

Whingate Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107969
Local Authority	Leeds
Inspection number	287979
Inspection dates	12–13 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Ann Sharpe

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	404
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev J Twitty
Headteacher	Mr Stuart Myers
Date of previous school inspection	29 April 2002
School address	Whingate Road Leeds West Yorkshire LS12 3DS
Telephone number	0113 2638910
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Most of the pupils attending this large urban school are White British, but about 20% are from a variety of other ethnic backgrounds. The school takes an increasing number of pupils who have recently arrived in the country from Eastern Europe and do not speak English. The neighbourhood suffers from significant social disadvantage. 'The Gateway' (Pupil Development Centre) is based at the school and provides support for families in Whingate and surrounding areas of Leeds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. Not all the children who attend Nursery transfer to this school's Reception classes and some children start in Reception classes who have not attended Whingate Nursery. The inspection took place in the second week following the summer holiday break and six teachers were new to the school. There has been a high turnover of staff in recent years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Whingate Primary is a good school, providing good value for money. It is a very happy, friendly, welcoming and secure school that has improved a lot since the previous inspection. This is because the headteacher has successfully created a strong sense of everyone pulling together to support the pupils, so that there is a lively and energetic buzz everywhere. Parents say that they are very happy with all aspects of the school. They particularly appreciate the way that staff work hard to involve them more fully in their children's education. Working in close partnership with 'The Gateway', for example, helps the school to reach out to parents and carers so that everyone can work together to help pupils to do as well as they can.

Pupils achieve well from their low starting points in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception classes), where the children receive a good quality of education. They build successfully on this positive start through Years 1 to 6, so that they reach close to the standard expected for their age by the time they transfer to secondary schools. Although standards by Year 2 have not improved as much as standards by Year 6 in recent years, girls and boys of all ages, ethnic groups and capabilities make equally good progress. This is because of the good quality of teaching and learning, an exciting and interesting curriculum and a high standard of care, guidance and support given to them. The high turnover of teaching staff makes it more difficult than usual to make sure that all teachers put new practices into place equally well. This is why, although teaching and learning are good overall, not all teachers match pupils' work closely enough to their capabilities and make sure that pupils know what they need to learn next.

The main reason for pupils' good progress is the dedicated and committed leadership of the headteacher, assistant headteachers and the senior staff. They are united with strong governors in their efforts to meet the varying needs of every single pupil. They do this by keeping an exceptionally close eye on how well pupils are getting on and making sure that they reach realistically challenging targets. They know, however, that pupils are not doing as well in writing as they are in reading and mathematics and have firm plans to address this.

Pupils' good personal development and well-being is another reason why they do well. Parents report overwhelmingly their children's enjoyment of school. Behaviour is good because pupils know what is expected of them, for example to remember the 'Big Rules'. The school council gives them a genuine voice, so that they feel involved in making the school a better place. Pupils' good understanding of the importance of safe and healthy lifestyles is seen in very enjoyable and energetic playtimes. They talk with understanding about the consequences of a lack of exercise and poor diet and say how they loved last year's 'Spirit Alive' week. Pupils meet their targets for improving attendance. The good progress they make in basic literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills, along with good 'getting along together' skills and confidence, are indicators of a bright future.

The school's thirst for making things even better for the pupils gives it good capacity to improve in the future.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is good. When children start Nursery, their skills and understanding are considerably lower than expected for their age. Although they make good progress, the skills of those who transfer to this school's Reception classes, combined

with new children who have not attended the Nursery, are still low. Provision in Reception classes continues to help children to make good progress, so that, by the end of Reception, standards are below average. The school has recognised that a main key to raising standards by Year 2 is to get children off to the best start possible. As a result of insightful leadership and improved practices, good teaching and learning are now helping the school to raise the level of skills on entry to Year 1. Children are now better prepared than previously for learning basic literacy and numeracy skills. They are confident to answer questions and to talk about their activities. They enjoy learning, both indoors and outdoors, from a wide-ranging curriculum and their behaviour is good. A high standard of care and improving links with parents and carers help children to feel happy and secure, so that girls and boys of all backgrounds and capabilities achieve well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Bring standards in writing across the school up to those in reading and mathematics.
- Ensure a more consistently good quality of teaching and learning, especially matching pupils' work to their capabilities and helping them to know what they have to learn next.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and standards are broadly average by Year 6. National test results for Year 6 pupils have improved much more than national trends in recent years. Although standards in the current Year 6 are not as high as in previous years, this is because the pupils had a lower starting point. Nevertheless, pupils are on track to meet the challenging targets that the school has set for them. National assessments in Year 2 have only just started to improve. The school anticipates that the 2007 results will move closer towards the national average. The main reason for improving standards is the school's determined efforts to ensure that all pupils make at least good progress. Consequently, girls and boys from all ethnic backgrounds and capabilities, those who are still learning to speak English and pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve as well as they can from their starting points. Although pupils often make good progress in writing, many still have a lot of catching up to do to bring standards up to those in reading and mathematics.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' good personal development and well-being, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, makes a major contribution to their good academic achievement. They behave well, enjoy taking part in all the activities on offer and do their best to succeed. Attendance, for example, has improved from below average to average because pupils try hard to reach their targets. Pupils understand the importance of healthy lifestyles. At playtimes, for example, they take part in a wealth of physical activities, such as basketball. 'Break Beatz' speak excitedly about organising fun activities and encourage others to take part. This results in happy and safe playtimes. The school council talk with enthusiasm about helping to make the school a better place, for example, by creating a nature area outdoors. They say that their views are listened to and acted upon. Pupils' good progress in basic literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills stand them in good stead for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning have improved since the previous inspection and mainly good teaching now ensures that all learners make good progress. Most lessons are orderly and purposeful because learners like and respect staff. They know what is expected of them and try hard. Teachers have a good knowledge of what they need to teach and they plan lessons in detail. The high turnover of teaching staff and large proportion of new teachers makes it difficult for the school to ensure that all teachers follow updated practices closely. Regular checking of the quality of lessons helps with this, however, and senior staff are working hard to get all teaching up to the same high standard. Although teachers have a good knowledge of what learners can already do, not all match the work they plan and the learning targets they set closely to these widely differing capabilities. As a result, individual learners do not always focus closely on what they need to do to reach higher levels of attainment.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school offers a good range of activities to meet the individual needs, interests and capabilities of learners, including extra-curricular activities and opportunities to extend learning at 'The Gateway'. School staff and 'The Gateway' staff work together closely to help pupils to overcome barriers to learning basic skills. Pupils appreciate going out on visits and having visitors to the school. The many exciting things they do bring their learning alive. Staff use the outdoor facilities creatively to ensure that learners enjoy wide-ranging, engaging and energetic activities. There is good provision for learning literacy and numeracy skills, and pupils are excited by opportunities to improve their skills in information and communication technology. The school adjusts the curriculum well to cater for the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those needing help to learn to speak English. Staff are working hard to improve the curriculum for writing and to develop more meaningful links between subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Good provision ensures that learners are happy and make equally good progress. Pupils say that they feel safe and can go to adults with problems and parents are very happy with how well their children are looked after. Staff respond swiftly and sensitively if bullying or racism occurs. The learning mentor supports pupils and parents very well in all areas, including improving their attendance and punctuality. Child protection procedures and arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust. Strenuous efforts to work closely with parents are paying dividends, as more and more parents get involved in their children's education, for example, during 'Stay and Play' sessions. Many activities at 'The Gateway' help pupils to benefit more fully from their education. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities has improved markedly recently. The school works closely with outside agencies, for example, to cater for the learning needs of pupils new to the school who do not speak English. Pupils reach their challenging targets, but are not always fully aware of what their individual 'next steps' in learning are.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management ensure that the school meets the realistic but suitably challenging targets it sets. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, especially in governance. The headteacher has skilfully created a growing sense of striving together to create a better school. The two assistant headteachers are excellent models of professionalism and other senior staff are equally dedicated and committed to meeting the varying needs of learners. As a result, Year 6 results are continuing to improve and previously declining Year 2 national assessment results have started to climb back up again. Ensuring full inclusion for learners is at the very heart of the school's day to day work, with outstandingly close checking of data to spot problems early and measure progress with putting them right. This data also helps the school to have an accurate view of its strengths and areas for improvement and to use resources to achieve good value for money.

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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	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

We really enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for talking to us and for answering all our questions so politely. Your behaviour was good, both in lessons and outside at playtimes, and we were especially pleased to see how much you enjoy playing together safely and getting lots of healthy exercise. Your attendance has improved because you are trying so hard to reach your targets.

Your school is a good school that is getting better all the time and you are right to feel proud of it, including the good Year 6 national test results. The headteacher and assistant headteachers are very keen indeed for you to do as well as you can. This is why they keep such a close eye on how well you are doing and help you make good progress towards your learning targets. Your teachers, classroom assistants, learning mentor and staff at 'The Gateway' all care about you. They make sure that you enjoy learning and that any little worries you have are sorted out quickly. Your parents and carers are right to feel so pleased with your school. We were impressed with how the school encourages them to help you at home. 'The Gateway' is a very important part of time at school - the breakfasts looked and smelled scrumptious!

You are doing very well with learning important literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills. Although your writing has started to improve, it is not as good as your reading and mathematics. We agree with the school that they should get quickly on with the plans to help you to become better writers.

When we visited, you had not been in your new classes for very long and some of your teachers were very new to the school. Even so, we have asked the school to make sure that your work is never too hard or too easy and that you always know what you have to do to reach higher levels in the National Curriculum. This will mean looking more closely at the good records they keep about what you can already do and telling you what they want you to concentrate on learning next. You can help by continuing to try hard and by asking teachers what your own learning targets are.