



Thornbury Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107222
Local Authority Bradford
Inspection number 287749
Inspection dates 16–17 January 2007
Reporting inspector Ross Parker

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Dick Lane
School category	Community		Bradford
Age range of pupils	3–11		West Yorkshire BD3 7AU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01274 665812
Number on roll (school)	661	Fax number	01274 657918
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr David Ward
		Headteacher	Mr Angus King
Date of previous school inspection	3 December 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Thornbury Primary School is a much bigger than average sized school in a socially disadvantaged area. A high proportion of pupils join and leave the school throughout each year. Most pupils are of Pakistani heritage with a small number from White British, Indian and Bangladeshi heritage. Ninety-three per cent of the pupils are learning English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals and those on the school's register of special education needs is well above the national average. Attainment on entry to the school is very low. The headteacher was appointed in 2003.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education. It has recently emerged from a period of underachievement and some pupils are still catching up after falling behind. They are now making good progress in most lessons although, overall, progress is satisfactory. Poor attendance by some pupils and very restricted understanding of English by many when they start school prevent quicker gains in learning. Standards are too low, particularly in numeracy, but they are improving. Achievement is satisfactory for all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who join the school with little or no English. Standards are still well below average by the end of the Foundation Stage but provision is good and children make good progress. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They feel safe and have a good understanding of what that means. They say that school has become more and more enjoyable in recent years. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They make a satisfactory contribution to the life of the community, and those who attend regularly are well prepared for their future. Attendance is inadequate. Although many pupils attend well, a significant number who take too much time off school adversely affects the overall attendance levels and this clearly restricts their learning.

The curriculum is good after being redesigned to meet pupils' identified needs. There is a strong emphasis on basic skills, but also clear links between different strands of learning so that pupils can see the relevance of what they are doing. There is a good range of additional activities. A wide variety of visits and visitors is used to broaden pupils' understanding of the world. Intensive help is given to pupils who are identified as slipping behind. Pupils have opportunities to develop healthier and safer lifestyles with trained coaches working in lessons and in many extra clubs run out of lesson hours.

The quality of teaching is good and so is the standard of care. Both are heavily based on tracking pupils' progress and showing them how to improve. The adults know the children very well so are able to provide good support for their personal development. They are also very good at welcoming newcomers, many of whom speak little or no English. Learning mentors provide additional support for pupils, and operate a homework club, which enables pupils to access additional support they may otherwise be unable to receive at home. However, many pupils have too few opportunities for speaking and listening to develop their language skills more effectively.

Leadership and management are good. The management team has a very clear understanding of what the school needs to do to improve. They have moved systematically towards the current satisfactory standard of education. They have dealt with the issues for improvement identified in the previous inspection. They have good capacity for further improvement. Much will depend on improved levels of attendance for some pupils, and the headteacher is working hard to encourage parents and other

members of the local community to become school governors and hence raise the profile of school issues within the community.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards, particularly in numeracy.
- Improve attendance.
- Provide a wider and more varied range of planned opportunities for speaking and listening so that pupils have more chance to think about what they are learning, and to improve the quality of pupils' writing.
- Secure more active involvement of community and parent governors.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

From a very low base line, often having very limited language when they come to the school, children make good progress in all areas of learning in the Foundation Stage. They make particularly good progress in their physical, social and language development. However, standards are still below the expected level by the end of Reception. Standards have been exceptionally low at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. They have improved recently, but are still well below average, though achievement is satisfactory. Several factors limit pupils' performance. Some spend too long out of school. Standards in English are held back by many pupils' low starting point, and progress in mathematics has been restricted by pupils' inability speak English fluently when they start school. The school monitors progress very carefully and current information shows that standards are continuing to improve.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy coming to school, they say they 'learn a lot' and find the lessons exciting. Strengths in their moral and social development are in the way they are able to work collaboratively and independently, and are well behaved and polite. This helps them to learn. A variety of assemblies, which celebrate different cultures, and experience of a range of festivals of different faiths, contribute to their good multicultural understanding and spiritual development. The school council has an effective voice within the school. For example, in bringing about healthier school meals and establishing 'playground angels' to help other pupils. Older pupils take on responsibilities within the school well and are proud of their success. Pupils understand the importance of a healthy diet and exercise. This is reflected in the school's achievement of the Active Mark by Sport England. Many pupils took part in the recent 'walk to school week' and children in the Foundation Stage enjoy the weekly 'Wilderness Walk' where they explore numerous new experiences away from the school environment. A significant number of pupils have poor attendance, for some, due to extended holidays and this adversely affects their attainment and progress.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school's judgement that teaching is good. The inadequate teaching that was holding achievement back has been eradicated. Good planning creates a variety of challenging activities which pupils enjoy. It focuses on priorities for improvement such as problem solving in mathematics, for example. It also caters for all needs, with probing questions to challenge the most able pupils, and good support for those who find the work difficult. Good relationships and consistently well managed behaviour help to maintain a good pace of learning. Stimulating resources, such as varieties of bread to taste and analyse help to maintain the excitement in lessons. So do the high quality classroom displays, laptops and electronic whiteboards. Teachers are enthusiastic and this motivates pupils. They make it very clear to pupils what they need to do, and their marking tells them clearly how well they have done and how to improve. However, across all years, opportunities for planned discussion and activities to develop listening skills do not occur frequently enough.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school describes its curriculum as satisfactory. Inspectors judge it to be good because of its match to pupils' needs, and the range of additional provision. There is a strong emphasis on raising standards in, English and mathematics, though speaking and listening are not given enough emphasis. Methods that have proved highly successful with children in the Foundation Stage have now been extended to benefit pupils in the infant classes. The use of information and communication technology is proving highly effective in forging many curricular links. A wide range of clubs, held out of lesson time, provide added opportunities for pupils to develop new skills and interests, as well as increasing their self-confidence. Good links with other schools are helping to raise standards, particularly by allowing gifted and talented pupils to work together. Raising standards in art has been a target for the school and artists working with the pupils have helped them to create large murals, paintings on silk and hanging mobiles that greatly enrich the learning environment.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Very detailed and regularly reviewed tracking systems ensure that all teachers know how well each individual child is doing. Teachers use this information to give clear guidance on how to improve. Arrangements to secure children's safety are securely in place. Pupils state that bullying is rare, and adults deal with incidents quickly and effectively. Parents recognise the school works hard to ensure that their children are happy and safe. Relationships between home and school have been strengthened through a range of initiatives designed to encourage parents to come into the school.

Parents are supported in developing the skills to help their children at home, through a range of coffee mornings, parent and toddler groups (at which Year 5 pupils assist), workshops, and a series of meetings, which have been well attended.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The qualities of leadership and management are good. Very good leadership from the headteacher has been crucial in improving teaching and learning. Good self-evaluation has enabled the school to overcome identified weaknesses. Subject planning is shared within teams to ensure that all pupils can make good progress throughout the school. Good leadership and management of the Foundation Stage creates a very secure base on which pupils' future learning is built. Some improvements in pupils' punctuality and attendance have been made as a result of concerted efforts of the headteacher and staff and this has helped to raise standards but there is more to be done. Difficulties of recruitment, together with problems with attendance at meetings have limited the impact of governors' support for these efforts.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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	4
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	4
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	3
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?	2
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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you all for the friendly welcome you gave us when we came to visit your school recently. We really enjoyed meeting you, and having the chance to talk to you. We found that the school is providing a satisfactory standard of education for you.

Here are some of the really good things about your school

We were impressed by your behaviour, and by the way you get on with each other. You have good opportunities to do a whole range of interesting things, from 'wilderness walks' and orienteering, to tasting lots of different kinds of bread. The grown ups know you very well, and take good care of you and there is lots of extra help if you find the work hard. The teachers also organise your lessons so that learning is fun. The headteacher and teachers are making sure that the school keeps on getting better.

What I have asked the school to do to make it even better

- Help you all to reach higher standards, especially in your number work.
- Help parents to make sure that you all attend school regularly so that you do as well as you can.
- Plan more times when you can talk to each other about what you are learning, and teach you to listen to each other more carefully. This will help all your learning and help you improve your writing.
- Get more parents and people from the local community to become part of the school family, especially as school governors