

# Talbot Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107908
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leeds
<b>Inspection number</b>	287951
<b>Inspection date</b>	26 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Lesley Clark

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	426
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Helen Haigh
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Linda Clay
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 December 2001
<b>School address</b>	East Moor Road Roundhay Leeds West Yorkshire LS8 1AF
<b>Telephone number</b>	0113 2934086
<b>Fax number</b>	0113 2930230

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This very large primary school serves a socio-economically advantaged area in the north of Leeds. It is a popular school and there is a waiting list for most year groups. Pupils come from the immediate vicinity and most walk to school. Two thirds of pupils are White British and a third comes from minority ethnic backgrounds where English is not their first language. The proportion at an early stage of learning English, however, is very small. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average as is the number with statements of special educational need. Nearly half the staff have changed in the past two years including the headteacher who took up post in September 2006.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The school provides a good education and there are some aspects of its work that are outstanding. Parents praise its caring, friendly atmosphere and high standards. The new leadership team has made a huge impact in a very short time, improving assessment, the curriculum, outdoor provision for the Foundation Stage and expanding pupils' personal development. This has successfully widened the educational opportunities open to all pupils while ensuring that the school maintains its very high academic standards. Extra-curricular and enrichment activities are now extremely good, contributing to a good curriculum and pupils' outstanding personal development. The school has an accurate view of its effectiveness and areas for further improvement have been tackled vigorously and successfully. It is too soon, however, to assess the full impact of some of these measures, so, while the school is very effective in several areas, the effect of recent improvements on achievement is not yet fully evident.

Overall, standards are exceptionally high at the end of Year 6. From an above average starting point pupils achieve well throughout the school because they are well taught. More able pupils do exceptionally well, especially in Years 4 to 6 where many make particularly rapid progress because of intensive teaching at a high level. Lower achieving pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. The school has quite rightly identified weaknesses in provision, for these pupils, which has slowed their learning until recently. In part, this is because not all teachers ensure that pupils' different learning styles are fully met. Currently, individual education plans for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do not identify appropriately small steps of learning which can then be used and checked regularly to help those pupils. As a result some pupils feel overwhelmed by the demands made on them and lose confidence. In the Foundation Stage, while overall provision is good, especially the new outdoor provision, opportunities for children to learn through finding out for themselves, determining their own pace and style of learning, vary from class to class.

By the end of Year 6, pupils are exceptionally well placed for their future lives with their extremely well-developed skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). They are articulate and mature for their age. Pupils have outstanding awareness of why it is important to lead healthy lives because of the healthy school meals, lots of sporting opportunities and extra clubs such as the pre-school aerobics club. Attendance is excellent, reflecting the high levels of enjoyment that the majority of pupils experience in this school. Typical comments are, 'We like all the teachers, they make lessons fun.' and 'We never get bored because there's loads of things to do.' They really enjoy the 'cyber caf,' and managing the school website but would like more computers so everyone who wanted to could join in. The school takes good care of its pupils, giving them good personal support and guidance. Academic guidance is good for the majority of pupils but has shortcomings for those who find learning more difficult. The recent improvements to the way pupils' progress is checked has given the school a much clearer overview of achievement. This has enabled the school to identify weaknesses and take action such as giving able bi-lingual learners increased opportunities for speaking and listening so as to improve their writing skills.

Outstanding leadership and management by a new leadership team have brought about many changes in a very short time, building on the strengths of an established high-performing school. Governance is excellent, striking the right balance between support and questioning to ensure effective educational provision. Staff new to teaching bring energy and new ideas

and experienced teachers mentor new recruits with notable success. The result is an enthusiastic staff team which plays a full part in driving forward improvements as well as contributing fully to some very effective learning. It has outstanding capacity to improve further.

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

- Improve the progress made by pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- Make sure that pupils' different learning styles are fully met in all classes so as to support those who find learning more difficult.
- Provide Foundation Stage children in all three classes with equal opportunities to learn through play and initiate their own learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good. From an above average starting point children make good progress in the Foundation Stage, comfortably reaching the goals expected of them, with a large proportion exceeding them at the start of Year 1. Achievement is best in those classes where children largely organise their own learning, challenging themselves, prompted by their developing curiosity. Good progress continues in Years 1 to 6, resulting in well above average standards at the end of Year 2 and very high standards at the end of Year 6 in reading, mathematics and science. Standards in writing have lagged behind but the school's data shows that there has been improvement as a result of recent initiatives. The trend in the school's test results is upwards. The school often exceeds its own challenging targets. The achievement of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is satisfactory rather than good because some pupils, until very recently, have not received sufficient support. More able pupils achieve exceptionally well because of their teachers' high expectations.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Most pupils thoroughly enjoy school and this is shown in their excellent behaviour and willingness to work. This helps them to achieve well. Bullying is not an issue and pupils agree, 'It's a pleasant, kind, cheerful school and all the children are friendly.' Pupils are proud of their school and the school council is kept busy acting on their suggestions as to how it can be improved. Currently they are busy organising making boats, treasure and other sea features to turn a classroom into a relaxing underwater zone to aid emotional health. Pupils benefit from the wide range of physical activities available, both as part of the curriculum and during out-of-school clubs. They get on well together and racial harmony is a strong feature of the school. They play energetically at break and lunchtimes, having great fun with lots of different playground games and equipment organised by the 'FITBODS' (a group of older pupils) - 'to get children active'. Playground buddies ensure that everyone has someone to play with. Pupils raise money for both national and international worthy causes as well as supporting community events. Their spiritual, moral and cultural development is good. Their social development is outstanding.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

The quality of teaching, including that in the Foundation Stage, is good with evidence of outstanding practice. Good features include high expectations and good planning and organisation. Interactive technology is used effectively to involve pupils in showing what they understand and to aid teachers' demonstrations. Innovative teaching in some classes is balanced by a steadier approach in others so that pupils learn well as they move through school, benefiting from teachers' different expertise. Where teaching is outstanding, a playful approach draws in lower achieving pupils, giving them confidence to try things out for themselves and to ask questions. Where teaching is less successful, pupils' different styles of learning are not taken sufficiently into account and so pupils' learning slows. Marking is good and clearly shows pupils what they need to do to improve their work. Sometimes, though, teachers have unrealistic expectations of the amount of writing lower achievers or those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities can do and some pupils lose confidence when the more they write the more mistakes they make.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum makes good provision for literacy, numeracy and ICT and gives pupils a broad balance of subjects. In some classes these are linked in interesting ways to enable pupils to use their skills in different contexts. Special weeks, such as problem solving or health weeks, enhance pupils' learning. The Year 6 Arts program gives pupils an excellent aesthetic education, helping to prepare them for future life. At present individual homework books, known as 'Learning Logs', are being trialled in Years 4 and 6 with great success as pupils enjoy this individual and creative approach to their weekly tasks. Similarly, in Year 5, an enterprise project is extending pupils' application of skills in a practical project. So far, though, these opportunities are unevenly spread across the school. The range of extra-curricular clubs has expanded and many have waiting lists because they are over-subscribed. The first residential trip for over five years is currently being planned so as to further develop pupils' confidence and independence. The Foundation Stage provision is good but the balance between formal and child-chosen activities varies from class to class. A limited range of catch-up strategies are currently offered to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Child safeguarding procedures are in place. Health and safety and risk assessment procedures promote a safe environment. Parents and pupils agree that children are looked after well. The learning mentor provides good support for all pupils and they feel relaxed and happy in school. The leadership team has set up a comprehensive system to track pupils' progress each term and uses the information to set targets and to determine what support pupils need. However, this is still in the early stages and the school recognises that there is more to do to link this with what teachers are actually teaching and to ensure that individual education plans are pertinent and used effectively. Pupils are involved in assessing their own learning and this aids their good achievement.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. A new team has taken on a highly effective school, stringently analysed what needs improving and set about it decisively, constructively and effectively. The result is a rapidly improving school, extending educational opportunities for all pupils and promoting personal development. Scrupulous analysis of provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in the first term of 2006/07 highlighted shortcomings which are being addressed. The system of teaching these pupils in 'booster' classes is being reviewed and more individual support is being targeted where it is needed, though more needs to be done. Measures to raise writing standards are proving successful and the school expects to exceed its targets this year because of the extra help given to able bi-lingual pupils. Rigorous checking of teaching showed some unevenness in provision and, as a result, an effective system of coaching and mentoring was set up to ensure that all teaching is of at least good quality. The school's high standards have been maintained but there is now an extra edge as pupils are being more closely drawn into what goes on at school. They have a real say in what goes on and have growing confidence that their views matter as they see things change. The school is already demonstrating its excellent capacity for improvement.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<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	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>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1
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	3

### 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	1
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>	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>	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	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	1
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

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

Thank you for talking to me so readily and courteously, and for sharing your views of your school. I really enjoyed meeting so many of you in my short visit, seeing you both at work and play.

I agree with you that you go to a good school where the staff are really friendly and there are lots of things for you to do. I was impressed with the way your school council runs itself and at how democratic you are when it comes to making decisions. I think the FITBODS and Buddies do an excellent job at making sure everyone is active and energetic at break and lunchtimes. Your many different clubs and extra-curricular activities are also excellent. Your school takes good care of you and your personal development is outstanding, preparing you extremely well for your future lives. You receive good quality teaching and some of it is outstanding. Your headteacher and senior staff have an excellent grasp of what needs to be done to make your school even better and they have made many improvements, some of which take a bit longer than others to have full effect.

It is part of my job to help schools to get even better and so this is what your school needs to do in order to ensure that everyone gets the best possible education.

- I have asked that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive more support so that these pupils gain in confidence and make better progress.
- I have asked your teachers to make sure that everyone's different learning styles are fully catered for in every class. This too will help those of you who find learning more difficult.
- Lastly, I want the three classes in the Foundation Stage to give children equal opportunities to learn through play and to choose what they do. This will help those who are more able as well as those who are more immature to learn at the right level for their age and stage of development.

I hope you enjoy learning in lots of different ways so that school becomes an even more interesting and exciting place to be for all of you.