



# Armley Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 107960  
**Local Authority** Leeds  
**Inspection number** 287974  
**Inspection dates** 6–7 December 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Joyce Taylor

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Salisbury Terrace
<b>School category</b>	Community		Leeds
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		West Yorkshire LS12 2LY
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0113 2639216
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	159	<b>Fax number</b>	0113 2790863
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Peter Doyle
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs M Andrews
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 May 2001		

<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is smaller than average. The vast majority of pupils live in the immediate area which experiences a higher than average level of social and economic difficulty. More pupils than average have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the proportion with statements of special educational need is higher than in most schools. The majority of pupils are White British. Around a fifth are from minority ethnic groups and some of these are at the early stages of learning English. At home these pupils speak Arabic, Slovakian or Polish.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Armley Primary School provides a good standard of education for its pupils and some aspects of its provision are outstanding. It offers good value for money. The school is exceptionally calm and the pupils' behaviour is exemplary. As a result, pupils feel safe and secure and are able to concentrate well on their work. The care, guidance and support of pupils are outstanding and parents are particularly pleased with the way their children are learning to think for themselves and make sensible decisions. Pupils say they know they must work hard in order to do well in the future.

Most children start in the Nursery with levels of attainment that are very low. The overall provision in the Foundation Stage is good. However, whilst staff are currently developing a structured assessment system, the data is incomplete. Consequently, the school does not have a clear enough view of children's attainment and progress in Nursery and Reception. Individual records suggest that children make good progress but attainment is still well below average when they begin Year 1. Standards are below average by the end of Year 2 and are broadly average and improving by the end of Year 6. Overall, achievement is good. In Years 1 to 6, the school's good systems for analysing pupils' progress have identified that some more able learners could progress more quickly and that the standards in writing across the school should be higher; inspection judgements agree with this analysis. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress and those at an early stage of learning English achieve well.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers expect pupils to work hard and think carefully about their tasks. Across the school, staff provide positive support whenever a pupil falters or becomes anxious. 'I don't mind waiting', one teacher said to a pupil, 'so long as what you're doing is good'. Such helpful interventions avoid difficult confrontations and ensure pupils benefit from their learning. Teachers say they feel accountable for their pupils' good progress and use the assessment tracking systems to ensure they stay on target. However, as yet, too few of the more able pupils have sufficiently challenging targets and this slows their progress.

The curriculum is good. Weaknesses identified by the last inspection have been remedied and the school provides a good range of interesting and well planned opportunities for pupils to learn outside the school day. Visits to places of interest and visitors who, for example, perform live music, extend the curriculum well. As a result, pupils enjoy lessons and these wider opportunities, and this contributes to their improving standards. A good focus on raising standards in writing by extending pupils' range of ideas through talk and developing it through other subjects is still in the early stages. Consequently, its full impact on standards and achievement is not yet evident.

The pupils' personal development is good with some outstanding features. Many older pupils keenly take responsibility, for example, as monitors, playground pals or members of the school council. Whilst a number of pupils need regular guidance from staff, they are learning to monitor their own behaviour and manage their work effectively. Younger pupils talk eagerly about the different countries pupils have come from and confidently

point out their own homeland on a world map. Their ready acceptance of different cultures enables them to understand different points of view and ensures they value each other. The pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles is extremely good and they talk confidently about healthy eating and the need for regular exercise.

The headteacher and senior staff provide good leadership and management. Evaluation of the work of the school is generally accurate, although anticipating the outcomes of future work led to some over-estimation of success so far. There are clear and appropriate plans for school improvement, which identify the means for raising standards further. The effective influence of the headteacher and senior staff is evident in the way all staff take responsibility for speeding pupils' progress. Their strong influence is seen in the way disaffected pupils grow to enjoy and value learning through the outstanding support and guidance they receive. Strong teamwork is a significant factor in the school's good capacity for further improvement.

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

- Raise standards in writing so that more pupils reach the higher levels.
- Raise the standards and achievement of more pupils by setting them targets that are more challenging and matching work more precisely to their needs.
- Record and track the progress of children in the Foundation Stage so the school has a more accurate view of how well they are doing.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Over the past three years, standards by the end of Year 6 have risen significantly. A sharper assessment focus over the past two years has drawn teachers' attention to aspects of learning that need to improve and has contributed well to pupils' overall average standards and good achievement. However, more able pupils do not always achieve as well as they should. Across the school, standards in writing are lower than in other subjects because pupils find it difficult to put their thoughts into words. Consequently, pupils struggle to reach higher than average levels. The school has worked successfully to improve standards in information and communication technology (ICT), which were well below average at the time of the last inspection. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well. Their progress is closely monitored and good interventions in lessons and small groups ensure they meet their targets. Those who speak English as an additional language receive good support to help them learn English and are making good progress.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The work to raise pupils' self-esteem has had a big impact and has contributed to excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils get on very well with each other, both in class and during playtimes. They are cheerful and polite, and

relationships with adults are very good; pupils happily respond to reminders of how to do things. They are gaining an excellent understanding of how to lead safe and healthy lives and eagerly join in the opportunities for physical exercise. One girl said, 'I like playing rugby. We don't win but we have fun.' Attendance is satisfactory and is improving as a result of the school's rigorous monitoring strategies. Pupils are developing into good citizens. They understand that they are part of the whole-school community and value having a voice through the school council. They enthusiastically raise money to support various charities and are successfully developing skills and attitudes that will help to ensure they grow into responsible adults.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Outstanding attention to the pupils' emotional stability is a key feature of teaching across the school. Staff are calm, avoid confrontational situations and provide constant encouragement. As a result of this high quality support, the pupils concentrate well in lessons, take on board what they are learning and use their skills effectively in new situations. In Year 3, for example, reading dialogue with expression improved so much during the session that the pupils and teacher thoroughly enjoyed the humour brought out by enthusiastic performances. The teaching of writing is being well supported by extending opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas before they begin work. As a result, the content of their writing is improving but standards are still lower than in other core subjects. Assessment strategies are used well in Years 1 to 6 to monitor the pupils' progress and show that most reach the targets they are set. Assessment is less developed in the Foundation Stage and strategies to monitor children's learning in order to evaluate their overall achievement, whilst improving, are not yet effective enough. Year 1 and Reception pupils work together for some tasks and the more able Reception pupils achieve challenging targets. However, across the school, the targets for the more able learners are not always as high as they could be.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

Extra-curricular sporting and non sporting activities, opportunities to participate in educational and residential visits, and the many visitors to school broaden pupils' horizons, add to their enjoyment and build self-esteem. This was highlighted when one pupil said, 'I like sport as I am talented at it'. The developing links being made between subjects, such as in history and literacy, bring lessons to life for pupils. Particularly rich provision to develop speaking and listening is promoting the provision for writing and supporting the drive to improve standards. Pupils at the early stages of learning English have an adapted curriculum designed to accelerate their learning and this is working well. The precise, realistic targets included in the individual education plans of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities mean that work is matched well to their needs. Pupils in the Foundation Stage enjoy practical and

imaginative activities that promote learning through play and give them a positive start to their school life.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Excellent relationships ensure that all pupils feel safe and know where to turn if they need help. Strategies to support vulnerable pupils are extremely effective and those experiencing difficulty are rapidly identified and supported with sensitivity. Child protection and health and safety procedures are in place, monitored regularly and applied rigorously. Staff have an excellent awareness of individual pupils and their family circumstances, and pay close attention to the well-being of each pupil. There are good induction arrangements for children entering the Nursery and they quickly settle into school life. Similarly, all pupils are helped to make the transfer to the next stage of their education as smooth as possible. The school succeeds in helping individuals feel valued and prepares them very well to take their place in the wider world. In the Foundation Stage, staff record how well individual children learn and provide appropriately challenging targets to help them make good progress. This information now needs to be organised into an overview of the children's achievement during their time in the Nursery and Reception classes so the school has a clear view of children's overall achievement.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher and senior staff have a very clear view of what the school does well and have identified pupils' standards in writing and the achievement of most able pupils as areas for improvement. Their key concern, of equipping pupils so they can make sensible career and lifestyle choices in later life, is a constant focus. This is achieved by ensuring pupils feel safe and relaxed and able to learn social and academic skills effectively. Over the past few years, senior staff have worked successfully to improve pupils' achievement, despite some very challenging experiences suffered by individual pupils out of school. Excellent use is made of outside support whenever circumstances require it. The strong support that school provides for parents is greatly appreciated and parents say how much they value the effort school makes on their behalf. Teamwork among staff is a strong factor in improving provision. The Foundation Stage/Key Stage 1 staff, for example, work extremely well together providing well designed learning opportunities that meet the different needs of their pupils. All staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities and how they affect the pupils as learners. Governance is good. Governors have a sharp insight into how well the school is doing and use their own strengths to extend provision. For example, an effective self-help group for parents was started by governors and provides a valuable community resource.





## 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?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
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	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

<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	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
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	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>	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>	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	1
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

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

Thank you for your help when we visited your school. We very much enjoyed watching you work and talking with you in your classes and around school. Your school provides good opportunities for you to learn and your headteacher and staff are brilliant in ensuring they take extremely good care of you. You work hard in lessons and reach satisfactory standards but some of you could do even better. You have fun times and you show how much you like each other and take care of your friends. We were particularly impressed with your extremely good behaviour. You told us you are happy and your parents are particularly pleased you come to this school.

We have asked your headteacher and staff to carry on with their hard work and we suggest three ways we think will improve your school even further.

- Help you improve your writing so you reach even higher standards.
- Ensure that some of you work at more challenging tasks than the rest of the class.
- Make sure there is a clear record of how well Nursery and Reception children are doing.

You are enthusiastic about your school and we hope you carry on enjoying lessons and helping your teachers keep Armley Primary School a happy and successful place to learn.