

Frizinghall Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107204
Local Authority	Bradford
Inspection number	287738
Inspection dates	13–14 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Roger Gill

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 on roll	
School	433
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Paul Sanders
Headteacher	Mrs Pauline Chilvers
Date of previous school inspection	11 November 2002
School address	Salisbury Road Frizinghall Bradford West Yorkshire BD9 4HP
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This large school is situated in an area of economic disadvantage. The vast majority of children are from minority ethnic backgrounds including an increasing number from Eastern Europe. Virtually all children are learning English as an additional language and many are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. The number of children who leave or enter the school during the year is consistently high. The school has experienced much disruption in the last few years. The headteacher was seconded for two years, returning full time in September 2006. Staff turnover and long-term illness was considerable, during that period. The school was closed temporarily and then quarantined during the winter of 2005/06 because of illness. It is recognised as an Investor in People and Pupils, ActiveMark (2006) and possesses the ArtsMark Gold (2003).

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Frizinghall is a satisfactory school that has improved remarkably during this academic year. Progress in Years 3 to 6 plummeted until July 2006 to the point that standards by the end of Year 6 were exceptionally low and children were underachieving. Taking into account the obvious causes, in terms of the difficulties experienced by the school, the returning headteacher put in place a razor-sharp plan of action to remedy the situation. Deeply considered and urgent leadership by the headteacher welded the relatively new team of staff in a way that has boosted learning swiftly.

The school is back on track, but with much more to do. The positive spirit that exists across the school and the precise knowledge of how standards can be improved are the main spurs for recovery. The school knows itself well and has created helpful partnerships within the community that have a beneficial effect on children's personal development. Strong relationships have also played their part well. What was said about the school by the assessors for Investor in People in 2004 still rings true today: 'People readily offer support and genuinely care for one another. There is a lot of laughter and enjoyment about the building.'

Standards in Year 6 are still below average, but nowhere near as low as they were last year. Achievement is satisfactory largely due to the sharp upswing in progress this year, but there is still room for improvement in standards and achievement. The changes in children's learning thus far denote a good capacity to implement the other necessary advances in order to raise standards. Learning in mathematics and science, which were distinct weaknesses, have been strengthened well. Skills in writing for older children have also improved. The 'catch up' in learning is dramatic in some classes; it is advancing at least twice the nationally expected rate. In others it is not quick enough to have fully eliminated the deficit that exists.

Children progress well in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. They are not far below the national average at the end of Year 2. It is later in the school that the inconsistencies existed. Parents, as well as children, recognise the signs of improvement. Their concerns about weak behaviour, for example, have been largely dissipated. Children are much kinder to each other at lunchtime and have to think carefully to remember when bullying was last a problem.

The interesting curriculum is packed with additional opportunities for children to excel in subjects beyond English, mathematics and science, such as art or to absorb themselves in excellent local community projects. This well developed programme to stimulate children's personal development has a good effect. Children enjoy school immensely. Moreover, in Year 6 they are keen to relate how much teaching has changed since September. A typical comment is, 'I think my school is an absolutely brilliant place to study.'

The general effect of the satisfactory teaching is to make achievement adequate, but there is too much variation from class to class even in areas where progress is good. There has not been time to induct new staff fully and so stringent methods of assessment have not bedded in entirely. Some good and occasionally outstanding teaching exists alongside the satisfactory, which creates an uneven profile overall. In the least successful lessons, children are not motivated enough by demanding practical activities or encouraged to talk critically about their learning.

The team of senior managers give good support to the headteacher, but it has only become a permanent unit and force for change this year. Nevertheless, a detailed knowledge about children's attainment has been married quickly with revised methods for teaching reading, writing and mathematics. The headteacher has led the way very well and others are catching

up quickly. Good management has put in place the right methods to improve children's learning. However, there is still more to do in ensuring that all leaders, including governors, play a full part in raising standards.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science, at the end of Year 6 to ensure that achievement, for all children, is at least good.
- Improve teaching so that all children receive challenging activities and can assess their own learning.
- Make sure that all leaders use information from assessments successfully to improve standards.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children start in Nursery at well below the levels expected for their age. They make good progress by the end of the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) despite some slower patches in Reception. There is a rising trend of attainment by the end of Year 2, so now standards are not far below average. Standards in writing are particularly promising because they are very close to the average. Children make rapid progress in constructing good sentences. Irregular progress in all subjects between Year 3 and 6, which caused the very low standards in the past, is being eliminated even for those who are admitted later than most. In 2006, children in Year 6 made better progress in English than in mathematics or science, but now there is parity across the subjects. Children do well in art and physical education owing to the extensive provision in these subjects which includes working with artists, regular gallery visits and opportunities to work with sports coaches.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The atmosphere throughout the school is one of enjoyment and keenness. As older children say, 'learning is now a mixture of fun and boosting our confidence'. Some recognise how much they have all benefited from the changes this year. A greater emphasis on mathematical games, experimentation in science and being able to write a balanced argument heightens their self-esteem. Spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good. Links within the community give children a very wide perspective. For example, they make friends with others from different ethnic backgrounds and a chance to work with organisations like Opera North adds considerably to their cultural and spiritual development. Attendance is satisfactory after the severe illness last year. Children lead an active, healthy life in school and possess confidence when working together. This is because they often learn in practical, 'real life' situations. Learning is not practical enough in some classes and this holds back children's development and thus prevents their personal development from being outstanding.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The rigorous system of assessment has almost eliminated inadequate lessons in which children make too little progress. Teaching is now satisfactory in its effect, but there are still weaknesses that the school is tackling currently. These exist even where progress is generally good such as the Foundation Stage or Years 1 and 2. However, it is most apparent intermittently in Years 3 to 6. New staff are finding their feet and some established teaching sometimes underestimates what children can do. Thus, educational play in Reception and practical learning elsewhere are not used to make learning quick or lively enough. Good teaching is taking time to close the gaps in children's skills and knowledge created by rapid staff turnover and extended absence. First-rate teaching overcomes previous shortcomings because it is so well planned, optimistic in its approach and effective in getting all children to contribute practically and orally. In the best lessons teachers and children share the task of evaluating learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum has a good effect on children's personal development and contributes well to the revival of academic progress. The influence of the curriculum is not stronger because pupils' progress is not yet fast enough. Nevertheless, the balance between acquiring essential knowledge and skills, and practising them in subjects such as science is struck well. For example, the problem solving approaches introduced to accelerate progress in mathematics across the curriculum are paying off well. The additional enrichment available makes all the difference to children's personal development and subject prowess in the widest sense. The teaching of French, communications with children from different cultural backgrounds, and in-depth provision for the arts make children very positive about school. Educational trips are successful in broadening horizons not least the residential expeditions, outward bound type activities and opportunities for horse riding. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit greatly from a tailor-made curriculum that for some is enhanced even further by being able to use the new multi-sensory room for children with complex needs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

These aspects have been strengthened owing to the need to accommodate the children from Eastern Europe, who possess little or no English, and the high numbers of other children who arrive at irregular intervals throughout the school year. There are good systems in place to support these children and they often settle in quickly as a result. Children generally feel safe and well cared for because rules are established skilfully and security is a high priority. Adults give strong advice about keeping fit, healthy and safe. Protection procedures for children, adult vetting and risk assessments are in place and working. Parents are pleased with the help that their children receive. Guidance in the form of academic targets is plentiful and is explained well in lessons. However, younger children in Years 1 and 2 are disadvantaged by the adult wording of targets designed to improve their reading and writing.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The combination of insight and swift action provided from the headteacher, ably supported by the new deputy and assistant headteacher result in better achievement. There has not been time for the strong impetus to be converted into sustained success, but the capacity for this to happen is good. The checking on teaching and learning, for example, is rigorous, but it is too early for this to have raised the quality of teaching to good or to have involved the full range of school leaders. The school knows what to do to enhance academic achievement. For example, the way in which children in Year 5 are currently being prepared for Year 6 is extremely apt. It is being taken seriously by staff and children and has already ensured speedy progress. The governing body understands what needs to be done now that it is beginning to use the information from academic assessment to evaluate children's achievements.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ 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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
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	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for your help when we inspected your school. We thoroughly enjoyed our two days with you all.

You go to a satisfactory school which is getting better rapidly. Many of you think that teaching expects more of you this year and we saw that for ourselves. We found that children in Year 6, for example, are racing ahead compared to their progress last year and those in Year 5 are already very well prepared for next year.

The art work around the school is fabulous. Your trips to Cartwright Hall Art Gallery, for example, have really paid off. Also the way that you are getting ready to help people in the local community to sort their rubbish for recycling purposes is extremely helpful. These things and your frequent visits out of school, including residential trips, tell us that you do far more than the daily reading, writing and mathematics. In this way the school helps you develop well as young people.

We know that you are now learning soundly, but there is still more to do to speed up your progress. That is because your teachers need to improve the standard of your English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Some lessons keep you on your toes and get you joining in at every opportunity. In others learning is not practical or lively enough. This makes many of you too quiet and not able to talk about how well you are doing.

Everyone at your school wants to push ahead with the improvements they have started. To do that they all have to think about how well you are doing and how your learning could improve even faster. Your headteacher is leading the way in this very well. You can play your part in helping the school to become a very good one. Enjoy any extra challenges that come your way in lessons and remember to always try to join in the discussions about your learning.

We think that you will get a lot of fun from helping your school to become a really good one.