



# Ballifield Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 107047  
**Local Authority** Sheffield  
**Inspection number** 287691  
**Inspection dates** 1–2 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Joyce Taylor

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Handsworth Grange Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Sheffield
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		South Yorkshire S13 9HH
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0114 2697557
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	460	<b>Fax number</b>	0114 2697557
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr R Strafford
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr G Gillard
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 March 2002		

<b>Age group</b> 3–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 1–2 November 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 287691
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

The pupils from this large school come from the local area, which has a higher level of social and economic disadvantage than appears at first sight. Fewer pupils than average have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the proportion having statements of special educational need is lower than in most schools. There are fewer than average pupils who speak English as an additional language and at home these pupils speak Arabic or Urdu.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Ballifield Primary School provides a good education for its pupils and some aspects of its work are outstanding. Parents are understandably pleased with the education their children receive and the pupils say they are very happy in school. The school atmosphere is calm and pupils receive outstanding care. This means they feel safe and secure and settle confidently to their work. During their time in school pupils achieve well. They get a good start in the Foundation Stage because of the good provision. Most start in Reception with lower levels of attainment than are typical for their age and standards in early reading and writing in particular are much lower than expected. By the end of Year 2 standards are broadly average although standards in reading are lower than in writing and mathematics. By the time they leave Year 6, pupils reach standards that are slightly above average, overall.

The teaching is good and contributes well to the pupils' good achievement. Very thorough assessment procedures identify how fast pupils make progress but strategies used to address issues identified and to sharpen progress are not always as effective as they could be. As a result, low standards in reading in Key Stage 1 have not been remedied fast enough.

The curriculum is good. The focus on improving aspects of writing and numeracy has broadened pupils' learning opportunities. The pupils say they enjoy their lessons but would like more practical work and the school has already identified ways of enlivening learning activities. Opportunities for learning outdoors, while good in Nursery are more limited in Reception where there are too few outdoor resources and children have too few structured learning activities outside. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are met well. Detailed assessments show what these pupils need to learn next and an effective combination of class-based and small-group work ensures that progress is good.

Personal development is outstanding rather than the school's modest evaluation of 'good'. Older pupils take on considerable responsibilities to support and befriend others; they show exceptional maturity and good manners around school. The pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles is extremely good and has clearly been taken to heart. They talk confidently about sensible eating and the need for regular exercise. Representatives from Year 2 to Year 6 form the school council. These pupils take their role very seriously and have already been involved in changing several aspects of school provision.

The headteacher and senior staff provide good leadership and management. Their knowledge of the school is accurate. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Monitoring systems provide a clear picture of the work of the school and have led to improvements in assessment of learning, in the provision for writing and in identifying weaknesses in numeracy. Strong teamwork is a significant factor in the school's good capacity for further improvement. The school provides good value for money.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Improve provision for outdoor learning for Reception children.
- Ensure that the steps taken to remedy identified weaknesses in pupils' learning enable them to make more rapid progress.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well. At the end of Year 2, pupils' standards in 2006 were below average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. This shows a drop in reading standards in Key Stage 1. Overall, achievement is good in Key Stage 1, when compared with the pupils' below average standards on arrival. Good progress continues through Key Stage 2 and by the end of Year 6 standards in English and mathematics were slightly above average overall in 2006, although standards could be higher in numeracy. The school has identified this and is working on improvements. In science standards were above average. The Key Stage 2 trend is steadily improving and achievement is good. Effective strategies for supporting the progress of pupils from minority heritage groups and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities ensure that they learn as well as their peers.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

All pupils benefit from numerous opportunities to extend their social and decision-making skills, as well as their self-esteem and confidence. As a result, Year 6 pupils take on responsibilities enthusiastically and successfully, showing how much they have matured during their time in school. Outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development means pupils play an active part in their school and local communities in a variety of ways. The school council, playground friends and peer mediators are some of the roles they volunteer for. Being interviewed and trained for these specific roles gives them a sense of achievement. One pupil remarked, 'I like being a playground friend because it makes me feel grown up.' Pupils have an exceptionally good understanding of how to stay safe and keep healthy. They are prepared well for later life by developing basic skills, and by the cooperation and teamwork they show in lessons. Behaviour is excellent and attendance is satisfactory.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teachers' high expectations are shared with pupils, who are also given regular opportunities to discuss their work with class partners. These lively discussions, particularly among older pupils, on what constitutes high standards enable them to

reflect on their own work and encourage them to seek improvements. Across the school skilful questioning by staff effectively probes pupils' knowledge, and tracking procedures of individual pupils are beginning to ensure that staff have an extremely accurate view of each pupil's progress. The more able pupils are challenged well and most of them work consistently at above average levels. Support staff are employed effectively to enable pupils to access learning opportunities successfully. However, the strategies employed to address weaknesses in reading for some younger pupils are not wholly successful. Consequently, their progress is not as rapid as it could be. Information and Communication Technology facilities, in particular interactive whiteboards, are used effectively to support learning throughout the school.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school holds a variety of themed weeks including Arts Week, Health Week and Science Week as a means of broadening the curriculum and introducing fun aspects. Pupils report how much they enjoy these occasions and recall with pleasure the learning activities they experienced. From Year 4, pupils have residential visits, which support their learning in aspects of history, geography, physical education and science and show them how these subjects relate to each other. Other year groups benefit similarly from regular visits to local places of interest. However, while provision is good in the Foundation Stage, the outdoor curriculum for Reception children is limited by a lack of resources. Additional activities extend the curriculum effectively; for example French is taught to Years 5 and 6, and all Year 4 pupils are invited to play a brass instrument. Good sporting links with the local secondary school, which holds Sports College status, has provided additional sporting opportunities, which many pupils enjoy.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The high quality care, support and guidance pupils receive significantly promotes their personal development and achievement. Staff know pupils very well indeed. Pupils know that staff listen to them and this helps develop their confidence and makes them feel valued. Staff are good role models and the very positive relationships across the school help to make it the happy place it is. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils' health and safety are secure. Academic and personal guidance for pupils are effective. Some of the procedures for assessing pupils' progress are in the early stages of development and need time to bed down; however, they are very thorough. Pupils benefit from a strong partnership with the local secondary school ensuring that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

There is a strong leadership team, which provides good direction for the school. The headteacher and senior staff have a very clear view of how well the school is doing.

As a result, most problems are identified rapidly and strategies for improvement are put into place. A strong team spirit means the staff readily adopt improvements designed to speed learning, for example the new systems to check whether pupils' progress is fast enough. Subject leaders take high levels of responsibility for improving standards in their subjects. The newly developed assessment systems mean that they monitor pupils' progress in every class and plan interventions where necessary. However, some of this work is in the early stages of development and is not fully embedded, as yet. The school has strong community links. For example, courses for parents are run in the new learning centre. A parent group works well with the school in identifying areas for development. Governance is good. Strengths are in the high level of commitment that governors show and in their thorough knowledge of how well the school is doing. Governors are beginning to seek a firmer monitoring role to see how effectively initiatives are implemented.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

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

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for your warm welcome when we visited your school earlier this month. You helped us find out about your school and we really enjoyed talking with you and seeing the work you do in lessons. Yours is a good school and it helps you learn well. You are expected to work hard and you all seem to try your best. We particularly enjoyed hearing you sing. Your school takes extremely good care of you and shows you how to get on with each other and be helpful and kind. We were very impressed with your extremely good behaviour and by how much you know about keeping healthy and safe. You told us you are happy in school and your parents are glad you come to Ballifield Primary School. Your headteacher and his senior staff have a very clear idea of how to make your school even better.

We have asked your headteacher and staff to keep up their good work and we suggest there are four areas that will improve your school further.

- Give Reception children more learning outdoors and provide them with climbing and scrambling equipment.
- Ensure that any problems children have with their learning are dealt with quickly.

You are proud of your school and we hope you carry on enjoying everything you do and helping your teachers keep Ballifield a happy and successful place for learning.