Milwain
Headteacher	Gordon Leach
Date of previous school inspection	7 July 2008
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