



Methley Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 134319
LEA Leeds
Inspection number 282549
Inspection dates 3 May 2006 to 4 May 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	Savile Road
School category	Community		Methley
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Leeds LS26 9HT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0113 386 2540
Number on roll	361	Fax number	01977 516304
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Jane Broadhead
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Ms Tracy Wallis

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3 to 11	3 May 2006 - 4 May 2006	282549

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger than average primary school was formed in September 2004 from an amalgamation of two schools which initially operated jointly on separate sites until September 2005, when the whole school moved to purpose-built accommodation on the edge of the village. Although the take-up of free school meals is below average, socio-economically the school is average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average and four pupils currently have a statement of special need, an above average proportion. The majority of pupils are of white British heritage and none are at an early stage of acquiring English as an additional language. A small proportion of pupils are looked after or particularly vulnerable. There have been significant staffing changes since September 2005.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with some good features and outstanding potential to improve, a judgement that matches the school's view of itself. It gives satisfactory value for money. The main success has been to amalgamate two very different schools in a short time into one forward-looking, dynamic, purposeful school. A real buzz of excitement about learning is reversing effectively some of the inherited underachievement. Achievement is satisfactory, a better picture than the school perceives, largely because of the unrelenting drive from the top to push up standards. Improvement since September 2005 has been both marked and rapid. Leadership, management and governance therefore are good, not satisfactory as the school indicated. Stringent assessment procedures have been used to highlight areas of weakness and to ensure that pupils are now taught what they need to learn. As a result, standards are beginning to rise, although those in English are still below average at the end of Year 6 and more able pupils do not read as well as they should by the end of Year 2. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Although much of the teaching and learning is very good, there are pockets of weakness, which are being challenged. The curriculum is satisfactory with some good, innovative features but these have yet to have a full impact on pupils' achievement. Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory but there are weaknesses in the assessment, planning and teaching of early literacy skills. There are good systems to ensure that pupils are well cared for. Pupils' personal development, behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. Attendance is above average. As Year 6 say, 'We're learning more and it's fun.'

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the Foundation Stage provision, particularly the assessment, planning and teaching of early literacy skills, and develop fully the potential of more able pupils.
- Raise standards in English by the end of Year 6 by providing more challenge for more able pupils.
- Ensure that more able pupils are taught to read with greater understanding by the end of Year 2.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The achievement of all pupils is satisfactory. The school met its modest targets in 2005 and is on track to meet more challenging ones in 2006. Underachievement, identified as an issue by the school, has been successfully reversed in Years 3 to 6 and standards are rising rapidly as a result of good teaching in these year groups. In the 2005 national tests, standards were below average in English but close to average in mathematics and science where twice the number of pupils reached the higher level than in English. The school's extensive tracking systems show a huge upsurge in pupils' achievement, most notably in Years 3 and 6, which is being sustained by the school's effective focus

on learning, enabling boys to do as well as girls. Achievement and standards are average by the end of Year 2 but more able pupils do not read as well as they should, as confirmed by the 2005 teacher assessments. Children make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage but there is underachievement amongst more able children. This is because assessment information is not used to ensure that all children are challenged. Although the majority of pupils are at the level expected of their age by the start of Year 1, their language and literacy skills are less secure than they should be.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils say that they feel valued, safe and secure and are confident that if they had problems there would be an adult they could turn to for support. At the start of morning and afternoon school, pupils give a number from 1 to 5 to indicate how they are feeling and their teachers do so too. This two-way process enables teachers to pick up on concerns and pupils learn to empathise with others.

Attendance is above average and most pupils clearly enjoy their lessons. Behaviour is good and pupils are independent and responsible. They show a mature understanding and tolerance of those who have behavioural difficulties. In the Foundation Stage and in Year 2, however, pupils are sometimes inattentive. The school council is well established and its members are proud of their fundraising production of a school talent show. There are good opportunities for pupils to be involved in their local and wider community. Pupils are well prepared for their future economic well-being through role play, often incorporating mathematics, and have strong views on why it is important to live healthily. They have a good understanding of right and wrong. Pupils have no hesitation in saying this school is 'much, much better than our old school!'

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory, as is pupils' learning. The picture is more complex, however, because teaching quality is consistently good or better in Years 1, 4 and 6 with outstanding practice in Year 3. In other year groups it is satisfactory. In the Foundation Stage, the wide range of resources helps children to learn independently but weaknesses in planning mean that outdoor and indoor areas are not always used as complementary learning spaces and staff divide their time unequally between children. There is a wealth of assessment but is not used as effectively as it could be to shape what children are ready to learn.

The intense focus on pupils' learning is a good feature in all lessons, as is the use of information and communication technology (ICT), and is clearly improving pupils' achievement. Teachers carefully structure their lessons to take account of different

learning styles and activities are skilfully timed so as to make best use of pupils' concentration levels. Weaknesses in learning occur when teachers talk for too long, set unchallenging tasks and give imprecise explanations. Assessments at the end of Year 2 have been inaccurate until recently. Where teaching quality is good, pupils are fully involved in demonstrations and explanations so they apply what they learn. Year 6 pupils commented, 'Teachers make lessons into games that help you to learn' and this, combined with opportunities for pupils to think and question, is what characterises the outstanding practice. All pupils are aware of their targets for improvement and how to meet them.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum meets statutory requirements and the needs of the pupils. It has good features which are beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' learning. The Foundation Stage curriculum is satisfactory. The outdoor curriculum for Nursery children is better planned than that for Reception. The curriculum generally makes good provision for literacy, numeracy and ICT and in Years 1-6 takes account of different learning styles. A role play area in every class is a successful innovative feature. Year 6 pupils explained, for example, that the puppet theatre they set up helped them to write dialogue. The curriculum is varied by 'Fun-time Fridays' when pupils of different ages work together on diverse activities for an hour in the afternoon and also by modern foreign languages at other times of the week. A thriving Latin club further supports language development. Provision for vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, support and guidance to pupils at the school is good and pupils feel secure because of very good relationships with staff. There are effective and relevant levels of support and welfare provided for the small number of vulnerable pupils in addition to those identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school's daily use of an 'emotional register' is an outstanding feature and ensures that the emotional needs of pupils are identified. Child protection procedures are in place and appropriate safety checks are made on staff new to the school. The tracking of pupils' progress is relatively recent but its outstanding thoroughness and accuracy show very clearly how well individuals and groups of pupils in Years 1 to 6 have progressed and whether they are meeting their potential. This enables the school to target individuals and to pinpoint weaknesses in provision, for instance, in Year 2.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The inspiring leadership of the headteacher is evident in the school's scrupulously honest and accurate self-evaluation. Decisive and creative actions have been taken,

with the full support of the assistant headteachers, to address underachievement, beginning with Years 3 to 6. The sense of fun permeating most lessons and the terrific energy and drive to improve comes from the top. The school's mission, 'Education and beyond. No fear!', is strikingly evident because everyone has embraced learning as the successful route to improved academic achievement through more effective teaching. Pupils fully appreciate that they come first, saying, 'This is a fair school, we vote for everything.' Rigorous assessment procedures monitor the work of the school and have made teachers accountable for their pupils' progress. Weaknesses in provision have been highlighted and effective measures are in place to ensure improvement in teaching quality. The decision to manage the school through three curriculum teams works well strategically in bringing together the staff of two schools, and practically as a means of raising achievement across all subjects and year groups. The school improvement plan reflects management's innovative thinking. Questions such as, 'What must we do to make it happen?' ensure that the identification of weaknesses, as in English, is balanced by detailed actions. The governing body asks searching questions and vigorously helps plan the school's educational direction. Financial management is good. Much of what has been put in place has not had time to have full impact hence the judgement of satisfactory value for money at the present time. However, the school is already demonstrating its great potential through measurable progress and a united staff team. It is led with vision and passion.

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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?	3	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	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA	NA

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	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	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	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 tell you what we thought about your school.

What we liked most about your school:

- we think that your teachers go out of their way to make lessons interesting and fun and that all the games help you to concentrate really well
- we like the fact that you know your learning style and we think you talk very well about what you have learnt and what you find difficult
- we are impressed with your behaviour and enthusiasm for school
- we are pleased that you take a full part in your education both through the school council and in designing your role play areas in the classroom, for example
- your parents and carers are very pleased that you are learning so well at this new school.

What we have asked your school to do now:

- we want the teachers in the Foundation Stage to make sure that children get a really good start to learning to read and write and to use assessments of what children know to help them plan what to teach next
- we want standards in English to be higher at the end of Year 6
- we think that some pupils do not read with enough understanding by the end of Year 2 and so there is a lot of catching up for them to do later on.

We liked meeting you and watching you learn and wish you all the best for the future.