

East Ardsley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107980
Local Authority	Leeds
Inspection number	287982
Inspection date	11 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Joe Peacock

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	358
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Steve Alleston
Headteacher	Mrs Jane Wedlinsky
Date of previous school inspection	21 January 2002
School address	Fall Lane East Ardsley Wakefield West Yorkshire WF3 2BA
Telephone number	0113 3862510
Fax number	01924 822373

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the school's strategies to raise standards at Key Stage 1 and for girls in mathematics, the quality of academic support and guidance for all pupils and if leaders and managers at all levels, including governors, are monitoring and evaluating the school effectively enough. Evidence was gathered from meetings with the headteacher and senior managers, governors, parents and pupils, visits to every classroom, the scrutiny of pupils' work, assessment data and documents as well as an analysis of the parent questionnaires which were returned to school. Some aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The school is situated in the centre of a commuter belt village and moved into a new building two years ago. It is larger than average. When they join the Nursery class, children's skills are broadly in line with those typical for their age. A significant proportion of children have speech and language problems. About 5% of pupils are from minority ethnic families. Only a very small number are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals and the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are both below average. The school has gained a number of nationally recognised awards including Investors in People and Investors in Pupils.

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 with some outstanding features and is providing good value for money. It has been mostly accurate in judging itself to be good in all areas.

The well managed Foundation Stage with the good quality of teaching and learning ensures that all children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes. In Years 1 and 2, there has been some disruption to pupils' learning caused by significant staff absence and this has resulted in a downward trend in overall standards over the past three years. In the national tests for Year 2 in 2007, standards were broadly average with girls performing much better than boys. Relatively few pupils attained above average standards in reading and mathematics and none did so in writing. There are encouraging signs that this trend has been halted with some improvements in the quality of teaching and successful strategies introduced to support and encourage boys to do better. By Year 2, pupils make satisfactory progress to attain broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics with an increasing number of girls and boys attaining above average standards.

Standards in Year 6 are above average in English and mathematics and significantly above average in science. In the 2007 national tests, the results show that high standards have been maintained in science. The quality of science work on display in most classes confirms science as a strength of the school. The school has responded well to the dip in standards in English and mathematics, caused by the higher than average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities last year by grouping pupils by ability for literacy and numeracy in some year groups. This allows new learning to be more sharply focused for pupils. An analysis of pupils' progress from school data clearly shows that most are making good progress. The more challenging targets for the current Year 6 in English and mathematics reflect the excellent, and improved, academic support and guidance being provided for individual pupils.

The school has been too modest in its evaluation of pupils' personal development and well-being, which are judged to be outstanding rather than good. 'He absolutely loves it' and 'School is welcoming and friendly' are typical comments made by parents. Excellent relationships exist between everyone in the school. Pupils have a very positive attitude towards their learning and their behaviour is outstanding. They clearly love coming to school and attendance is above average. A strength is the way in which staff praise and encourage pupils to do well. The Healthy School and Activemark Awards demonstrate pupils' secure knowledge and understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle. Community links are strong and pupils are exceptionally well prepared for their future as they learn by example from staff to be considerate and polite. The school is well on its way to achieving the next stage of the Stephen Lawrence award, which promotes racial tolerance, and understanding. The Year 2 assembly on friendship successfully reinforced the importance of being a good friend. Visits to a Hindu Temple and studying other cultures such as that of the Aborigines add further to pupils' understanding of other religions and cultures. Good literacy and numeracy skills along with pupils' positive attitudes equip them well for future learning.

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good and is directly responsible for pupils achieving as well as they do. Teachers' enthusiasm and the way learning is made fun, exciting and challenging are key strengths helping to create a purposeful atmosphere for learning throughout the school. For example, pupils in Year 1 enjoyed the game of finding numbers up to 100 on a blank grid and Year 5 created a movement sequence to music linked to the similes

in the Highwayman poem. Year 6 were highly motivated to write a character description after watching a film clip. Teaching in some instances is not as effective when tasks are not matched closely enough to pupils' ability level. The school knows about this relative weakness and is trying hard to eliminate it.

The good curriculum successfully motivates and challenges pupils by providing them with many interesting learning experiences. Boys in particular benefit from a curriculum which emphasises sport, adventure and excitement. Developing literacy and numeracy skills has a high profile. Guided reading sessions, learning letter sounds and using computer programmes to help those finding reading difficult are helping to raise standards. The ability groups in mathematics and extra support for girls are ensuring that they achieve as well as boys. In Years 1 and 2, the curriculum is sometimes not matched closely enough to meet pupils' differing needs and this affects pupils' rate of progress. Visits and an extensive range of activities every night after school enhance the provision; for example pupils said how much they enjoyed the film club, dance club and variety of sports clubs. All pupils learn French and some good links are being made between the different subjects. The Christmas shadow light boxes, for example, involved science and design skills.

Parents and pupils alike appreciate the outstanding level of care, support and guidance that the school provides for them. 'Second to none' was a typical parent's comment. It ensures that all enjoy coming to school. The whole staff has been involved in creating the very high level of care and support which results in such a warm, friendly atmosphere in school. Systems are firmly in place to ensure health, safety and child protection. A very close check is kept on the welfare of vulnerable pupils and there are excellent links with outside agencies to support this work. The specific needs of every pupil, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are carefully assessed using effective assessment procedures. These have been improved significantly and the school now has a detailed, accurate picture of how well individual pupils are doing and what each needs to do next. Care is taken to ensure that pupils who could fall behind in any area are quickly guided and supported. As a result, standards are rising.

The effective partnership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher ensures that staff work effectively as a team and that there is a good capacity to improve. The school improvement plan reflects the commitment of everyone to raise standards and the quality of education further for all pupils. Senior managers regularly monitor the quality of teaching and learning and other aspects of school life. Subject leaders are rapidly developing their involvement in the process. The school is well resourced with computers and these are used effectively to support pupils' learning. The governing body has a high level of expertise and all governors are fully committed to helping the school to improve. They are successfully developing their role in helping the school to monitor its effectiveness.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage and achieve standards that are above those expected in all areas of learning by the end of their Reception year.

As a result of effective teaching, children make good progress in all areas of learning and settle well into the calm, well structured environment. In the spacious Nursery class, children enjoy the exciting, practical activities provided for them such as building animal shelters and joining materials with sticky tape, glue or split pins. Stimulating learning activities and the close support of adults in the calm learning environment effectively promote children's speaking and listening

skills. The Nursery outdoor area is being developed but children do not have the same high quality activities planned for them outdoors as they do indoors.

Children in Reception are equally keen to take part in the good range of exciting learning activities provided for them. However, the Reception classroom is smaller than the Nursery and accommodates 45 children, which is the equivalent to one and a half classes. This results in overcrowding and a very busy learning environment with pressure on space for activities such as construction and role play. Boys, for example, did not have enough floor space to build their models. It is a credit to staff that they compensate so well for the lack of space. Pressure is eased a little when groups go outdoors to build an obstacle course or work on the floor in the corridor outside the class. The Foundation Stage is well managed with staff working effectively as a team to meet the needs of the children in their care. Sensitive care, support and guidance underpin the development of children's good personal and social skills and their growing ability to be independent. This is seen in how well children, including those who require extra support, manage to concentrate and enjoy their learning even though they have so much happening so close to them.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the proportion of pupils at Key Stage 1 who attain above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Ensure that children in Reception have enough space indoors to enjoy creative and role-play activities.

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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?	1
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	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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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

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?	1

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

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when I visited your lovely new school and please thank your parents for me for sending in so many of the inspection questionnaires. It was helpful to get their views about school. I was very impressed with how well all staff help to look after you and your excellent behaviour. There is a really calm, quiet atmosphere in school and I am sure that this helps you to concentrate as well as you do in lessons. Your good attendance shows how much you enjoy coming to school.

You are right to be proud of your school because it is a good one. Nursery and Reception children have lots of exciting and interesting things to do such as building animal shelters and obstacle courses, playing in the Chinese restaurant or hat shop and making a dancing hen. I can see why you do so well. I hope the school can find ways to give those of you in Reception a bit more room to enjoy your activities in the classroom.

In the rest of the school, your science work on display in most classes is of a high standard and you are doing well in literacy and numeracy in the junior classes. I enjoyed reading football poems by boys and the 'Wanted' posters in Year 6, especially the one for Cut Throat Bones! The movement session I saw in Year 5 with everyone responding brilliantly to the music and the light boxes creating Christmas shadows in Year 4 were other memorable things from my visit.

I have asked the school to help those of you in Years 1 and 2 to do much better with your reading, writing and mathematics. I am sure you will do your best to improve your work and reach a higher standard.

Your headteacher, governors and staff are doing a good job and working very hard to make your school even better. The range of after-school clubs for you to enjoy is excellent and it is a real achievement to have gained so many important awards for your school. Good luck with the next Stephen Lawrence award. I hope you get it.

Thank you again for helping me with this inspection. I hope that you will carry on enjoying school as much as you do now.