

# Lowtown Primary School

Inspection report - amended

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107862
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leeds
<b>Inspection number</b>	287933
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 February 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mike Driver

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 category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	202
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs S Wood
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms R Howells
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 July 2001
<b>School address</b>	Kent Road Lowton Pudsey West Yorkshire LS28 9BB
<b>Telephone number</b>	0113 2567303
<b>Fax number</b>	0113 2577385

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<b>Age group</b>	5–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 February 2007
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## Amended Report Addendum

This report has been resubmitted to reflect a change made to correct an error in the headteachers title, and also an error in the introduction concerning the numbers of children from a White British heritage.

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by a team of two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Lowtown Primary School is a small and popular school situated in Pudsey, to the west of Leeds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average, as is those from minority ethnic groups. Very few children are learning English as an additional language. The majority of pupils are from a White British heritage. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including statements of special educational need, is below average, but can vary significantly in different classes.

## 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, which provides good value for money. Strong leadership and management have established clear direction for improvement, as a result of careful and accurate evaluation of provision. Supported by the effective governing body, the school has a good capacity to improve further. The measures taken have ensured that pupils achieve well and show good levels of personal development. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make good progress. As a result, standards in Year 6 are above average. Provision in the Foundation Stage is outstanding, with a rich curriculum and strong teaching, which encourages pupils to work more independently. Pupils make very good progress through Reception.

The school has an informed school improvement plan and strategies in place to improve standards further. 'Power Writing' is an approach being used to raise standards in writing. This system uses imaginative methods to stimulate pupils' writing skills. Assessments of pupils' work, together with observations in the school, have shown this approach is having a good impact on standards.

Secure measures have also been put in place to improve standards in mathematics, particularly at Key Stage 1, although it is too early to judge the impact of this initiative.

After significant staffing changes in recent years, the school is now very close to having an established team of teachers in place. The quality of teaching and learning is good and this is the major reason why pupils are achieving well. However, assessment information is not consistently used to match work to pupils' needs and increase their pace of learning. Pupils are well behaved, keen to learn and enjoy being at school. Attendance is above average. There is a strong and effective emphasis in the curriculum on promoting pupils' awareness of other cultures, and issues of race equality and human rights through the 'Global Dimensions' initiative. This has also strengthened the cultural aspect of pupils' personal development, which is now good. Very good links with other schools enrich the curriculum in sporting activities, foreign language teaching and mathematics for higher attainers in Year 6. The rich curriculum engages pupils' interest and promotes good achievement. There is good provision for developing skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT).

Pupils are well cared for and feel safe. There are improved and effective systems to monitor pupils' progress and provide support if pupils are not making the expected gains. The pupils develop well as individuals and have good opportunities to take on responsibility in the school: organising a Fair Trade fair, and in the school council, for example. Pupils have a good appreciation of a healthy lifestyle. They are well prepared for life after school.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in mathematics, with particular attention to Key Stage 1.
- Ensure the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good in relation to use of assessment to help pupils learn and matching work to pupils' needs.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Children come into Reception at the level expected for their age. Teaching is good. As a result, pupils learn well, make good progress and show good achievement throughout the school.

Rigorous assessments show standards are above average by the end of Year 6. Challenging targets are set for pupils and these are reviewed and raised to provide further challenge.

Results in Year 2 were average in 2006 in English and mathematics, reflecting a lower level of attainment of that particular group when they started school. Standards in Year 2 now are also average because of some temporary staffing changes last year. Staffing is now settled. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have made good progress this academic year. Results in Year 6 in 2006 were above average. Pupils' performance in mathematics varies and is lower in Year 2 than Year 6 when compared with national averages. Secure measures have been put in place to improve standards in mathematics but it is too early to judge the impact of this initiative.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Personal development and well-being are good. Pupils enjoy school very much. They behave well and grow into mature, considerate young people who have a strong sense of doing the right thing. Older pupils promote Fair Trade products for example, explaining that 'this is so that people in poorer countries can make a proper living'. They also raise money for charity. This willingness to contribute is also seen in school, where older pupils take on the role of 'peer mediators', helping to solve minor conflicts that might occur at break times. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils achieve well. Relationships in school are good, and this provides an atmosphere that is favourable for learning. Lessons are well planned, with a clear structure, a good variety of activities and a brisk pace to engage and sustain pupils' interest and enthusiasm. Good use is made of techniques, such as talk partners, to involve all pupils. There is a good emphasis upon developing key skills in literacy and numeracy. For example, in Year 5, links were made between science and literacy. Pupils across the range of attainment wrote good quality letters to convince an imaginary friend that air is a real substance.

Good progress has been made in using assessment to help pupils learn better but the best practice is not yet used consistently and the school has identified the need to develop this aspect further. Teachers do not consistently match the level of work well to the needs of different pupils to ensure high levels of challenge.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. Statutory requirements are met, and the curriculum is enriched in many ways. In the 'Global Dimensions' project, there is planned consideration of cultural and human rights issues in different subject areas. In a literacy lesson, for example, pupils were enthusiastically discussing Fair Trade in the context of wages paid to foreign workers. The pupils were preparing to develop a play about the moral, ethical and human rights issues. The activity was also effective in promoting pupils skills in speaking and listening. There is a wide range of visitors to the school who work with pupils on topics, such as, African music, refugees

and South Asian arts, or put on a play about science, for example. There is good extra-curricular provision, with many clubs, including an Eco-Action Team. There are strengths in physical education, performing arts and personal, social, health and citizenship education. Pupils regularly put on productions. 'Grease' and 'The Lion King' are recent examples. Occasionally, opportunities to develop spirituality are not fully embedded in assemblies.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. Pupils feel valued. Well-resourced play areas, both for the Foundation Stage and for older pupils, illustrate the school's desire to provide its pupils with good quality recreation as well as learning. Good support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities ensures these pupils make good progress. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their children's education and the large majority praise the care and support the school provides, although a small number expressed concerns about behaviour. Inspectors saw no evidence of behaviour problems. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are fully in place. Pupils are knowledgeable about the individual learning targets they are given and say that they find these useful in helping them to improve their work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. There is accurate and regular evaluation of teaching, with constructive feedback to staff. Team teaching is being introduced to help teachers share expertise. Performance data are analysed well, and used to inform planning for future improvements to provision in the school. The headteacher has developed a successful team approach that enables other senior staff to use their managerial expertise to good effect for pupils' benefit. There is a strong commitment to helping every pupil to gain the most from their education. This is based upon valuing children and working hard to make sure each one receives an education tailored to their needs. There are good links with parents and active measures are taken to help parents support their children's education. The governing body is knowledgeable and has helped steer the school successfully through a period of significant staffing changes. There is a clear, shared vision for further improving standards. Improvement since the last inspection is good.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### 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>	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	1
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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<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.



## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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

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**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

We enjoyed visiting your school, and talking with you, as well as meeting the headteacher, teachers and governors. We listened carefully to what you told us, including how you enjoy school very much and how the teachers make learning fun. We also listened to the views of your parents or carers.

We agree with you that this is a good school. It is well led by the headteacher and other teachers, supported by the governors. They have made improvements to ensure that all of you make good progress in lessons. In the first year at school, in the Foundation Stage, you make very good progress. At present, you reach above average standards when you are in Year 6. The teaching in the school is good. Teachers are trying to use marking to help you learn even more effectively, but know they need to share good ideas for this. Sometimes the work could be more challenging for you. Teachers use imaginative ways to make writing fun and this is helping you to learn how to write more effectively. The teachers also want you to make better progress in learning mathematics skills, particularly in Years 1 and 2, and we agree with this aim. The subjects and topics you study are well planned and we think the work you do learning about people in other countries is very good. The school brings in a lot of interesting visitors to teach you extra things, like African drumming.

The school cares for you all well and helps you develop well as a person.

To help you learn better we have asked the school to:

- make sure teachers share good ideas on teaching, especially in marking your work to help you learn even more
- help you to do better in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 particularly.