



Scholes (Elmet) Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107813
Local Authority Leeds
Inspection number 287919
Inspection dates 20–21 September 2006
Reporting inspector Lesley Clark

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Station Road
School category	Community		Scholes, Leeds
Age range of pupils	3–11		West Yorkshire LS15 4BJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0113 2649149
Number on roll (school)	236	Fax number	0113 2649149
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Clarkson
		Headteacher	Mr T Ashby
Date of previous school inspection	30 April 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Scholes (Elmet) Primary is slightly larger than average and includes a 26 place Nursery. While the proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average a number have significant special needs or challenging behaviour. At the time of the inspection the school was undergoing major building works. Three classes were taught in temporary accommodation including the school hall. Lunches were served in classrooms and pupils had restricted playground facilities.

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. Standards are well above average in mathematics, science and reading by the end of Year 6 and above average in writing. The school is successfully tackling a relative weakness in boys' writing through adapting the way boys are taught so that their different learning styles are fully catered for. The result is that boys are now switched on to writing and make good progress.

Pupils achieve well throughout their time in school because teaching is good. Children make exceptionally good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes. They quickly become independent and purposeful learners because of outstanding provision in the Foundation Stage. Similarly, in Years 5 and 6, pupils put on an extra spurt in response to outstanding teaching which develops their individual skills to a high standard. Pupils follow an interesting and enjoyable curriculum which prepares them well for their future lives. The school takes exceptionally good care of its pupils. Provision for learners who have difficulties is outstanding and most achieve nationally expected standards as a result. Behaviour is good, and the recent building works have been a good test of the effectiveness of the school's systems. There has been minimal disruption to learning. Attendance is above average because pupils love coming to school. They are fully included in making decisions that affect them, and the school council plays an active part in school life. Throughout the school pupils are used to being listened to and so they have the confidence to voice their opinions. They say that the staff are, 'kind, welcoming people and when you get to Year 6 you are treated like adults.' Provision for pupils' personal development, therefore, is outstanding.

The school is a happy, successful learning environment because leadership and management are outstanding. Leadership is exceptionally strong, drawing on the strengths of an experienced staff but with the humility to try out new ideas. This ensures continuous improvement. There are very good systems in place to enable all staff to play a full part in helping to manage the school. Great attention is paid to small details, and the monitoring and evaluation of the school's work are extremely thorough. Simplifying the assessment systems, however, would help the school to have a clear and instant overview of the progress of different groups of pupils from year to year. Financial management is very good. The school gives outstanding value for money. It is no wonder that pupils say, 'The school is full of loads of happy children.'

What the school should do to improve further

- Simplify assessment systems so as to give a clear overview of the progress of different groups of pupils as they move through the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards and achievement are good. From a broadly average starting point pupils make good progress each year, developing new skills and building on what they know

and understand. Standards are consistently higher in mathematics and science than in English because standards in writing are not as high as those in reading. Typically, over half the pupils exceed the nationally expected levels at the end of Year 6 in mathematics, science and reading whereas less than a third does so in writing. The school has identified weaknesses in boys' writing as the major cause of this and has put sensible steps in place which are clearly having an effect. Many boys are very keen on writing as a result and avidly collect words to put in their 'writing journals'. Literacy 'warm ups' along the lines of mental and oral starters in mathematics are making pupils more aware of language and, through drama, pupils learn how to bring language alive. Children achieve exceptionally well in the Nursery and Reception classes and consequently have a very good foundation for learning when they enter Year 1.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

First and foremost pupils enjoy school. They are alert and attentive in lessons and say, 'lessons are fun'. They thoroughly enjoy the wide range of sporting opportunities during the school day. Pupils clearly have a say in what goes on. The school council sees its role as, 'making the school a better place' and has helped set up a playground buddy system as well as healthy lunches and drinking water in class. An outstanding feature is the 'What's special about me?' box in every classroom. Everyone has a turn to put special things inside and to talk about these to the rest of the class. Similarly, the 'childline' box is a place where children can put confidential concerns thus alerting the teacher who can deal with them discreetly. Pupils therefore feel extremely well supported and believe bullying is rare as a consequence. Behaviour is good. Pupils think that 'golden time', a privilege they can lose through misbehaviour, is a very fair system. Attendance is above average. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and they are exceptionally well placed in terms of their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good with some outstanding practice especially in the Foundation Stage and in Years 5 and 6. In these year groups pupils' learning really gathers momentum. Features of good lessons include thorough preparation, interesting resources and a lively delivery. These help pupils to concentrate and to feel at ease. Sometimes, teachers talk for just a bit too long which cuts down the time pupils have to learn through doing. Marking is helpful and pupils are involved in assessing how well they have done and what they need to do to improve. In outstanding lessons, pupils learn almost without realising it through role-play, discussion and demonstration. An excellent device throughout the school is the pasting of the last piece of work in July at the

start of pupils' new books in September so it is easy to measure progress and set appropriate challenges without loss of time.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum provides well for a wide range of ability and learning needs and has a strong creative bias. Nursery and Reception children get off to a really good start because they have so many exciting and interesting things to do. Speaking and listening are promoted well to develop pupils' understanding and to prepare them for the wider world. Appropriate time is given to literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology, and pupils have suitable opportunities to use these skills in other subjects. 'Themed weeks', such as a European week, successfully extend and enrich the curriculum. Currently, the school is piloting teaching Spanish in Year 3 to promote language awareness. A wide range of clubs appeals to the interests of many pupils and adds much to their enjoyment of school. Provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education is outstanding.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

There is outstanding provision for pupils' welfare, and child protection procedures are robust. The systems to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are outstanding and the school has the capacity to cope successfully with extremely challenging learning difficulties and behavioural problems as a result. Individual education and behaviour plans give precise and achievable small steps of learning for pupils and these, together with outstanding support from learning assistants in all classes, enable pupils to make good progress. The systems to support academic progress for all pupils are extremely thorough but many documents have to be consulted to give an overview. An excellent feature is the way teachers use daily assessments to help them plan what to teach next. Pupils help review and set personal targets and have a lot of responsibility for their own learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

In this school everyone really matters and all, whether child or adult, are expected to play a part in helping it to run smoothly. The headteacher and deputy headteacher set high expectations and lead by example to inspire and motivate the staff. Innovative practice has helped the school to make good progress since the last inspection. The school's management structure, organised so that responsibility for standards, inclusion and learning is shared between three staff teams, is instrumental in raising standards. This is because of open debate and shared policies, which are then rigorously monitored and evaluated to check their effectiveness. The school improvement plan gives outstanding educational direction, and is underpinned by excellent professional development of all staff. This in turn has raised the status of support staff by enabling

them to take on leadership roles. Outstanding self-evaluation, scrupulous attention to detail and simple systems that really work typify the management. Governance is warmly supportive and knowledgeable. The school has good capacity to improve further.

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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?	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	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
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

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?	1

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?	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

Thank you for being so welcoming and friendly. We very much enjoyed our two days in your school. We spent much of our time talking to your headteacher, teachers and learning assistants as well as spending time in your lessons and time talking to you. We came to the conclusion that your school is outstanding and that you help to make it so. We were impressed by your sensible behaviour. Those of you working in temporary classrooms really made the best of it and pointed out all the good things about the new arrangements. Your teachers too had very positive attitudes and some of you wrote some inspiring poems about the diggers as a result. This is because your school is exceptionally well run and the outstanding leadership and management are some of the best things about it. This is what helps you to feel safe, secure and happy. Lots of you told us how much you enjoy school and it was easy for us to see why. You are taught well and your teachers go out of their way to make lessons interesting and fun. You follow a good curriculum which teaches you important skills as well as giving you times to learn about other cultures as in the European week, for example. But you do your bit too by coming to school on time and concentrating well. Did you know that your attendance rate is better than average? All these factors help to explain why you achieve high standards and make good progress. We judged several aspects of your school to be outstanding. These included the Foundation Stage, provision for pupils who have particular learning or behavioural difficulties and the care, support and guidance you receive. All that adds up to a highly effective school which makes outstanding provision for your personal development.

It is part of our job to point out what your school needs to do to improve further. In order to reach the above conclusions we had to look through lots of documents and many files. All the information was there but it would be easier for everyone if the way this information is collected could be simplified.