



Ashlands Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107277
Local Authority Bradford
Inspection number 287776
Inspection dates 17–18 October 2006
Reporting inspector Jim Griffin

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Leeds Road
School category	Community		Ilkley
Age range of pupils	3–11		West Yorkshire LS29 8JY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01943 609050
Number on roll (school)	278	Fax number	01943 609050
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Matt Bacon
		Headteacher	Mrs Eileen Fitzpatrick
Date of previous school inspection	12 February 2001		

Age group 3–11	Inspection dates 17–18 October 2006	Inspection number 287776
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average size school. It takes in a high proportion of junior pupils at other than the usual time because it is the only primary school in the expanding town of Ilkley with spare places. One sixteenth of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is well below the national average. Most pupils are of White British heritage. A few are of Asian or mixed race backgrounds, all of whom have English as their first language. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. There have been four changes in headteacher since the previous inspection.

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 where pupils achieve well. Leaders are fired by a common belief in providing a well rounded education for all pupils. As a result, pupils make good gains academically and in their wider personal development. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. The school has a good capacity to improve further. It provides good value for money. Most parents are rightly positive about what the school provides and achieves.

Pupils make good progress overall because of good teaching, pupils' good attitudes to learning and effective tracking of their progress. By the end of Year 6, standards are always significantly above the national average. Impressive proportions of pupils gain the higher Level 5 in English, mathematics and science.

The school's care for pupils and their wider personal development are strengths. Parents find staff approachable and helpful when difficulties or concerns arise. The school is good at settling in the significant number of junior pupils who join at other than the usual time. They make progress that is similar to the rest. Pupils' good attitudes to work and good behaviour make a major contribution to the pleasant atmosphere in school. As a parent remarked, 'I feel the school is a happy and vibrant place, where my children enjoy going'. This is reflected in excellent attendance. Pupils have a growing voice in the school. They know about the importance of healthy eating and exercise in making them feel fit and happy. Older pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities such as helping younger children in the dining hall and with reading.

Whilst the curriculum is satisfactory, it has not been reviewed with a view to increasing the learning of pupils by making more links between different areas of learning. Pupils' understanding of their own and others' cultures are satisfactory. The range of extra-curricular opportunities in sport and music is also satisfactory. Whilst the quality of the provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall, outdoor provision is too limited to support the expected range of creative and imaginative activities.

Leadership and management are good. The tracking of pupils' progress is particularly effective. There is a good level of teamwork and common purpose among the staff. Subject leaders have become more influential and effective since the previous inspection. Governance is good. Governors know the school well and provide a good level of support and challenge for staff. The school has accurately judged its key areas for improvement in the short term but there is no longer-term strategic plan.

What the school should do to improve further

- Create effective links between different subjects so as to improve the quality of pupils' learning.
- Create a longer-term plan to meet the needs of all stakeholders and ensure the direction of school development.
- Improve the outdoor play facilities in the Foundation Unit in order to improve children's progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, achieve well. Pupils make good progress because of good teaching and good attitudes to learning. Most children enter the Nursery or Reception class with knowledge and skills that are above those expected for their age. They settle quickly but progress in creative and imaginative learning is limited by restricted outdoor provision. Pupils make good progress in the infant classes to reach above average standards by the end of Year 2. Pupils' standards and progress are on a rising trend by the end of Year 2 because growing proportions of pupils are reaching the higher Level 3. Progress is good in English, mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6. Standards are always significantly above average by the end of Year 6. This is largely due to the impressively high proportion of pupils that gain the higher Level 5 in English, mathematics and science. The school has clear plans to raise pupils' progress in writing closer to the very good progress made in reading. The school exceeded its targets in 2006.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils enjoy their time at school and this contributes to the excellent attendance levels. Pupils are friendly, polite and most are sensible and mature for their age. Nearly all pupils cooperate and help each other. Behaviour is good overall in lessons and outside, although a few pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties occasionally find it difficult to adjust their behaviour appropriately. A strikingly calm and sociable atmosphere prevails in the dining hall. Pupils are well aware of how to work actively to address any issues of bullying or unfairness, should they occur. They know that this behaviour is unacceptable and decisively addressed by adults.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall with social and moral aspects being good. Pupils have a growing awareness of other cultures. Older pupils spoke positively about a recent visit to the local mosque. Spiritual awareness is satisfactory. Pupils understand that eating healthy food such as fruit, and taking regular exercise and regular drinks of water, keep them fit and healthy. Older pupils have opportunities to help younger pupils in the dining hall and with reading. The work of the school council is well regarded by pupils. Good personal qualities combined with good standards in literacy, numeracy and computer skills, prepare pupils well for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. This is reflected in pupils' good progress and in the high proportion of good lessons seen during the inspection. Positive, purposeful relationships between adults and pupils and among most pupils create a good atmosphere for learning. Learning objectives and expectations are consistently shared with pupils. Good pace and good involvement of pupils are other strengths. Teachers know where pupils are in their learning and set them work that is well matched to their needs. Good use is made of the interactive whiteboards to enliven pupils' learning in most classes. Teaching assistants are appropriately deployed. The management of behaviour is generally good. However, measures to handle the few pupils with significant emotional and behavioural difficulties are not as well developed as they could be to ensure that the learning of others is not affected and that these individuals get the most effective support. Assessment information is well used to track pupils' progress on a termly basis. There is much good marking that helps pupils to improve their work, but this is not yet the case in all classes or subjects.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. Provision for literacy, numeracy and science is good. Subject leaders, in these subjects, have accurately identified and implemented improvements, as needed. The quality of the provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall; as the school recognises, the current outdoor provision does not support enough creative and imaginative activities. The range of visits, visitors and clubs, mostly in sport and music for junior pupils, is satisfactory.

No significant attention has been given to increasing pupils' enjoyment of the curriculum by strengthening the links between different areas of learning. For example, the provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education does not permeate through a range of subjects. As a result, opportunities are missed to make learning as rounded and interesting as it could be.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The caring ethos, safe environment and good relationships reflect the good pastoral care and support given to pupils. The school works well with outside agencies and health professionals to meet pupils' needs. Parents are rightly pleased with the level of care their children receive. Pupils' views are regularly sought in circle times and through the school council and questionnaires.

Child protection procedures are well known to staff, and risk assessments are securely in place. There are good induction arrangements into Nursery and Reception classes.

The large number of pupils that join junior classes later than the usual time make good progress like the rest of the cohort because they settle rapidly, are quickly assessed and effectively tracked. Parents comment positively about how rapidly pupils settle in.

Arrangements to support pupils' academic progress are good, but the direct involvement of pupils in setting and reviewing their targets is limited. Identification of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities has improved, since the previous inspection; however, some parents do not yet feel as involved or regularly informed as they should about how to best support these pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall. Despite the lack of continuity in leadership since the previous inspection, pupils' academic progress and personal development are good. The most recent headteachers have restored morale and provided a clear sense of direction for staff. The new and highly experienced headteacher has got off to an excellent start. Parents and staff are rightly impressed with the authority and clarity that now prevail. Nevertheless, past instability in leadership has delayed changes aimed at sharpening the systems for leadership and management. For example, the management structure has yet to be updated to reflect responsibilities for teaching and learning and some of the developments associated with workload reduction for staff are not embedded. The new headteacher is already addressing these matters. Substantial work to enliven the curriculum has yet to start and the use of computers by staff, to help with their planning, is underdeveloped. The new headteacher has created an annual school improvement plan that identifies most of the immediate priorities. However, there is no longer-term plan.

The good arrangements to track pupils' progress are pivotal in pupils' good progress. Senior staff have a clear and accurate view of the quality of teaching, across the school. The contribution of subject leaders is good.

The contribution of the governing body is good. Governors provide a good level of support and challenge for school based on a clear and accurate grasp of its performance. They take difficult decisions, now make successful appointments and have good capacity to contribute to the school's longer-term development.

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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?	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	3
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?	2
The standards ¹ 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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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

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?	3
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	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	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 welcoming us to your school and for being so friendly and helpful. It was very useful to hear how much you like your school. We really enjoyed our visit and want to share with you what we discovered. We think you go to a good school.

What we liked most about your school.

- Your attendance levels are excellent.
- Your teachers teach and look after you well and give you extra help if you need it.
- You are happy and feel safe in school.
- You are keen to learn, behave well and get on well with each other.
- The people in charge of the school are good at their jobs and know what they need to do to make the school even better for you.
- Your parents and carers are pleased you come to this school.

What we have asked your school to do now.

- Work out what kind of school best serves the local community, in the longer-term.
- Improve the outdoor play arrangements for Nursery and Reception children.
- Examine how more useful links can be made between what you learn in different subjects.

You are a credit to your school. Keep working hard and making the most of your time in school. We wish you every success in the future.