

Low Ash Primary School

Wrose Road, Wrose, Shipley, West Yorkshire, BD18 1AA

Inspection dates 28–29 January 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Too few pupils achieve the expected standards by the time they leave at the end of Year 6.
- Not enough pupils, including the most able, attain the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to reinforce their writing and mathematical skills across different subjects.
- Pupils' progress and attainment in mathematics lag behind reading and writing because work in mathematics does not always give them enough opportunities to apply the skills they have learnt in real-life problem-solving activities.
- The quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent across the school and lessons do not always challenge pupils to do their best.
- Teachers' expectations of the acceptable quantity and quality of pupils' work are not always consistently high.
- Marking, particularly in mathematics, does not always fully ensure that pupils know how to improve their work.
- There is some boisterous behaviour outside the classroom. This causes concern among some other pupils and at times makes them feel a little unsafe.
- Leaders check the quality of teaching regularly and raise useful development points, but leaders do not make enough use of the outcomes to focus on tackling weaknesses.
- Attendance, although improving, remains slightly below average.

The school has the following strengths

- The recently appointed headteacher, together with the deputy and assistant headteachers, has introduced a range of strategies which are bringing about improvements in teaching and in pupils' achievement. This has yet to impact fully on standards at the end of Year 6.
- Children get a good start to their learning in the Nursery and Reception classes and make increasingly good progress.
- The governors are active in supporting the school. They have a good understanding of the school's performance and are increasingly holding the school rigorously to account.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 22 part-lessons, two of which were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, they made short visits to classrooms and specific support classes. They also listened to pupils read in guided reading sessions.
- Inspectors spoke with two groups of pupils, including members of the school council. They met with five members of the governing body including the Chair and a representative from the local authority. They also had discussions with the inclusion manager, the Early Years Foundation Stage leader and members of the senior and extended leadership teams, including subject and phase coordinators.
- There were too few responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) to enable the team to access parents' views. However, inspectors spoke informally with parents at the beginning and end of the day. They also considered responses from the school's own questionnaire to parents. In addition, 37 responses from school staff were also considered.
- Inspectors observed the school at work and looked at the school's own pupil progress and attainment data, pupils' books, school development planning and the school's own systems to enable it to gain an accurate view of its own performance. In addition, they scrutinised a range of documentation in relation to safeguarding, child protection, behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Yvonne Mills-Clare, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Mary Lanovy-Taylor	Additional Inspector
Sharon Bruton	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a much larger than average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is average.
- The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those from service families and those looked after by the local authority) is broadly average.
- The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is much lower than average. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- There has been a change of headteacher since the previous inspection.
- The school provides a well-attended breakfast club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching so that it is at least good to raise pupils' progress and attainment by ensuring:
 - that the work and activities set for pupils, including the most able, make them think hard and learn well whatever their ability, to enable them to reach the standards of which they are capable
 - that teachers' marking, particularly in mathematics, clearly indicates to pupils what they need to do to improve their work
 - that pupils have sufficient time to respond to teacher comments in marking and practise the skills teachers want them to improve.
 - that teachers have consistently high expectations of the quantity and quality of work their pupils are required to produce.
- Raise levels of attainment and progress by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length in a range of different subjects
 - offering greater opportunities in mathematics for pupils to apply their numeracy skills to solving real-life problems
 - raising attendance levels further so that fewer pupils miss out on the continuity of learning.
- Improve behaviour, particularly at playtimes and lunch breaks, by ensuring that all staff consistently apply the school's behaviour policy.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management on improving the quality of teaching by focusing more sharply on tackling identified weaknesses.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because, since the last inspection, not enough pupils have made good progress, particularly in mathematics.
- Most children start school with skills that are below those typically expected for their age. They make good progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage and enter Year 1 with broadly average levels of attainment.
- Progress varies across the rest of the school. By the end of Year 2 attainment is broadly average. Most pupils make the progress expected of them from their starting point in Key Stage 1.
- In 2011 and 2012, attainment overall by the end of Year 6 was below average. However, strategies to accelerate learning have begun to show some impact and in 2013 standards in reading and writing were broadly average. However, in mathematics attainment remained below average.
- The proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 is not as high as it should be.
- The school's data on the progress that pupils are now making, supported by inspection evidence from lesson observations and analysis of the work in pupils' books, show that pupils' achievement is beginning to improve securely.
- Video clips, pictures, educational visits and a school magazine provide stimuli to encourage pupils to write. A sharp focus on year-on-year development of writing skills has strengthened writing. Teachers use learning walls and 'toolkits' to extend pupils' vocabulary choices and promote fluency. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length in other subjects.
- Achievement in mathematics is steadily improving, although the improvement is yet to be seen fully in attainment by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils enjoy reading and progress is accelerating across the school. Guided reading is a regular feature of lessons and the books that pupils receive are appropriate to their abilities. In the 2013 phonics check, fewer pupils achieved the expected level than average. However, in 2014, pupils are on track to achieve above the national average. Older pupils read with accuracy, expression and understanding.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are supported well by talented teaching assistants and teachers. As a result, they make good progress in their learning.
- Not enough of the most able pupils do as well as they should because teaching does not always stretch them enough.
- The school uses the pupil premium funding effectively to promote the personal, emotional and academic development of looked-after pupils and those known to be eligible for free school meals through effective one-to-one and group tuition, and targeted programmes to support their learning. In 2013, pupils supported by the funding achieved in line with similar pupils nationally. The proportion attaining the higher National Curriculum levels was above the national average for similar pupils in writing and mathematics. In comparison to their classmates, their attainment was, on average, approximately four months behind in reading, writing and mathematics. Inspection evidence shows that the gap is continuing to close.
- Better systems for tracking the progress of pupils allow the school to more swiftly support any underachievement of pupils, demonstrating the school's increasingly successful commitment to providing equality of opportunity.

The quality of teaching**requires improvement**

- The quality of teaching requires improvement. Although improving, it is inconsistent across the school and, over time, has not been good enough to enable pupils to make good or better progress. During the inspection, some good and outstanding teaching was observed.
- Not all teachers use information about what pupils can do to set work that ensures all pupils, including the most able, learn well and make good progress. Some pupils find the work too easy and others find it too hard. This slows the progress that they make. Warm relationships between pupils and adults are a feature of most lessons and pupils work together well.
- Attitudes to learning vary. When lessons are engaging, pupils are keen and avid learners. For example, in an outstanding session in Nursery, children were thoroughly engaged in singing and role play before moving on to their number work. As a result, the enthusiasm that this engendered led to learning that was undertaken with excitement and rapture. Sometimes, where lessons do not capture pupils' interest fully, their attention wanders and behaviour deteriorates somewhat.
- Not all teachers use their knowledge of what pupils can do to provide activities that challenge pupils to think hard. This slows the pace of learning for these pupils.
- However, where teaching gets the challenge right, pupils not only acquire new knowledge and skills at a fast pace, but make good use of opportunities to apply their existing skills to real-life situations. In a Year 4 mathematics lesson, after a short recap of previously acquired skills, pupils were given opportunities to use these skills to solve a series of word problems. The choice of methodology was left to the pupils and caused great debate and discussion between them. They were completely absorbed in what they were doing and there was a positive 'buzz' of excited learning and discovery.
- Teachers' marking is most consistent in literacy, where teachers clearly indicate what pupils are doing well and how they can improve their work. However, even in the best marking, teachers do not always offer time or relevant tasks for pupils to respond to these comments. Marking in mathematics is less detailed. As a result, pupils are not always sure of what they need to do to improve.
- The amount of work that pupils complete and their presentation varies between classes and year groups. Often, expectations of what is acceptable are not high enough and, as a result, some written work is too untidy.
- Where pupils make good or better progress, teachers explain new ideas clearly and confidently. They ensure that pupils are clear about what they are learning and what steps they need to take to succeed. They choose activities with care to enthuse and motivate pupils to achieve well. For example, inspectors saw the use of video clips, 'hot seating' and topics to appeal to both boys and girls. They also use specific books to promote cultural awareness among the pupils. For example, *Journey to Jo'burg* was being used for pupils to debate the differences and emotions of people in South Africa.
- Teaching assistants are generally deployed effectively to support pupils' learning, especially disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium both in lessons and in specific support classes.

The behaviour and safety of pupils**requires improvement**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. When closely supervised by adults, pupils generally behave well. However, during less structured times at break and lunchtimes, for example, some pupils are too boisterous and are not always considerate of others.
- Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning, are keen to learn and behave well where lessons capture their interest. However, where lessons do not hold their attention, some pupils become disengaged, continue to write or draw instead of listening and mess around with the equipment that teachers give them. On occasions, some pupils answer back when the teacher is speaking.
- Pupils say that there is some bullying and unkindness, sometimes relating to pupils' home

circumstances, but they say that teachers deal with it appropriately. Pupils say that the word 'gay' is used sometimes to hurt feelings.

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. It is not good because, while pupils feel safe in class, they say that this is not always true in the playground or on the corridors, because a minority of pupils are too boisterous.
- Although the school's policies for behaviour and safety are in place, they are not reviewed and updated regularly enough.
- All staff and governors are trained in child protection procedures and senior staff and relevant governors have attended appropriate training for recruiting new staff.
- Pupils enjoy a range of responsibilities in the school and are keen to take part. For example, they train as play leaders and have the opportunity to be on the school council. While pupils feel proud to have been chosen initially, their pride wanes when some pupils do not respond positively to their organised games by, for example, refusing to line-up and join in sensibly.
- Opportunities to work together, specific programmes and assemblies are used appropriately by the school to promote effectively pupils' social, moral and spiritual development, while religious education and topics within school promote cultural awareness.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The school's leadership is securing improvements in pupils' achievement. However, leadership and management require improvement because not all teaching is consistently good, particularly in mathematics. As a result, although pupils make steady progress, too few do better than this.
- Despite being relatively new to the school, the headteacher has quickly gained the confidence and respect of his staff. He has delegated more responsibility to his deputy and assistant headteachers to build capacity in the senior leadership team to tackle priorities in the school more swiftly. School self-evaluation is accurate and priorities in the improvement plan are appropriate.
- Leaders have put in place more rigorous procedures for monitoring pupil progress. However, leaders do not currently monitor the impact that absence is having on the progress that pupils make, or use the breakfast club effectively enough to improve attendance and punctuality.
- The headteacher, together with his deputy and more recently the two assistant headteachers, has improved much about the school since his arrival. Teachers now have a better understanding of the progress that pupils are making and how to make sure it speeds up. Through regular meetings with senior leaders they discuss the progress of their pupils and have developed a greater awareness of measuring progress accurately. Regular assessments ensure that extra support is targeted at those who need it. As a result, pupils are making faster progress across the school, particularly in mathematics. This demonstrates that leaders and managers are providing the school with undoubted capacity to carry on improving.
- Leaders and managers check regularly on the quality of teaching and identify where it could be better. However, leaders are not rigorous enough in using what they find out from their checks to focus on weaknesses in their follow-up visits to classrooms to bring about improvement at a faster pace.
- Middle managers are allocated time to manage their subjects across the school and now have the opportunity to work alongside colleagues, shape teachers' planning and provide whole-school training for teachers. As a result, they are playing a much fuller role in school development and influencing positive changes in their subjects.
- The management of staff performance and training for teachers and other adults is beginning to raise achievement securely. There is a clear link between the performance of teachers and the overriding emphasis on them reaching their pupil progress targets and salary progression.
- The curriculum meets the needs of pupils adequately, but there are not enough opportunities for them to practise and reinforce their writing skills in subjects other than literacy. In mathematics there is not a strong enough emphasis on enabling pupils to use their mathematical skills to solve problems and puzzles.

- There is a wide range of after-school clubs, activities and a breakfast club which are well attended and promote pupils' personal development well.
- Leaders use the primary school sports funding effectively to provide further opportunities for pupils to take part in games and other extra-curricular sporting activities. Funding is used to release the coordinator for physical education to work alongside other colleagues to raise their confidence and skills.
- The school meets the statutory requirements of safeguarding and through the more thorough systems for monitoring progress, is now beginning to promote equality of opportunity more effectively. The school rejects all forms of discrimination and has effectively eradicated the very few incidents of name-calling experienced last year.
- The local authority adviser visits the school regularly and has provided the school with effective support and training that the school has requested.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a good awareness of the school's strengths and areas for development. When the new headteacher was appointed they commissioned an external review of their performance to ensure they were able to challenge and support the school in equal measure. As a result, they are able to interpret pupil progress data accurately and ask searching questions about the school's performance. Individual governors are frequent visitors to the school and are involved in visiting classes. They understand how the school is attempting to improve the quality of teaching, and the staffing and finance committee hold discussions about the performance appraisal arrangements, linked to the financial reward for successful teachers. Governors are actively involved in the spending of the pupil premium funding and the difference it makes to their attainment and progress.

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	107272
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	440762

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	470
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Sinfield
Headteacher	Terry Woollin
Date of previous school inspection	21 March 2011
Telephone number	01274 582927
Fax number	01274 586503
Email address	office@lowash.bradford.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

