

Limeside Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105633
Local Authority	Oldham
Inspection number	308901
Inspection date	16 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Marie Cordey

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	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr Stphen Barrow
Headteacher	Mrs H Arya
Date of previous school inspection	23 February 2004
School address	Third Avenue Limeside Oldham Lancashire OL8 3SB
Telephone number	0161 6811756
Fax number	0161 6811756

Age group	3-11
Inspection date	16 November 2007
Inspection number	308901

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The following issues were investigated: pupils' achievement and standards; the quality of teaching and learning; pupils' personal development and well-being; the curriculum and other activities and how well the school's leadership promotes care and high standards. Evidence was gathered from observation of lessons, pupils' work, discussion with pupils, staff, the chair, vice chair of governors, parent governor and community cohesion governor, a scrutiny of school documents and parent questionnaires. Other 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, in its self-evaluation form, were not justified. These have been included, where appropriate, in the report.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized school set in an area of significant social and economic deprivation. A high number of pupils are eligible for free school meals and more than a quarter of the pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school is an Investor in People. It has gained the Healthy School award and attained an Activemark award for its sports provision.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Limeside is an outstanding school and provides the highest quality of care and education. Happiness and delight sum up the pupils' pleasure in learning and their care for each other. They are polite, enthusiastic and excellent ambassadors for their school and community. Underpinning the pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being are the headteacher's vision and dedication. This is variously described by pupils, parents, staff and governors as 'life changing', 'passionate and visionary'. All staff and pupils are motivated and supported to succeed.

Pupils make excellent progress to achieve above average standards from low starting points. Pupils are articulate, knowledgeable and excited by investigative enquiry. Their vocabulary is sophisticated because of the high levels of challenge in their learning. For example, a Year 4 pupil talked at length about going beyond basic learning to 'meta-learning'. Reading skills have improved significantly in Years 1 and 2 because of the way letter sounds are taught. Even so, in Years 3 to 6 spelling accuracy and reading comprehension ability, although in line with national expectations, are not as advanced as pupils' writing. Weekly philosophy lessons lead pupils to ask probing questions, to consider different points of view and to adopt an intellectual response to problem solving. For example, a typical pupil summed up the difference between working and learning thus: 'Working is just a thing that is a case of getting it right but learning helps us to work out how to get things right.' Pupils develop into reflective, confident and considerate members of society. The 'Awe, wonder and worship', assemblies celebrate and reflect people from different backgrounds and cultures and extend pupils' awareness beyond school. The weekly celebration assemblies are attended regularly by parents and volunteers because it is 'the highlight of the week'. All pupils sing with gusto and in harmony; especially the song 'Every Child Matters' written by children from a local special school. Parents said that this 'brings them to tears because it is so moving'. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they delight in coming to school. Pupils eat healthily and sociably in the dining room and exercise regularly. They are exceedingly tolerant and respectful members of their community.

Outstanding teaching and learning revolves around planning work to precisely match individual needs. This includes joint planning and excellent deployment of the teaching assistants. That is why pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, severely disabled pupils, the gifted and talented and looked-after pupils make the same outstanding progress as other pupils. The pupils are very involved in lessons and buzz with enthusiasm because they are nurtured to develop their potential, talent and individuality.

Pupils relish the outstanding curriculum and the opportunities it gives them to use first-hand experiences in their work. Subjects are all linked and planned to improve the pupils' key skills. Consequently, in a literacy lesson pupils in Year 2 improved their skills in information and communication technology by word processing letters to 'The Ugly Duckling'. Pupils developed their scientific knowledge by devising experiments linked to Charlie and the Chocolate Factory in Year 4 and communicated their reasoned views on education in the published book What If? All pupils possess a remarkable ability to manage business affairs owing to lessons on project management. Their success in gaining the approval of a business leader from the television programme 'Dragon's Den' has resulted in pupils forming their own small business. They delight in coming to school and would like it to be open in the evening and at weekends.

At the heart of the school's character is the drive and commitment of its leaders. That pupils face many barriers to their learning acts as a spur for leaders. They develop excellent systems to develop learning and meet the varied needs of the pupils. The outstanding senior leadership encourages pupils to take on responsibility and this helps them to prepare for their futures. Pupils reach challenging targets. However, in Key Stage 2, reading skills, although in line with national expectations, are not yet as high as those in writing. Overall, excellent leadership and management ensure that arrangements for safeguarding pupils are appropriate and the care, guidance and support for pupils are excellent. Links with outside supporters, such as the community housing association, educational psychologists, attendance officers and local authority partners, make an outstanding contribution to pupils' well-being and achievement. The school understands itself well but judges its performance too harshly. This is because governors and staff strive for perfection and always consider that there is more to be done. Nevertheless, self-evaluation is searching and reflects the headteacher's requirement for thoroughness and depth in all the school's actions. Governors are very supportive and knowledgeable and they challenge the school very well. The school provides excellent value for money and has made outstanding improvements since the previous inspection. Limeside has excellent capacity to improve still further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children in the Foundation Stage are very well provided for and quickly settle into the Nursery and Reception classes. Leadership, teaching and learning are outstanding and children make excellent progress. From very low starting points when they join the Nursery, they make excellent progress. A significant number attain many of the early learning goals for their age by the end of the Reception year. The enthusiastic and committed staff team plan a range of activities to promote learning and are especially good at promoting children's personal development and well-being. The teaching of early writing skills and recognition of number is systematic and there are highly effective learning programmes to develop speaking and listening. Activities are stimulating and well planned so that children direct themselves in a series of learning activities ranging from outside play to working on the computer. Children have the opportunity to work and play outdoors at all times and this develops their communication skills and partnership building. Boys' physical skills, in particular, have developed considerably as a result of the outside provision, particularly in the construction centre. This impacts well on their handwriting. All staff contribute to very effective systems to track children's individual progress and an overview of the progress made by the class as a whole. Relationships with parents are very positive and parents are happy with their children's learning and social development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Spread the successful teaching of letter sounds in Years 1 and 2 to raise pupils' reading standards and spelling accuracy in Years 3 to 6.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
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	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

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?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
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	1
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 very much for the warm welcome you gave me when I came to visit your school. I would especially like to thank the pupils who met with me to talk about their views on the school and the many individual pupils who made a point of talking to me. I learned many of your names because you made me feel so much a part of the school. You are all very polite and enthusiastic and enjoy being at school.

Like you and your parents and carers, I think that yours is an excellent school because you learn very well and improve your standards, especially in mathematics, writing and science. You are happy to be in lessons and love being active and involved. You eat very healthy food and take an active part in physical education lessons and sporting activities. You are confident and cared for and your parents are very pleased with the school. This is because of the outstanding way that the school looks after you and the excellent work you do as part of your community. School assemblies are lovely and it is a treat to watch you sing at the tops of your voices and collect all your well earned prizes.

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes settle down very quickly and enjoy coming to school. They make excellent improvements to their work. I would like your school to further improve your reading skills in Years 3 to 6 by using the phonics you like so much when you are in Years 1 and 2. You can help by working with your teachers to develop your use of letter sounds when you are reading.

I wish you the very best for your future.