



Victoria Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107930
LEA Leeds
Inspection number 277869
Inspection dates 26 June 2006 to 27 June 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Lesley Clark CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Ivy Avenue
School category	Community		Leeds
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		West Yorkshire LS9 9ER
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0113 2482449
Number on roll	342	Fax number	0113 2482449
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Ms Louise Sutton
Date of previous inspection	4 December 2000	Headteacher	Ms T Mason

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger than average inner city primary school serves an area of social and economic hardship. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage with about 15 per cent from minority ethnic groups. A small number are at an early stage of learning English. A third of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, a much larger proportion than usual. The number with statements of special need is currently about average but is often higher. The proportion of pupils who enter or leave the school at times other than the usual is up to 30 per cent in some year groups. An above average proportion is vulnerable or has considerable barriers to learning. The school has received national recognition for many aspects of its work, notably the Stephen Lawrence award last year.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding features, notably pupils' personal development and well-being which are exceptional. Pupils thrive here because of it, developing into capable and responsible young people. The school's self-evaluation is largely accurate in that it rates itself as good but it tends to be over-modest in some respects. Its judgement that the care given to pupils is outstanding is a true reflection of the personal support they receive but academic guidance is less strong. This aspect therefore is good overall. The school is well led and managed with good support from governors. The school has improved well since the last inspection and has good capacity to improve further. It gives good value for money.

The school does well to get the majority of pupils close to average standards at the end of Year 6 from their low starting points. They get off to a flying start in the Foundation Stage where provision and the quality of teaching are outstanding. In Years 1 - 6, pupils achieve well because they are well taught. An outstanding curriculum develops their capacity to think, imagine and learn with enjoyment. Pupils' learning has accelerated because of this and because this year much improved assessment procedures have enabled teachers to target precisely those pupils who need extra help and to focus on particular aspects which pupils find difficult such as writing. The school has rightly identified that pupils should be involved in checking whether they have met small achievable targets so they learn from their mistakes. Furthermore, there is a need to tighten up individual education plans for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities so they too give clear small steps for learning and precise targets.

What the school should do to improve further

- Involve pupils in checking their work against small, achievable targets so they understand what they have to do to improve its quality.
- Ensure that individual education plans give very clear small steps for learning and precise targets.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The achievement of all pupils is good. Children enter the nursery with low communication, language and literacy skills. About two-thirds go into the reception classes, joined by others who have limited pre-school experience. They make outstanding progress in the Foundation Stage though overall standards are well below those expected at the start of Year 1. Achievement is good in Years 1 to 6 because pupils are well taught. Results vary from year to year depending on the proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with complex needs and significant barriers to learning, and rates of mobility. The school anticipated low results in 2004 and 2005 because of these factors. While overall standards have been significantly lower than average at the end of Years 2 and 6, the overall picture is distorted by the very large number of pupils with learning difficulties compared to

higher achievers. The school sets challenging targets which it largely meets despite the considerable setbacks many pupils face for reasons outside the school's control. Evidence from the school's tracking systems confirms that the increased focus on writing is leading to improved standards but is too soon to measure the impact of similar initiatives in mathematics. Overall standards are undoubtedly rising because of improved assessment procedures and are on track to be closer to average in 2006 and 2007 in English, mathematics and science as a result.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is exceptional and their spiritual, moral social and cultural development is outstanding. Their time in school produces strong, confident people, well prepared for their future lives. Relationships and behaviour in school are very good and pupils know they can go to a playground buddy or seek advice from trained 'peer mediators' if they need help. They say they feel confident and happy in a school where they feel everyone 'tries to make lessons fun'. Through the school council, children as young as the reception class feel they have 'revolutionised' school meals. They have a strong voice in the school, to the extent of advising on the appointment of new staff, introducing recycling initiatives and being a driving force behind successful anti-bullying and anti-racist strategies. Pupils know the value of healthy eating and exercise and are aware that the current 'skipping challenge' is promoting their physical health. Pupils are attentive in lessons and enjoy the opportunities they have for creative thinking. 'Just the job' work experience opens their eyes to the value of education, teamwork and friendship in their future lives. Their cultural awareness is exceptional as when the music and foods of the Caribbean enriched Christian festive occasions. Residential visits further extend pupils' social awareness and tolerance of others. The pupils enjoy school and attendance has improved; it is satisfactory. The school reports that attendance is adversely affected by external factors beyond its control.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. It is outstanding in the Foundation Stage where independent learning is sensitively balanced by short bursts of intensive individual teaching so that children's learning comes on apace. In these early years, children make rapid gains in communication, language and literacy skills. They learn quickly and independently, choosing from indoor and outdoor activities that foster their imaginations as well as their practical skills. Throughout the school, effective aspects of teaching include good subject knowledge, behaviour management and a good rapport with pupils which makes learning enjoyable. Computerised screens are used effectively to demonstrate teaching points and to involve pupils in showing what they understand. Occasionally teachers spend too long on introductory sessions. Questioning is often better adapted to less able pupils rather than to extend the

understanding of more able learners. Opportunities are missed to involve pupils in checking their progress against small achievable targets. Thus it is possible for a few pupils to sit back and be taught rather than actively learn at all times. Teaching assistants are used exceptionally well but the support they give pupils with learning difficulties would benefit from clearer steps of learning in individual education plans.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. Well-organised provision for literacy and numeracy with a strong emphasis on information and communication technology helps pupils learn well. These subjects are used exceptionally well in all others. Personal, social, health and citizenship education lies at the heart of the curriculum and successfully develops pupils' self awareness and responsibility towards themselves and others. The school is recognised nationally for its 'Creativity for Learning' project involving drama specialists and other artists over extended periods which successfully develop pupils' imaginations and encourage vivid writing in a wide range of styles. Not surprisingly, a number of pupils aspire to be authors. School life is enriched and pupils' aspirations raised by visitors into school and visits out into the community. Sports coaches, specialist music teachers and foreign language teaching give a wealth of experiences to pupils. An exciting outdoor provision for Foundation stage children is extended successfully to Year 1 to promote independent learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

There are enormous strengths in the pastoral care and support given to all pupils and highly effective systems ensure child protection and health and safety, including healthy eating. A 'wrap around blanket' of care places each pupil at the heart of everything the school does. Trusting relationships between staff and pupils create a warm, friendly and stimulating learning environment in which pupils feel safe and can flourish. The school works well with parents and outside agencies to ensure that pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who are vulnerable, make good progress. Pupils feel extremely comfortable talking to staff, especially the learning mentors, about problems and parents agree saying 'staff are friendly and approachable.' Academic guidance has had a lower profile until this year and individual education plans lack precision. The improved assessment procedures have sharpened pupils' progress but the school has rightly identified that the next stage is to involve pupils in assessing their own learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's leadership is inspirational and the school is at the forefront of national initiatives such as the 'Creativity for Learning' project and plays a key role in helping other local schools. Much of the

school's energies have been concentrated on personal, social and emotional development which has enabled pupils to perform reasonably well in national tests despite outside pressures and considerable barriers to learning. Driven by concerns that standards kept pace with the national trend, but at a lower level and rarely rose above it, the school radically changed its management structure in September 2005. The appointment of an assistant headteacher to oversee assessment, together with a deputy headteacher responsible for putting ideas into practice, has made an appreciable impact. Reorganisation of staff into management teams for specific year groups and subjects is also proving successful. Achievement has risen as a result. The next stage, to involve pupils in assessing whether they have met small, achievable targets, is designed to give all pupils the very practical academic guidance they need. The school improvement plan is clearly focused on promoting high standards and monitoring of lessons gives good guidance to improve practice. Performance management and training links in well with these targets. The governing body forms a strong part of this learning establishment and asks the right questions to ensure it is fully informed. The school seeks the opinions of parents and pupils and they feel quite sure that their views matter. Financial management is good and the school is well placed to improve further.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for being so friendly and helpful. We really enjoyed our visit and want to share with you what we thought about your school.

What we liked most about your school

- The nursery and reception classes get young children off to a flying start.
- We think that you are taught well, your teachers try to make lessons interesting for you and your school is well run.
- We are delighted that you all get on so well together and that you care for each other well.
- We were impressed at how much the school council does.
- We think you have a much better curriculum than in most other schools and that working with drama specialists and artists really boosts your writing and your confidence.
- Your school provides a stimulating learning environment and displays on the walls give you a lot of information to help you to learn.

What we have asked your school to do now

- We think your teachers spend a lot of time marking your work and that you could do more to help them by checking your mistakes and seeing if you have met small, achievable targets like checking whether you have used paragraphs or different sorts of punctuation, for example.
- Children who find learning more difficult also need to be given very clear small steps for learning and precise targets to help them improve their work.

We liked talking to you and watching you learn and wish you well for the future.