

Old Town Primary School

Billy Lane, Old Town, Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire HX7 8RY

Inspection dates

2–3 November 2016

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The school has made substantial improvement since its previous inspection. The focus and steer of the headteacher, supported by conscientious and caring staff, have created a positive place for pupils to learn.
- The school has actively sought external support, including from a local leader in education. This has meant that teachers have received good-quality training, resulting in good teaching.
- Progress is strong across a range of subjects, particularly mathematics.
- Teachers' regular checks on pupils' progress identify gaps in knowledge to help them plan lessons. The school's focus on nurturing the disadvantaged pupils means that they make good progress.
- The governing body is 'spot on' with its assessment of the school's strengths and weaknesses in the quality of teaching and learning. They are robust in holding the school to account.
- Leadership has been strengthened. The delegation of subject responsibilities to new leaders has brought a sense of energy and drive to school improvements.
- The behaviour of the pupils is good. They listen attentively and focus well when working. There are good relationships between adults and pupils.
- The school puts a high priority on pupils' welfare. Attendance is good. Pupils are proud of their school and say they feel safe and confident that staff will deal with their concerns.
- Outcomes for children in the early years are good. Consequently, they are well prepared for Year 1.
- Improvements in provision for the youngest children have not been as rapid as in the rest of the school.
- Pupils' progress is slower in writing because pupils' spelling is weak and work is not always well presented.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- All teachers have a consistent approach to the correcting and editing of pupils' work so that:
 - pupils reach higher standards in writing
 - pupils use accurate spelling
 - the presentation of pupils' written work is tidy and clearly set out.
- Improve provision in the early years, by:
 - ensuring that all activities have a clear purpose based on what children need to learn next
 - challenging the most able children to accelerate their progress
 - providing all staff with training to fulfil their roles
 - involving parents so that they contribute to their child's learning journey.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher's leadership is highly valued by staff and parents. She has a clear vision for the school. With a balance of support and challenge she has brought about the necessary improvements in the quality of teaching.
- The school's development plan sets out a path to improvement with ambitious but realistic targets for pupils' achievement. Leaders have identified suitable actions to bring about the changes that are needed to improve the quality of teaching.
- The leadership team has been strengthened with the appointment of people in key roles who are leading the school forward in their different subjects. Their enthusiastic and analytical approach means that improvements are well focused.
- Professional development to improve weaker teaching has been effective and teachers value the support they have received from the school. The school's leadership is resourceful in using support from other schools as well as consultants to improve the quality of teaching and learning. This means that the school has an accurate view of its own effectiveness.
- Support and guidance for the early years have brought about improvements in outcomes for the youngest children. The building of an outside area has also strengthened provision for the early years. However, teaching and learning are not always sufficiently well focused so that the youngest children do as well as they could.
- By the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2, pupils' achievement in writing is not as strong as in reading and mathematics. The school's initiatives to improve the quality of writing through pupils editing their own work are not consistent across the school. This means that some pupils' work looks messy and is confusing to read.
- The leadership team has monitored and evaluated teachers' performance. Performance management targets are clearly linked to pupils' progress and attainment. Support has been given where teaching is weaker and this has had a marked impact on improving the quality of teaching.
- The school curriculum is lively and exciting with visitors and visits a regular feature. Lessons and assemblies promote effective reflection on faith, culture and personal choices. Pupils show respect for people from all backgrounds and faiths and have a good understanding of British values. They have a thorough understanding of the importance of rules and are well informed about the democratic process.
- Leaders have used the pupil premium funding to provide extra teaching and welfare support for disadvantaged pupils. The school's approach to mentoring these pupils means that they have developed some good strategies for coping so that their learning is not interrupted and their progress is as fast as everyone else's.
- The school has created a safe culture to protect its pupils and every parent who responded to Parent View agrees that pupils feel protected and safe in school. All staff have a comprehensive induction in safeguarding and this is emphasised throughout the school's work as well as in lessons.
- The physical education (PE) and sport funding for primary schools has been used

effectively to improve the quality of teaching in PE. Teachers are mentored by coaches who bring to the school a high level of expertise and help to improve teachers' skills. The pupils explained to the lead inspector how PE lessons had changed for the better to help them appreciate the importance of sport to improve their lives. Pupils now participate in more sports and represent the school in tournaments.

Governance of the school

- The governing body has a sharp focus on holding the senior leaders to account.
- The committee responsible for teaching and learning is highly effective in challenging the school about pupils' achievement.
- Governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching across the school and are committed to ensuring that staff provide value for money.
- Governors understand that the progress pupils make should be the main driver when awarding pay increases for teachers and the headteacher. They are fully prepared to challenge underperformance where teaching has not been good.
- Governors can talk about how well different groups of pupils are doing across the school and where improvements need to be made. They are well informed when the progress of pupils is not as good as it should be so the school can eradicate any barriers that stop these pupils learning.
- Governors track the progress made by disadvantaged pupils and can explain the support and resources that are now in place for this group and which are making an impact.
- Governors are fully conversant with their statutory duties for safeguarding.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school gives a high priority to making sure that the procedures for safeguarding are robust. It works closely with external agencies and parents where appropriate so that pupils are well supported and feel safe.
- Pupils' attendance is good and the school follows up absences to make sure that no pupil is away from school unless it is absolutely necessary.
- Teachers and pupils are aware of the school's procedures for safeguarding. Training for staff is up to date and they are aware of their obligations in preventing radicalisation and extremism. The school is keen to give pupils the opportunity to go on school trips and teachers plan these with detailed risk assessments so they are safe at all times.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have benefited from some good training and collaborative work with other schools. Seeing good practice in action in other settings has given the school a wider view of its own work and made a difference to the quality of teaching, which is now good.
- Lessons are thoughtfully planned and consideration given to meeting the needs of all ability ranges with quality teaching and well-matched tasks. As a result, pupils

concentrate in lessons because they understand what to do and the work is pitched at the correct level.

- When pupils are working in a group or in pairs their discussion is meaningful and focused on their work, so they gain understanding and knowledge from each other as well as from the teacher.
- Teachers use information technology which engages the pupils' interests and motivates them to learn. A geography lesson on climate was introduced using an audio recording and pupils were asked to decide what kind of weather it might have been. Their suggestions showed they already had some good geographical knowledge about extreme weather and they were keen to find out more.
- The teaching of mathematics is a particular strength because it is clearly structured so that pupils learn step by step. Young pupils are able to tackle simple mathematical problems and apply their basic number skills at an early age. Older pupils are able to record their mathematical reasoning and show some mastery of the subject as well as tackle an open-ended problem which demands some creative thinking.
- The school's approach to the teaching of reading in key stage 2 has engaged even reluctant readers. As a result, they make rapid progress and are sufficiently confident in discussing their ideas about a text. In a session reading 'Friend or foe' by Michael Morpurgo, the teacher's questions resulted in pupils showing a sophisticated understanding of how an author engaged the reader, set the scene and created tension in the opening pages.
- The teaching of writing has been less successful in producing high-quality work without the need for several re-edits. There is not consistency across the classes in how editing is used to improve work. Pupils often misspell frequently used words and in their attempts to correct their work it becomes messy and difficult to read unless they have written a final copy.
- The progress that pupils are making is checked frequently and teachers plan lessons carefully so any gaps in pupils' understanding are swiftly tackled. Teachers provide effective feedback so that pupils know how to improve their work. In mathematics, teachers' feedback has promoted pupils' effective mathematical reasoning skills, which has accelerated their progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Parents value the 'family feel' of the school. 'The children are nurtured' and 'this is a caring school' were some of the comments from parents.
- Funding is used to provide opportunities for extra-curricular clubs and trips for pupils who would otherwise not get the chance to participate in out-of-school activities. This is having a positive impact on disadvantaged pupils.
- The school now runs a breakfast and after-school club to provide a good start and finish to the day. This is very well attended and all ages mix well together as they play.
- Pupils say they feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe. They are very well

informed about safety when using the internet. They are confident in the school's systems to sort out any problems they have. Pupils have good relationships with each other and with the adults. They have a good understanding of bullying, including any related to gender or race.

- The school's support for a charity sponsoring a child in the Philippines and its links with a school in Bradford have given the pupils a good insight into the wider world. Pupils understand that people have a right to make different life choices. They were knowledgeable about different faiths and understood and talked about the fact that people hold different views, have a different culture or religion and that these should be respected. They are well prepared to develop into good citizens in a tolerant and diverse Britain.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They have a positive attitude to their learning and this is reflected in their good attendance and their focus during lessons. They listen well to the adults and their peers, and show respect for the views of others.
- The school is a calm place to work. Pupils' behaviour in the playground shows that pupils are cooperative and mixed ages play together well. Older pupils take responsibility for younger pupils and the 'buddy bus stop' ensures that no one is left out during playtime.
- Pupils are confident in the school's systems to sort out any problems. They have a good understanding of bullying, including any related to gender or race. They explained the school's 'bully box' and how that is followed up if there are concerns and this stops them worrying.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In Year 1, pupils achieve well in phonics when compared to others nationally. By the end of key stage 1, pupils are achieving in line with or better than the national average. In lessons, pupils enjoy learning the sounds that letters represent and they make consistently good progress over time.
- From key stage 1 to key stage 2 pupils make good progress in mathematics and reading. Standards at the end of key stage 2 in reading and mathematics are higher than the national average. Pupils' achievement in writing at both key stage 1 and key stage 2 is weaker.
- Pupils' handwriting is good and from the early years they confidently use the start of a joined script and correctly form their letters. However, the standard of pupils' spelling is not consistently good. They misspell common words and this has a negative effect on their writing.
- Pupils say that they enjoy a range of subjects, especially mathematics. They talk about what they know about the Romans from their history and they are very well informed about different religions, faiths and beliefs. They have a good working knowledge of science and have recently enjoyed dropping teddy bears out of a window when conducting experiments to find out about air resistance. Their enjoyment of these subjects is reflected in their good progress. Pupils are rightly proud of the high-quality

art work they have done with a visiting artist.

- Pupils are conscientious about their homework and talk confidently about how it helps them with their work. One boy proudly showed the lead inspector how his handwriting had improved as a result of regular practice. The older pupils explained how weekly debates challenged their thinking and part of their homework was to prepare an argument either for or against a particular topic.
- The school's support for disadvantaged pupils, including those who are also most able, has been effective in helping them access what the school offers. As a result, they make similar progress to other pupils nationally.
- Careful lesson planning by teachers and provision of learning aids to match activities to pupils' needs ensure that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully integrated within the lesson. The skilled support from teaching assistants, guiding and prompting when necessary, means that this group of pupils are confident and make good progress.
- The most able pupils achieve well and this is because work is pitched at the right level and teachers have high expectations. In mathematics, pupils are often challenged by open-ended questions which require considerable thought and application of their mathematical skills. In reading, they choose more advanced books; they express a view about different authors or particular genres and can discuss a text in depth.

Early years provision

Good

- Children enter the early years with skills and knowledge broadly typical of their age. Children make good progress and most achieve a good level of development for their age. By the time they leave the Reception class they have acquired the necessary skills to equip them for key stage 1.
- The adults know the children well and provide a caring and nurturing environment for them to learn and play. Children's behaviour is good in the classroom and in the outside area. They cooperate and play well together. At snacktime, children confidently help themselves and eat appropriately without the need for adult supervision.
- The story of 'The three little pigs' fired up the imagination of some children, who made up a puppet show taking it in turns to role play the wolf using story language to act out the play. Boys enjoyed competing to build sandcastles within a time limit, showing an understanding of number when comparing who had built the most.
- The good provision for creating and making is reflected in much of the children's work that is displayed around the classroom. During the inspection, children enjoyed making firework pictures and two boys were earnestly focused on wrapping a present and cutting a ribbon using scissors with some skill.
- The basic skills of mathematics and language are planned within the classroom as well as in the outdoor areas. However, many of the activities, although well resourced, have no specific learning focus. Consequently, children, particularly the most able, do not achieve as well as they could.
- The leadership in the early years has brought about a clear focus on improving the quality of learning for these young children. Teachers have been working in partnership

with a local leader in education as well as a local mathematics hub, a network of schools developing high-quality mathematics teaching. This professional support has helped raise teachers' expectations of the youngest children.

- Overall, teaching has improved and is typically good. Staff have visited other schools to develop their practice but not all have benefited from training to fulfil their role working with the youngest children.
- The welfare and safety of the youngest children are given a high priority in the early years. Good links with external agencies and specialists have been established in previous years to support children with specific needs. At present there are no children who have special educational needs in the Reception class.
- Transition arrangements are appropriate. Staff liaise with the pre-school providers prior to children starting. All health and safety requirements are met. The unit is a safe place for children.
- Parents are very positive about the provision for their children but they have little opportunity to make a contribution to their child's learning profile. This means that the school is using limited information to assess children's ability and plan the appropriate next steps in their learning.

School details

Unique reference number	107524
Local authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	10019719

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	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	102
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Graham Codd
Headteacher	Janette Batty
Telephone number	01422 842859
Website	www.OLDTOWN.CALDERDALE.SCH.UK
Email address	ADMIN@OLDTOWN.CALDERDALE.SCH.UK
Date of previous inspection	26–27 November 2014

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- Nearly all pupils are from White British backgrounds and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited lessons in all classrooms, some with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector observed small groups of pupils being taught.
- The inspector scrutinised pupils' work, heard pupils read and spoke to pupils about their enjoyment of school and their opinions of behaviour and safety.
- The inspector held discussions with staff, governors and representatives of the local authority.
- A wide range of school documents were taken into account as part of the evidence, including: the school's self-evaluation; its school development plan; behaviour and attendance records; governing body documents; and documents relating to the monitoring of teachers' performance.
- The views of 27 parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were taken into account, as well as discussions with parents.

Inspection team

Karen Heath, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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