

Hothfield Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107284
Local Authority	Bradford
Inspection number	287779
Inspection dates	14–15 June 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 category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	278
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs D McCartney
Headteacher	Mrs Ruth Leech
Date of previous school inspection	3 March 2003
School address	Hothfield Street Silsden Keighley West Yorkshire BD20 0BB
Telephone number	01535 210666
Fax number	01535 210660

Age group	7–11
Inspection dates	14–15 June 2007
Inspection number	287779

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This above average sized school is the only junior school in the Bradford district. It is situated in a village to the north-west of the city in an area that serves mixed housing types and an outlying farming community. It includes a broadly average proportion of families with higher education qualifications as well as an increasing proportion with social and economic need. The proportion entitled to free school meals is below average. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic groups or who use English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) is below the average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The outstanding level of enjoyment which pupils get from their day-to-day experience is a striking feature of this good school which provides good value for money. The headteacher has an outstanding vision of how the school needs to develop. This has enabled the school to sustain a secure and welcoming environment whilst it has undergone significant changes in pupil numbers, staffing and the curriculum.

The quality of care, support and guidance is good and pupils feel very safe. The dedication and commitment of all staff have a major impact on pupils' good personal development and well-being. The good manners and politeness of pupils are a pleasure to experience. Behaviour is very impressive. Very effective relationships between teachers and pupils, together with pupils' positive attitude towards their learning ensure that all make good progress. The school promotes pupils' knowledge and understanding of different cultures and world religions well. As a result, all are very tolerant and respectful of others. Links with the community, especially with the local churches and other schools, are strong. These help to broaden pupils' understanding of their responsibilities within communities. Attendance is above average and pupils are punctual.

Pupils' achievement is good. They begin working in Year 3 with average standards. They progress well so that, by Year 6, standards are typically above those expected. Parents are pleased because pupils who are new to learning English and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. Pupils develop both good basic and teamwork skills which prepare them well for success in later life.

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good, and teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils' learning. However, there are still some satisfactory lessons where the pace of learning is not as sharp. Because pupils are so cooperative, teachers sometimes direct the work too much. This provides too few opportunities for pupils to take responsibility or use their initiative. The curriculum is well designed to provide a rich, creative and healthy experience. It is enhanced by a wide range of activities for pupils to enjoy outside normal school hours. As a result, pupils of all ages and abilities are successfully motivated and challenged by the interesting tasks that they are given to do. Arrangements for assessment provide a wealth of information on the standards being achieved. This enables pupils' progress to be effectively tracked term by term.

Leadership and management are good. Parents appreciate the school's mission to enable pupils to develop into happy, well-rounded young people. Staff work effectively in teams to bring about improvement. All regularly monitor the quality of teaching and learning and other aspects of school life. The governors are effective in supporting and developing the work of the school. They work unstintingly to promote the school in the community. The school has been too modest in its evaluation, judging itself to be satisfactory in some areas rather than good. This is because it sets itself high standards. Overall, the school has a good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the consistency of teaching so that all pupils are continuously challenged as they are in the best lessons.
- Extend opportunities for pupils to be independent and to show initiative in lessons.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils show average skills when they start working in Year 3. Standards are above average in the tests pupils take at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. Science has been the strongest subject over the last five years with more than half of pupils getting higher than expected results in 2006. The school's detailed data show that pupils in all years make more than the expected rate of progress, and achievement is good. This is because of the good quality of teaching, and the extent to which pupils are motivated by enjoyable lessons. Pupils who face barriers to learning also achieve well because they receive good support in class by teaching assistants. Well-planned additional support for small groups and individuals, assisted by the learning mentors, also boosts progress. For example, pupils in the current Year 5 who were identified as falling behind in mathematics or English have made good progress over the last five months.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They are confident, enthusiastic, and gain huge enjoyment from the rich and creative curriculum that the school offers. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. Assemblies provide many opportunities for reflection. Links with another local primary school have been particularly well used to develop a deeper awareness of other cultures. Weekly events such as SPOTS (special people of this school) celebrate pupils' social as well as their academic achievement. Pupils develop an outstanding understanding of how to develop a healthy lifestyle, and parents are encouraged to support this emphasis. Pupils say they feel safe in school, and know who to turn to if they have a worry. Pupils are given roles of responsibility within the school community as junior mentors and in helping with administrative jobs around school. They are beginning to take greater initiative for their personal development, for example, with starting their own clubs.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school has an accurate picture of teaching and learning, where the overall quality is good with a significant proportion of outstanding lessons. In the majority of lessons, pupils are enthusiastic because of the interesting and varied range of activities. In one lesson, pupils greeted the task with a sharp intake of breath because it was so challenging. The teacher's response was to raise the bar even higher to see just how far they could go. Teachers give the highest attainers opportunities to use higher level thinking. Discussion activities free pupils to take an individual approach to problem solving. Pupils' exercise books illustrate their good work rate. Marking shows teachers' crucial role in identifying misconceptions, and guiding pupils to more secure understanding. Teachers are clear about what they expect pupils to have learned in the lesson. As a result, they find it easy to spot which pupils are coping well, and adapt their approach for anyone who might be struggling with a new skill or concept. The quality of learning in around a third of lessons is more ordinary. Teachers plan the work carefully, but often take too much control of the learning. In these lessons, pupils behave and cooperate well but the level of challenge is not high enough.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The broad and balanced basic curriculum is enriched by several strands of creative activity which are particularly effective in supporting pupils' very good personal development. The extensive range of extra-curricular and sporting activities, including Tae Kwando and cross-country running, for example, makes a good contribution to pupils' outstanding awareness of healthy lifestyles. Daily, guided group activity allows pupils to work independently and provides intensive support for reading or writing. It also gives teachers the flexibility to link core learning to contemporary issues at national or international level. This brings additional relevance to topics studied in literacy, for example. Enrichment afternoons allow pupils to explore ideas from the core curriculum through art or information and communication technology (ICT), and reinforce the enjoyment that pupils can get from all of their lessons. The link with Creative Partnerships provides good opportunities to explore mathematical ideas through dance and music.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's pastoral care, guidance and support are superb, and enable pupils to feel really secure and to get on very well together. All staff show a very strong commitment to ensuring the happiness and well-being of each individual pupil. This is underpinned by a thorough knowledge of the needs of all pupils and very good relationships which show mutual trust and respect. There are comprehensive procedures to ensure pupils' safety. A good range of agencies work with the school to provide care and guidance. Year 6 pupils, for example, are working with Barnardo's to build confidence around sensitive issues of personal safety. The older pupils feel well prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils' progress is thoroughly monitored, and the reasons for any concerns are explored in detail by the whole staff team. Pupils are clear about their targets and know what they have to do to improve in English lessons but this is less so in their work in mathematics. Some of the higher-attaining pupils would welcome even more challenging targets in subjects other than English and mathematics.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management play a very influential role in securing pupils' good progress and well-being. The school's monitoring and evaluation are thorough though cautious. It identifies areas for improvement clearly, sets a realistic timescale for achieving the changes that are needed, and then ensures that effective action is taken. One example of this is the development of the curriculum to increase pupils' enjoyment and appreciation of the real-world relevance of what they are learning. Another is the support to improve teaching and learning. Subject leaders are fully aware of whole-school issues and priorities. Weaknesses identified in the previous inspection have been dealt with effectively. Actions to ensure that all pupils can develop, mature and enjoy their learning promote equality of opportunity. For example, any discrimination in relation to race is tackled rigorously so that pupils understand why this is not acceptable. Good links exist with parents, who are strongly supportive of the school. Governors are effective in supporting and developing the work of the school. Through regular visits, reports from staff and involvement with parents, governors have a clear understanding of what the school does well and how it can improve further.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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
--	-----------------------

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 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	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
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

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.

Annex A

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	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

Inspection of Hothfield Junior School, Silsden, BD20 0BB

Thank you all for the very 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.

The school gives you a good education.

Here are some of the really good things about your school.

You make good progress and by the time you are in Year 6 you are well prepared for secondary school. It is obvious that you enjoy your time at school enormously. We were impressed by your politeness and by the friendly atmosphere in the school. Your behaviour is superb. You have some good opportunities to help each other and you use these well. You make your views clear about how the school can be improved. You understand well how the right food and the right amount of exercise will keep you healthy, and you throw yourselves into work and play with great enthusiasm. You also really appreciate the efforts that the teachers and other adults make to ensure that you are safe and enjoying yourselves. The school makes a good job of giving everybody an equal opportunity to develop as well-rounded individuals.

I have asked the school to do something which will make it even better.

The next step is to make all the teaching as good as it is in the very best lessons. Teachers need to make sure that each one of you has really challenging work to do all of the time. This is so that you can make even faster progress and reach standards that are better than anyone expected when you first came to the school. You can help by taking advantage of every chance you get to work without being supervised and by using your initiative to take on new projects and responsibilities around the school.