

Sandy Lane Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107219
Local Authority	Bradford
Inspection number	309343
Inspection dates	18–19 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Carmen Markham

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	312
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Diane MacBairdy
Headteacher	Ms Angela Woodthorpe
Date of previous school inspection	31 January 2005
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger than average primary school does not have a Nursery, and a significant number of children have had no pre-school education when they join Reception. The school draws pupils from an area of varied social and economic advantage, although the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is smaller than the national average. The school serves a changing population, and an increasing number of pupils' families originated in Pakistan. Currently 25% of pupils have links with Pakistan and approximately half these pupils enter school at the early stages of learning English. The percentage of pupils identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Sandy Lane Primary is a satisfactory school that is steadily improving. It has outstanding features in the Foundation Stage. The personal and social development of pupils and the care, guidance and support that the school offers them are good. Links with the community through the Intergenerational Project are outstanding.

The school has demonstrated that it has a good capacity to improve because good progress has been made since the last inspection. Improvements include changes to the structure of the leadership team, the role of governors and procedures for assessing and tracking the progress of pupils. The many improvements made by the school are attributable to the energy and enthusiasm of the headteacher, the capable school leadership team and to good governance. They all know the school's strengths and weaknesses well and develop good strategies to address identified areas for development. They work hard to embed initiatives relating to teaching and the curriculum, but these have yet to have a significant impact on pupils' achievement and standards, which could be higher. Therefore, the judgement for leadership and management is satisfactory. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

Pupils currently in Key Stage 2 entered the school with skills in line with those expected nationally. However, the changing school population means that many children now entering the Reception classes have literacy and numeracy skills that are below national expectations and social development that is well below expectations. Currently, following very effective reorganisation of the Reception classes, children are making excellent progress in the Foundation Stage. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 make satisfactory progress and attain the national average. Standards are beginning to rise. This reflects improved provision, particularly in relation to assessing and tracking pupils' progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make similar progress to their peers while those with English as an additional language make good progress.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Some good and outstanding lessons were seen, but many were satisfactory. This inconsistency is preventing standards in English, mathematics and science across the school from rising more rapidly. The more able pupils in both key stages are not attaining the higher levels because they are not sufficiently challenged in all lessons. The curriculum is satisfactory. A new curriculum designed to motivate and interest pupils has recently been introduced. It is beginning to improve learning but is still at an early stage of development.

The school works hard to involve parents in their children's learning through specific workshops and very good communications home. A typical comment from parents is, 'Parents are often asked to participate in the school through courses etc. which I have found extremely helpful to my understanding of my child's education.' Pupils grow quickly in maturity as, from the Foundation Stage onwards, staff make demands of them to promote their independence. By Year 6, they are effective members of the school community and the wider world beyond school because their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Good relationships cement the harmonious atmosphere that percolates through school. Pupils enjoy school. They have a voice and feel that they are involved in ideas and decisions that affect them; for example concerning the development of the playground.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Recent improvements to the provision and organisation of the Foundation Stage, in particular the emphasis on literacy and mathematics, are enabling children to make excellent progress so the majority now exceed the expected levels of attainment at the end of the Reception year. Children develop good personal and social skills because relationships are strong and staff have high expectations that children will become independent learners. They have good access to information and communication technology (ICT) and a quality outdoor play area. Good planning ensures that these are well used and that play and work match the needs of the children. Exemplary marking of children's work helps them to understand what they need to do next. The Foundation Stage leader and her team are working very effectively to ensure that children have access to quality learning experiences. Assessment is regular and thorough and children who need extra support are quickly identified and helped. There is good provision for children who enter the school speaking little English. Parents are kept very well informed of their child's progress and they are encouraged to support their learning. Children work and play happily together. They all follow school routines sensibly and enjoy the opportunity to participate in joint activities.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement in English, mathematics and science.
- Improve the quality of the teaching so all pupils experience good teaching.
- Extend the challenge and provision for the more able pupils.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged as satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

In 2007 standards rose and were in line with the national average in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6, although too few pupils attained the higher Level 5. Standards at the end of Year 2 were also in line with the national average but too few pupils attained the higher Level 3. Inspection evidence demonstrates that standards are rising throughout the school and are now a little above average in Year 6. Until recently, pupils entered the school with skills and knowledge in line with national expectations. As they leave school with standards in line with the national average they are making satisfactory progress. However, progress is accelerating because the performance of all pupils is carefully monitored and additional help and support in English and mathematics is given to pupils who need it. Overall, boys and girls make similar progress despite some annual variation. Pupils who do not speak English at home do not do as well as their peers at the end of Year 2 but by the end of Year 6 they have made good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' good personal development is reflected in their positive attitudes, good behaviour and enjoyment of school. Although pupils enjoy and value school, attendance is average as, despite the school's best efforts, some parents take children on extended holidays or do not ensure

that they attend regularly. Pupils value being part of a harmonious community that has a strong respect for other people and other faiths. They show a good awareness of how to stay safe and healthy and are proud of their Healthy School award. They look after each other; they say that the rare instances of bullying are dealt with promptly and that they always have adults to turn to for help. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the community. They enjoy taking responsibility in school as council members, 'buddies', playground mediators and sports leaders. Their many community links include links with the local church and nursing homes. Pupils' preparation for the next stage of education and the world of work is satisfactory. They have good personal, social and computer skills and are developing financial awareness through the school banking system managed by pupils. However, their basic skills in literacy and numeracy, although improving, could be higher.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching, although improving, is inconsistent. The quality of teaching seen ranged from outstanding to satisfactory. As a result, the progress that pupils make is patchy and their achievement is satisfactory. Teachers assess pupils' work carefully and accurately to check on their progress. Teachers make good use of assessment to help them to plan lessons to meet the needs of pupils. In spite of this, not all pupils are making the progress of which they are capable; for example, there are times when there is insufficient challenge for the more able pupils. The school has a good marking policy that is well used by some teachers to set targets and provide helpful guidance. However, the policy is not used consistently so pupils do not always know what to do to improve their work.

In all classes, good relationships and the good use of praise promote pupils' self-esteem. Teachers manage pupils well, making for calm, well ordered classrooms. Good use of interactive whiteboards and other resources engage pupils well and teachers explain things clearly. Those pupils who have English as an additional language are well supported by effective teaching assistants. Pupils mainly enjoy their lessons and they are willing learners.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum satisfactorily meets the needs of the various groups of pupils, for example those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. There are times when lessons do not meet the needs of the more able pupils because they lack challenge. The school has recently begun the process of re-designing its curriculum into topics which make meaningful links between the different subjects, helping pupils to be creative and acquire important skills. This is beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' learning and enjoyment. Increasingly good use is made of ICT to support the curriculum. French is taught throughout the school and good links are made to other curriculum areas, particularly English. A well planned personal, social and health education programme helps pupils to understand how to stay safe and healthy. They enjoy taking exercise through the good range of sporting activities. Well planned enrichment activities, including the good number of visitors and visits, the out-of-school clubs and opportunities to perform in front of an audience, effectively support pupils' personal development and add to their enjoyment of school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides a particularly effective pastoral management team of teachers and support staff. They work well together to supervise and meet pupils' individual needs. Pupil target setting and tracking systems have been significantly revised since the last inspection. Pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science is now very carefully monitored on a half-termly basis. Action is speedily provided where necessary and the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are closely and efficiently matched to the skills of the large number of good teaching assistants. Individual pupil targets are used to promote academic improvement, but there is some inconsistency in the quality and use of targets. Parents are well informed of their child's learning and progress and are increasingly involved in the work of the school.

Safeguarding procedures are in place. Pupils are safe and happy in this diverse but racially harmonious environment. The headteacher has quite rightly placed a strong emphasis on health and safety while maintaining and developing a welcoming, well maintained and open environment.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher, the leadership team and the governors have a clear vision for the school. They aspire to high standards and good achievement for all pupils. They set challenging targets that are now beginning to be met although too few pupils reach the higher levels. Although they are modest in their evaluation of some of the aspects of their work, they know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. Monitoring is thorough, systematic and well documented. Therefore, appropriate priorities for improvement have been identified and a full range of strategies has been effectively implemented. This includes the introduction of a rich and innovative curriculum that is beginning to make learning exciting and relevant, and very strong community links. Since the previous inspection the school has made significant progress. Of particular note is the development of the role of the leadership team and governors. This has improved the management of the curriculum and teaching. Staff, resources and the learning environment are all used efficiently to improve learning. Staff are supported well and helped to improve their skills. The school is an active learning community involving leaders, governors, staff, pupils and parents in understanding learning and developing their skills to support the school.

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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?	3
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	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

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	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
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?	3
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	3
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	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

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

On behalf of the inspection team I would like to thank you for making us so welcome in your school. You helped us to find our way around the school and we enjoyed looking at the beautiful displays of your work, especially the very original decorative eggs in the main corridor. We also enjoyed talking to you and finding out about your school council and the work you do in lessons.

We think that your headteacher and the staff all work hard to make your school successful. We judge it to be a satisfactory school with some things that are good or excellent. The staff look after you well and most of you feel safe and happy in school. You make progress in lessons because your teachers plan them carefully so most of you have work that suits you. They also make sure that they involve you in a lot of interesting topics, activities and visits so that you can practise new skills and improve your understanding of the world.

Most of you attend school regularly and arrive on time. As you all behave well you are able to listen and learn. We noticed that you take good care of each other so that you can all enjoy school. You also know how to stay healthy and safe and make the most of all the exciting activities the school provides during and after school. One of these activities is the Intergenerational Project where you work with people in the community. We think this work is outstanding.

One of the reasons for our visit was to see how your school can improve. We have asked your school to help you to make even better progress than you are making now so as to raise your standards in English, mathematics and science. We have also asked teachers to improve the quality of their teaching in some lessons and to make sure that work is not too easy for those pupils who learn very quickly.