



# Parkinson Lane Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Better  
education  
and care

**Unique Reference Number** 107487  
**Local Authority** Calderdale  
**Inspection number** 287826  
**Inspection date** 18 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Arthur Markham

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

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|---|--------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                     | Primary            | <b>School address</b>   | Parkinson Lane         |
| <b>School category</b>                    | Community          |                         | Halifax                |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                | 3–11               |                         | West Yorkshire HX1 3XL |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed              | <b>Telephone number</b> | 01422 362227           |
| <b>Number on roll (school)</b>            | 490                | <b>Fax number</b>       | 01422 250104           |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body | <b>Chair</b>            | Mr P Smith             |
|   |                    | <b>Headteacher</b>      | Mr G Ahmed             |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 21 May 2001        |                         |                        |

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|--------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This large primary school serves a disadvantaged area in the centre of Halifax. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is very high and most are in the early stages of learning English. The number of pupils claiming free school meals is well above that in most schools, as is the number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Many pupils join and leave the school throughout the year including a small number of pupils from refugee/asylum seeker families. The school has been awarded the Artsmark Gold and the Basic Skills Quality Mark. It received the Kelloggs Best Breakfast Club in the United Kingdom award in 2006 and also has Healthy School and Investor in People and Pupils status.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school that works extremely well with the community and other partners to promote high quality learning. Parents rate the school highly. Comments such as, 'My children just love coming to school each day because of the headteacher and teachers', and, 'We are all like a family here at Parkinson Lane', mirror the views of many parents. Pupils' enjoyment in learning is reflected by the excellent progress they make and the way that standards have risen in recent years. Achievement is outstanding and standards are above average. Children get off to a very good start in the Foundation Stage because staff pay very close attention to providing activities that help children learn and encourage them to be independent. Most children do not reach the standards expected nationally by the end of the Foundation Stage but they make rapid progress from their very low levels on entry. Throughout the school, pupils respond very well to the high expectations everyone has of them. In Years 1 and 2, many pupils have difficulties because they struggle to speak and understand English. Consequently, standards are below average. By the end of Year 6, however, they have made substantial gains in using English and standards are above average. This is a marked improvement since 2001 when results were significantly below national averages. When their very low attainment on entry to the school is taken into consideration, the rate of progress made by pupils is much better than expected.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The dynamic leadership of the headteacher is a major factor in this improvement. His steely determination to raise standards by providing pupils with a rich and stimulating diet of learning experiences is appreciated by the staff. They share his vision and value the way he supports their development and enables them to instigate change. This commitment to improvement has successfully resulted in the creation of a vibrant learning environment in which pupils and staff can thrive. Pupils consequently have an enthusiasm for learning and a strong pride in their school. Pupils say that their teachers are, 'the best, because they help us to learn'. They like the way that teachers help them to understand what they must do, by setting them targets and explaining clearly how they can meet them. Teachers take great care to meet the differing needs of all pupils. Their progress is continually checked in order that quick action can be taken to tackle any underachievement.

The school has an exceptionally warm and welcoming atmosphere and staff work tirelessly to provide an outstanding level of care, guidance and support for pupils. One parent wrote, 'I know that my children are safe and well cared for'. This sense of security helps to develop pupils' self-esteem, so that they become very confident learners. Their personal development is outstanding and impacts strongly on their achievement. Very positive relationships with staff effectively promote excellent standards of behaviour and attitudes to learning. From an early age, pupils start to become independent learners and they show increasing maturity as they move up through the school. They are aware of the importance of healthy lifestyles and are pleased that their views are taken into account. For example, members of the school council speak enthusiastically about how they help the headteacher to run the school.

The collection of over £34,000 in support of the Pakistan earthquake disaster is an impressive testament to pupils' care and concern for others.

The school provides excellent value for money and has improved in many ways since the previous inspection. Very effective management systems provide the school's leaders with an accurate view of its strengths and areas for further development. Taking into account the improvements made, the very strong leadership of the headteacher, the extremely high quality staff teamwork and the effective support provided by governors, the school's capacity for further improvement is outstanding.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve standards in the Foundation Stage and in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Achievement is outstanding. Very effective teaching enables pupils to make outstanding progress from their low level skills on entry to the school. For the last three years, the progress made by pupils at Key Stage 2 has placed Parkinson Lane Primary in the top one or two percent of schools nationally. Children's progress in the Nursery is very good, but many of the most able children are not able to join the Reception class due to limits on the number of places. As a result, standards at the end of the Foundation Stage are below those expected nationally. In Years 1 and 2, the emphasis on developing pupils' skills in literacy and language enables them to achieve extremely well. National test results in reading, writing and mathematics have improved steadily over the last three years and are now above average at the end of Key Stage 2. Throughout the school, there are year-by-year differences in the performance of boys and girls, but no consistent patterns. Over time, all pupils achieve equally well.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils really enjoy school, and this is reflected in their good attendance. They develop very positive attitudes to learning because teaching is lively and the curriculum stimulating. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and they know what to do if they have any concerns. Their behaviour is outstanding. They work together amicably on shared tasks, willingly undertake responsibilities and enjoy each other's company. Pupils have a very good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Their very positive attitudes to learning and outstanding achievement in literacy and numeracy prepare them well for the next stage in their schooling.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Pupils find lessons stimulating and say that teachers 'make learning fun'. Lessons move along at a fast pace; frequent opportunities to talk to partners or in small groups enable pupils to generate ideas very effectively. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can do and know exactly how well pupils are learning. The very close links between assessing pupils' progress, planning their work and setting challenging targets mean that teaching is tightly focused on ensuring that all pupils do as well as possible. Teaching assistants work in close partnership with teachers and make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The school's outstanding curriculum meets the needs of all pupils and is a major factor in their exceptional progress and personal development. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good and places a strong emphasis on enabling children to make choices, which develops their independence. Throughout the school, close attention is given to the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. However, pupils also enjoy plenty of exciting experiences, which make learning relevant and exhilarating. For example, during the inspection, Year 6 pupils developed their awareness of life in Victorian times through a lively drama session involving students from a college of education. Visits to places of interest, residential experiences, and visitors, all enrich the curriculum and add greatly to pupils' enjoyment of learning. An extensive programme of after-school activities makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development and achievement.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 1**

One pupil said of this aspect of the school, 'Teachers care for the children as if they were their own'. Staff know pupils very well and work closely with parents to ensure that the needs of each child are met. Parents are justifiably confident that their children are well looked after at school. Procedures for ensuring pupils' health, safety and well-being are thorough and child protection procedures are in place. Well organised and effective arrangements help children to settle into the Foundation Stage and Year 6 pupils are prepared thoroughly for the move to secondary school. Support and guidance for pupils' academic development are very good. Pupils' academic progress is tracked meticulously. Arrangements for setting individual targets ensure that all pupils know what they must do in order to improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The inspirational leadership of the headteacher gives a very clear educational direction. He is an excellent role model, respected by staff, pupils and parents, indeed many pupils say, 'He is the best'. He has successfully created a climate where everyone is constantly trying to improve the school further. In these circumstances, it is not surprising that pupils achieve extremely well. Systems to evaluate each aspect of the school's performance are excellent. The information gathered is used to the full, for example, to set challenging targets and to identify any pupils not making the expected progress so as to ensure that their needs are met. Governors are actively involved in the life of the school. They make a very good contribution to school improvement, by working in close harmony with the school's leadership team.

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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> |
|---|-----------------------|

### 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> | 1   |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?  | 1   |
| The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage  | 2   |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation  | 1   |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements  | 1   |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection   | Yes |

### Achievement and standards

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

### 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  | 2 |
| How well learners enjoy their education   | 1 |
| 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                                    | 1 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 1 |

### The quality of provision

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>          | 1 |
| <b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b> | 1 |
| <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>                                       | 1   |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 1   |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets   | 1   |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can                     | 1   |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money  | 1   |
| 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**

It was a pleasure to visit your school recently. Thank you for being so friendly and for talking to me. I very much enjoyed my day with you and listening to what you had to say. I agree with you that Parkinson Lane Primary is an excellent school. You are provided with an outstanding quality of education and obviously immensely enjoy learning. I think your school is a very welcoming place and I was very impressed at the way that it is always trying to improve so that you do well. The things I particularly liked were:

- the way your headteacher and school staff work hard to make learning fun so that you enjoy school
- the outstanding way in which staff look after you
- your excellent behaviour and the way you help each other
- your enthusiasm and hard work in lessons and the pride you take in your work
- the polite way you told me your views about school.

To improve even more the school now needs to:

- help the children in the Foundation Stage to do even better and
- help those of you in Years 1 and 2 to improve your reading, writing and mathematics.

Thank you for helping me so much with the inspection of your school. You are lucky to be at a very special school. I hope you continue to be happy there and do well.