

Bankside Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107901
Local Authority	Leeds
Inspection number	287949
Inspection dates	19–20 September 2007
Reporting inspector	David Halford

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	623
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Roger Howington
Headteacher	Ms Sarah Ruty
Date of previous school inspection	13 January 2003
School address	Markham Avenue Leeds West Yorkshire LS8 4LE
Telephone number	0113 2626439
Fax number	0113 2626439

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This very large primary school serves an area of social and economic disadvantage. The number of pupils eligible for a free school meal is well above average. Almost all the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and the vast majority have English as an additional language. Almost half the pupils are in the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The school has received a number of awards including Investors in People and the Basic Skills Quality Mark. This year the school's Standard Admission Number has risen from 70 to 90 pupils. Alterations to the accommodation to cater for this increase are not yet complete and as a result Nursery and Reception children have yet to start their school year.

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. It is led by an inspirational headteacher who, working alongside a talented and ambitious senior leadership team, sets clear direction for the school. They have a very realistic picture of the strengths and areas for development of the school and a real determination to pursue improvement. There are high expectations of what the staff and children should achieve and a determination to ensure that pupils enjoy all aspects of school life. Everyone is encouraged to do their 'Bankside best!' Parents are generous in their praise, their very positive views summed up by the comments: 'I know I made the right choice sending my son to Bankside School,' 'I find all the staff approachable,' 'The continuous praise the pupils receive gives them lots of encouragement to continue their hard work,' and 'I would recommend this school to any parent'.

Almost all pupils start school with very low overall standards. The vast majority come from homes where English is not the first language and this is reflected in their limited communication skills. They make swift overall progress through the Nursery and Reception years and this positive trend continues as they move through the school. By time they leave the school in Year 6 they attain standards which are close to the national average. This represents good progress over time. The pupils' personal development is good and promoted well by high quality care, guidance and support and a rich and diverse curriculum. Whilst curricular provision is good overall, pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills are underdeveloped. Relationships are particularly strong at all levels. Pupils play enthusiastically, behave sensibly and safely and enjoy the wide range of activities on offer to them.

The school has detailed arrangements to check staff performance. This contributes well to the good quality of teaching and learning. However, the work set in some lessons is not always matched precisely to the different needs of pupils. Detailed procedures for tracking individual pupil's progress are of high quality. However, these systems have been established only relatively recently and have yet to impact fully on pupils' better progress. The school's self-evaluation systems form an integral part of its everyday practice. They are regularly reviewed and adapted to ensure they are being used to optimum effect in the pupils' best interests. Since the last inspection, under the clarity and vision of the headteacher, the school has made good progress. The governors are supportive and knowledgeable and keep a satisfactory overview of the school. The school has good capacity to continue its improvement and is providing good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the Nursery with much weaker skills than is the norm, particularly in aspects of communication, language and learning, and personal and social education. Their provision is well managed and the staff team is well led. Children enter a language rich environment, which is maintained throughout their time in school. Strong bilingual support promotes children's rapid development in their use and understanding of English. Children make good progress through the Nursery and Reception years. However, by the time they enter Year 1 many do not reach the targets set for them nationally in most areas of their learning. The early years unit provides a safe and secure environment for these young children and links with parents are good. Every child receives a home visit before they enter the Nursery. The staff work well in teams and have a good grasp of the children's needs. Support staff are well qualified and

experienced. They are integral to the good progress made by the children. Detailed checks on children's progress are made and the results used effectively to track their achievement. Outside play facilities are currently better for Nursery children than for those in Reception. Arrangements are in place for the Reception provision to be improved during the current term.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in pupils' literacy and numeracy skills by ensuring that lessons are planned appropriately to meet the needs of pupils of differing abilities.
- Develop further pupils' ICT skills across the curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good through Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) and this continues through Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6). Steady and consistent improvement over time brings pupils' overall standards close to the national averages by the time they reach the end of Year 6. Strong teaching of reading has resulted in particularly good progress in this subject. Although, overall pupils' standards remain a little below the national average, given their very low starting points this represents good achievement. Challenging targets are regularly set for pupils and these are mostly met. Whilst a large majority of pupils gain the levels expected for them in the Year 2 assessments and in the Year 6 tests, only a small percentage gain the higher levels. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those large numbers of pupils for whom English is an additional language, achieve well as a result of the good support they receive. Their needs are well known and dealt with precisely by knowledgeable and sensitive staff.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good and central to the school's success. All pupils know that they are safe and when asked what they liked about school replied, 'we like everything!' The school council members are active and discharge their responsibilities well. They know that their decisions will be taken seriously and acted upon. They learn skills that will serve them well in adult life. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and exemplified in their good behaviour, relationships and positive attitudes in class, around the school and in the playground. Pupils gain insights into the world beyond their immediate community; for example, the work experience initiative for all Year 6 pupils, sponsored by local industry and businesses. Pupils learn to take responsibility through acting as 'happy lunchtime helpers', 'playground friends' and 'tour guides'. Attendance is satisfactory and has recently improved well.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good overall. It has a positive impact on pupils' learning and ensures their good progress. Teachers develop pupils' listening and oracy skills, for example in 'partner work' which is helping many pupils to read relatively swiftly and clearly. They demonstrate increasing fluency and understanding in their reading in addition to gaining increasing confidence in their use and understanding of English. Pupils are assisted greatly by good quality questioning from

skilful staff, high quality support from able teaching assistants and from lessons being managed well. In the majority of lessons, pupils are encouraged to think and discuss. For older pupils, their involvement in assessing their own and that of others' work helps them to better understand how well they are progressing. The use of 'success steps' enables pupils to know what to do next to improve their work. Whilst many groups of pupils work effectively, not all lesson plans ensure that the tasks teachers set meet the differing needs of pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and focuses strongly on developing pupils' basic skills and personal development. However, pupils have insufficient opportunities to develop fully their ICT skills by using them in a range of subjects. The curriculum meets well the needs of vulnerable pupils, those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and all pupils who have English as an additional language. It is supported well by a wide range of extra-curricular activities, appropriately timed to complement pupils' commitments out of school. There is further enrichment through a good variety of visits out of school and visitors into school. The school is working successfully to develop a curriculum which enables pupils to make good links between subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good overall. Robust safeguarding and child protection procedures are in place. The pupils indicate that they feel happy and safe in school and that adults deal with problems effectively should they arise. There are good procedures to ensure attendance requirements are well-known and applied appropriately. 'Wake-up, shake-up' activities and 'golden rules' promote a positive learning environment.

Pupils are aware that their welfare is important to the school. The school works well with parents in a wide variety of settings. Academic records are detailed but established relatively recently. Staff track pupils' individual progress rigorously and provide appropriate support for those who do not make the expected progress. Although these procedures are of high quality, they have yet to impact fully on raising pupils' standards. Very good strategies are in place to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and pupils who are learning English as an additional language. Their individual requirements are met sensitively.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher is inspirational and has a clear and realistic vision. She is described as 'a true captain' and has, over a relatively short time, collected together a new and ambitious leadership team which is setting a clear direction for improvement through increasingly effective checks on the quality of teaching and learning. This is a school that now knows itself well and what it must do to improve further. All staff know what is expected of them. They work closely together to promote equality of opportunity. Staff are encouraged, through high quality professional development, to use their expertise confidently, not only for the benefit of pupils in their own school but also for others in the locality. Some effective, recent developments, such as the procedures to track pupils' progress, have yet to impact fully on raising standards. Governors are capable, knowledgeable and

supportive of the school but have yet to embrace fully their role in evaluating the school's effectiveness.

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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	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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	3
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

Mr Allen, Mrs Gowers, Mrs Hicks and I really enjoyed our recent visit to your school. Thank you very much for your very warm welcome and for looking after us so well. You were very helpful in lessons when we asked you to explain what you were doing and also very friendly around school. Particular thanks should go to members of the school council who helped us to understand why it is that you enjoy your school so much.

We do not think you will be surprised to hear that we think Bankside Primary School is a good school. This is because it cares for you well, helps you to make good progress in your work and enables you to enjoy yourselves very much. We particularly liked your 'wake-up, shake-up' activities and were impressed at the wide range of work that you do so well.

One of our jobs is to try to look for things which will make your school even better and help you more with your work. We think it would be helpful to you if your teachers gave you more opportunities to use your computer skills. We also know that some boys and girls find learning easier than others and we think it would be helpful if your teachers bear that in mind when they are planning their lessons for you, and try not to ask you all to do the same work. So we have asked Ms Ruddy and your teachers to see if they can improve those two areas of your work in school.

We send you all our best wishes for the future. We hope you continue to enjoy your learning as much as you do at the moment.