

Asquith Primary School

Horsfall Street, Morley, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS27 9QY

Inspection dates 7–8 May 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Together, the headteacher, assistant headteacher and governors are successfully and quickly improving the school's performance. The quality of teaching has strengthened. Behaviour and attendance have improved and the standards reached by pupils across the school are rising.
- Good provision in the early years ensures that children make good progress from their often below typical starting points. They are well prepared for learning in Year 1.
- Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 make good progress, particularly in mathematics. Standards across the school are rising and, by the end of Year 6, are at least average and sometimes higher.
- Teaching over time is good overall and some is outstanding. Activities are varied and interesting, effectively holding pupils' attention. Staff check pupils' understanding carefully and probe their thinking through effective questioning. As a result, pupils make good progress.
- Pupils' behaviour is good both inside and outside the classroom. Their positive attitudes to learning contribute to the improvements evident in their achievement.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils rightly feel safe. Partnerships with outside agencies help to ensure that pupils learn how to make safe choices.
- Senior leaders skilfully review information about the achievement of individual and groups of pupils. They use their findings well to identify and support those who need extra help and target additional funding.
- Effective use is made of the pupil premium to support disadvantaged pupils. Previous gaps in the achievement between this group and others in the school and nationally are closing as a result.
- Middle leaders play an integral role in improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. Staff are a close-knit team. They are keen to continually improve their teaching skills.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress in writing, although good, is not as strong as in reading or mathematics.
- The teaching of aspects of writing in Key Stage 2 is inconsistent. In Years 3 and 4, opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills by undertaking longer pieces of work are sometimes overlooked.
- The school's marking policy is not consistently followed by all staff in all year groups. Not all pupils are well informed of how to improve their work.
- Pupils in Year 1 are not always given books to read that match their particular needs, particularly lower-ability pupils. Pupils' reading records are not always regularly and accurately updated.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team visited a variety of lessons taught across the school. Two lessons observations were undertaken jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils and reviewed work in pupils’ books in order to gather evidence of the quality of teaching and learning over time.
- The inspection team also held discussions the headteacher, middle leaders and members of the school’s staff. The lead inspector met with the Chair of the Governing Body and six other governors.
- The views of the 47 parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were taken into account as well as the views of a small group of parents who met with the inspection team and who contacted the inspection provider. They also took into account the views of 16 staff members who returned questionnaires.
- The inspection team studied health and safety documentation, documents relating to the procedures to check the performance of staff, pupils’ attendance data and the school’s system for checking pupils’ attainment and progress.

Inspection team

Marian Thomas, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Terry Bond

Additional Inspector

Mark Williams

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a slightly larger than the average-sized primary school. It has increased in size since the previous inspection.
- Most pupils are White British. Approximately 10% come from other ethnic groups, including a small number from Irish Traveller heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those supported through the pupil premium is close to the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is approximately half the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Children who attend the school's Reception class do so full time. The 52 children who currently attend the Nursery do so on a part-time basis.
- Alongside three other local primary schools, the school is part of the Aspire Learning Partnership that support school improvement and development. The school also works in collaboration with schools within its local authority cluster to develop policies and practice to assist school improvement.
- There is a before- and after-school club for pupils who attend the school. The governing body manages this provision.
- Since the last inspection, the co-located Children's Centre has moved to Morley Town Hall. This provision is managed by the governing but was not part of this inspection. It is inspected separately.
- The school is increasing in size from a one-form to a two-form entry. To accommodate this, there has been an on-going large-scale building project, which was completed and handed over to the school at the time of the inspection. The school has accommodated significant disruptions to both timetables and outdoor-play provision over the last 18 months.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' achievement in writing even further, particularly in Key Stage 2 by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills by undertaking longer pieces of written work, particularly in Years 3 and 4
 - ensuring that all staff consistently adhere to the school's marking policy so that pupils in all year groups are well informed of how to improve and do not continue to repeat mistakes.
- Ensure that Key Stage 1 leaders carefully check that pupils' reading records in Year 1 are always regularly and accurately updated and that pupils always read books that meet their varying needs, particularly lower-ability pupils.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a very clear vision of what is needed to make the school even better in the future. This, coupled with the support offered by other senior leaders, staff and the governors has enabled the school to maintain and build upon the good performance identified in the previous inspection. School leaders have established an ethos, which ensures that good learning flourishes and pupils behave well.
- Senior leaders use the wealth of data they collect to carefully analyse pupils' attainment and progress. They swiftly identify pupils, or groups of pupils who need extra help and use this information to pinpoint any variances in their achievement and well as the quality of teaching. Regular meetings which check pupils' progress towards their targets ensure all leaders can check that all groups of pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed, that any discrimination is avoided and positive relationships between different groups of pupils are promoted.
- The quality of teaching is well monitored and assessed. The headteacher has put in place a highly effective system to manage teachers' performance. Targets set for staff are closely linked to areas identified in the school's development plan. The headteacher, supported by the governors, has been rigorous in tackling previous underperformance in teaching. This has been a key factor in improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement over time.
- The role undertaken by middle leaders is well established. They play an integral role in improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. They support senior leaders well and their role in assessing the quality of teaching provides information for teachers' performance management.
- The leadership of mathematics and English has improved as evidenced by the acceleration in pupils' progress over the last year. In English, pupils' skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar in particular have strengthened and this has led to improvement in pupils' overall achievement in writing. However, leaders are yet to ensure that pupils in all year groups in Key Stage 2 are provided with the opportunities they need to write extended pieces of writing and that the procedures to record Year 1 pupils' achievement in reading are regular and accurate.
- The provision for disabled pupils with those with special educational needs is well led and managed. Systems to measure their progress are robust and thorough. Pupils' needs are identified effectively and quickly and, as a result, make equally good progress to their peers.
- School leaders use the pupil premium funding effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. These pupils' good gains, both last year and currently show that gaps in attainment and progress between this group and others are closing. Successful initiatives include developing pupils' achievement and self-esteem through time spent learning in small groups, as well as providing funding to ensure all pupils have equal access to school visits out of school.
- Leaders have embraced the national changes to the primary curriculum with enthusiasm and ensure all aspects are met. A wide range of experiences such as trips to outdoor pursuits centres and national book week enhance the curriculum and make learning exciting and interesting. 'Learning how to use a canoe was the scariest thing I have ever done, but I was very proud afterwards', reflects a typical pupil comment.
- Effective use is made of the primary school sports and physical education (PE) funding to increase pupils' physical skills and well-being. Alongside partner schools within the Aspire Learning Partnership, the school employs sports coaches to lead PE sessions. Teachers work with these coaches in order to further develop their skills and confidence in teaching PE skills. As a result, more pupils now access sport and are enjoying success in inter-school competitions, such as in football.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are well aware of the importance of British values and are prepared effectively for life in modern Britain. Through the democratic process of electing a school council, pupils learn of the importance of equality and fairness. Through their studies of Hinduism and other religions, they learn to respect those who are different from them. Pupils learn the importance of developing social and moral values through the 'kindness tree' on to which pupils celebrate the small acts of kindness shown to them by others.
- Parents' opinions of the school are high. Most would recommend the school to others. Parents feel welcomed into the school and acknowledge that their children make good progress.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements and are thorough and effective. Careful checks are undertaken on all adults who work pupils and the school liaises well with other organisations to protect pupils.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is effective. It has played a significant role in improving both the standard of teaching and

the achievement of pupils. The governing body has high expectations for the school and works exceptionally well with senior leaders to bring about continued improvement.

- Governors have a good understanding of data relating to pupils' achievement, including how well the school performs in comparison to others. This, coupled with their wide range of skills and regular training, enables them to hold school leaders to account for pupils' progress.
- Governors are well informed about the quality of teaching. They have supported the headteacher effectively in tackling previous underperformance. They ensure teachers' pay closely reflects their performance and the achievement of pupils.
- Regular visits to school ensure that governors have a good understanding of issues relating to health and safety. These have been particularly pertinent during recent building work.
- The finance sub-committee manages the school budget prudently, as evidenced by the good resources made available to furnish the new building.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well both inside and outside the classroom and in the before and after-school clubs. This is reflected in the calm atmosphere in school and the polite and friendly welcome given to visitors.
- The vast majority of pupils spoken to grade behaviour highly. They say that school is a welcoming community in which everyone is valued. A few pupils acknowledge that behaviour is not yet outstanding because 'sometimes pupils don't make quite the right choices'. Nevertheless, pupils fully agree how much they enjoy coming to school.
- Pupils' positive attitudes to learning have contributed directly to the improvements in their academic achievements across the school. Pupils' pride in their work reflects in the well-presented work in their books.
- Incidents of difficult behaviour are few and far between. No pupil has been permanently excluded in the past three years.
- Support for those pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable is very good. Parents say that staff frequently 'go the extra mile' to ensure the needs of their children are met. Several parents whose children have extra needs commented on how highly they rate the way in which their child was welcomed and nurtured within the school community.
- Attendance is broadly average and has increased since the previous inspection. The recent work undertaken by the learning mentor is having a positive impact on both improving attendance and punctuality.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- All staff undertake safeguarding training regularly and effective work is undertaken with outside agencies to ensure pupils' safety both inside and outside school.
- Pupils say they feel very safe and secure because staff are there to help them. They comment that there is always someone who will listen should they have concerns and they know where to turn if they feel upset or troubled.
- The school works closely with outside agencies to help keep pupils safe. For example, during the inspection, the local police visited to talk to pupils and parents about how to keep safe when using the internet. Pupils are able to understand how to make safe decisions now and in the future as a result.
- The school's recent work on anti-bullying highlighted to pupils the different forms bullying can take. Pupils talk confidently about this and show good levels of understanding. The majority feel that bullying behaviour does not happen very often but are clear about where to turn should an incident occur.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching over time is good overall. Work in pupils' books demonstrates that some teaching is outstanding.
- Classrooms are bright and welcoming places. Displays are used well to celebrate pupils' achievement and further improve learning. Activities are varied and interesting and hold pupils' attention during lessons.

- Teachers work closely with teaching assistants who contribute well to pupils' learning. Teaching assistants support for individuals not only develops pupils' concentration but also their confidence in their own successes. Teachers and teaching assistants' use of questions check pupils' understanding and probe their thinking is effective.
- Despite the lack of a school library, pupils' progress in reading has increased and is good. This is because of the strong emphasis on the teaching of reading skills. Staff are well trained in the teaching of phonics (matching sounds to letters). These sessions are well planned and staff across the school typically match activities well to meet pupils' varying needs and abilities. However, in Year 1, records made by staff of the books pupils have read are not always regularly and accurately recorded. As a result, pupils sometimes re-read books or start books which are too hard or too easy, slowing their development, particularly those of lower ability.
- Spelling, grammar and punctuation skills are taught consistently well across the school. However, the teaching of some other aspects of writing is inconsistent between year groups in Key Stage 2 and progress therefore varies. Pupils who do not always make good progress in some year groups have to catch up in others. For example, in Years 3 and 4, pupils are not given enough opportunities to practice writing longer pieces of work. This prevents them from developing the necessary stamina to needed to hone their skills so that they reach the highest levels of attainment in Year 6 national tests.
- Mathematics is taught well and pupils in both Key Stages 1 and 2 make consistently good progress. A focus on developing pupils' thinking skills helps them to deepen their understanding of different mathematical concepts. A conscientious approach to planning and the high expectation that all will make at least good progress has increased pupils' achievement.
- Staff usually mark pupils' books conscientiously. However not all staff adhere to the school's marking policy and therefore does not always have the impact intended. In Years 2, 5 and 6 for example, marking is highly informative and of a good standard. Pupils' feedback to teachers' commentary showing a good understanding of how to improve and make better progress as a result. However, in other year groups, marking does not reflect these effective practices. Pupils sometimes repeat mistakes, which are not clearly identified in teachers' marking, and this slows progress.
- Homework tasks contribute effectively to pupils' achievement by helping to promote their research skills.

The achievement of pupils is good

- After a good start to learning in the early years, between Years 1 and 6, all groups of pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. This is confirmed by inspection evidence, school data and work in pupils' books. The large majority are making the expected rate of progress and an above average proportion are making better than expected progress from their starting points in both key stages.
- In 2014, the standards attained by pupils at the end of both Year 2 and 6 were a disappointment to school leaders and represented a dip in the school's usually average and sometimes above average standards. School leaders quickly identified the root causes of this dip. They have systematically and successfully improved the quality of teaching in order to raise standards quickly. As a result, pupils' achievement has accelerated in both key stages. The current standards seen in Year 2 and 6, as well as across the school, are now much higher, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils' achieve well in reading and despite the lack of a library due to the on-site building work, progress in reading has continued to improve across the school. Staff are justifiably proud of Year 1 pupils' results in the national reading screening check of pupils' phonic skills (letters and the sounds they make) in 2014. A well-above average proportion of pupils met the expected standard. Pupils currently in Year 1 are on course for even greater gains in this particular aspect of reading. However, pupils' reading records in Year 1 are not always accurate and updated regularly. Pupils are not always books to read that reflects their precise learning needs, particularly lower-ability readers.
- Older pupils say they really enjoy reading. 'Reading a good book sucks me into the pages' was a typical pupil comment.
- Pupils' progress in writing has accelerated due to a clear focus on improvement, particularly in their spelling, punctuation and grammar skills and, overall, pupils achieve well. School data, along with inspection evidence shows that a range of different strategies has improved standards in pupils' writing skills, particularly in Key Stage 1. By contrast, aspects of written work seen in pupils' books across Key Stage 2 are inconsistent across the year groups. In Years 5 and 6, progress in writing is good and sometimes better. In Years 3 and 4 however, pupils do not practice their writing skills or regularly undertake enough longer pieces of written work and this sometimes hinders their progress.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics because work set matches their varying needs well. The school's clear

focus on developing pupils' thinking skills and improving their ability to solve problems has increased pupils' rates of progress across the school.

- Overall, from their starting points, disadvantaged pupils achieve well. In Year 6 in 2014 in reading and mathematics, their attainment was around two- and a half-terms behind others in the school and four terms behind other pupils nationally. In writing, they were two terms behind others in the school and three terms behind others nationally. Almost half of these pupils also were identified as having special educational needs. School data and inspection evidence shows that disadvantaged pupils are making good progress across the school and previous gaps in attainment are successfully closing.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because their needs are recognised quickly by staff. Effective teaching, help and encouragement ensure they engage well in learning.
- The most able pupils are making good progress overall in reading, writing and mathematics. The school provides a curriculum, which challenges them to reach their potential. This is demonstrated by the increased numbers of pupils currently in Year 6 who are on track to reach both the higher Level 5 and highest Level 6 in national tests.
- The small numbers of pupils from other ethnic groups and those from Irish traveller heritage are making good progress overall from their starting points.

The early years provision

is good

- Children enter the Nursery and Reception with a wide range of pre-school experiences and at levels that are often below what is typical for their age group, particularly in speaking, listening, reading, writing and social skills. Many children are known to be vulnerable. Once settled into the routines of the unit they make good, and sometimes better, progress from their different starting points. The majority leave Reception having achieved a good level of development and are well prepared for learning in Year 1.
- The quality of teaching is good. Activities are planned which specifically match their varying learning. A well-resourced and stimulating environment offers a wealth of opportunities to learn through play, exploration and investigation, such as through the imaginative use of technology.
- There is an appropriate balance between activities led by adults and those that allow children to explore on their own. Children's ages, experience and starting points are taken into good consideration when planning activities. Where adults lead activities, questions are appropriate and engage children in discussion, which promotes learning well.
- The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is effective. Phonics skills (matching letters to sounds) are taught exceptionally well and, as a result, children's progress in reading is excellent. Numeracy activities are well thought-out and planned.
- Staff effectively identify children's social and emotional needs and ensure they feel happy, safe and secure. As a result, children are willing to learn. They settle quickly to their daily routines and work in harmony with each other and this reflects in their good behaviour.
- The recently appointed early years leader leads an enthusiastic team of staff, who share a common sense of purpose so that every child learn can learn effectively, including through play. Leaders ensure that observations and assessments of what children already know and can do to are used good effect to plan the next steps in learning for all groups of children.
- Partnerships with parents are well developed. Home visits, workshops and specially organised events, such as Mothers' Day, ensure that parents play a full and active role their child's education and in celebrating their achievements.

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	132795
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	461868

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	333
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julie Barker-Smith
Headteacher	Gill Austerfield
Date of previous school inspection	5 May 2011
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