

Laycock Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107263
Local Authority	Bradford
Inspection number	309358
Inspection dates	10–11 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Gill Hepworth

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	79
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr P Simpson
Headteacher	Mrs L Proctor
Date of previous school inspection	4 October 2004
School address	Laycock Lane Laycock Keighley West Yorkshire BD22 0PP
Telephone number	01535 605916
Fax number	01535 600761

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	10–11 July 2008
Inspection number	309358

© Crown copyright 2008

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.

Description of the school

This small school is situated in a village near Keighley. Most pupils come from a local housing estate. Pupils are taught in one of four classes. The overall proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above that found nationally. There are currently no pupils with a statement of special educational need. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The small number of pupils who regularly join the school in Years 3 to 6 from other schools has a proportionally bigger impact due to its small size. The school has undergone considerable changes in staffing since 2006, including the appointment of a new headteacher. The school holds the Healthy Schools Award and Activemark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Laycock Primary provides a satisfactory education with a number of good features. The headteacher, school leaders and governors have enabled the school to recover from a recent period of upheaval and have had particular success in creating a happy and welcoming environment where pupils grow in confidence and self-esteem. The strong priority given to ensuring pupils' good personal development makes them well placed to improve their academic achievement. Carefully tailored support helps those with emotional and behavioural problems as well as those who join the school part-way through their primary education. Pupils' behaviour is good. They enjoy coming to school, taking responsibilities and getting involved in activities. They have a good understanding of the need to maintain a healthy lifestyle and contribute well to the school and wider community.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Good teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 enable most pupils to make good progress so that the majority of pupils reach nationally expected levels by the end of Year 2. Standards in Year 6, while below average, are nowhere near as low as they were last year. Although there are examples of good teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6, pupils' progress is uneven. This is because in the past some groups of pupils experienced a great many staff changes which slowed their learning. Currently, the 'catch up' in learning is accelerating, particularly in writing and science in Years 4 and 5. However, there has not been time to eliminate fully the gaps that exists in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. Considering pupils' starting points, achievement is satisfactory overall.

Despite facing a number of significant challenges since her appointment, the headteacher has set the school on a carefully chosen pathway of improvement. Her clear vision and determination are paying off. She has successfully motivated her relatively new staff team and there is a shared vision for school improvement. Staff welcome opportunities for further training and, as a result, the quality of teaching and learning are improving. Effective partnerships with outside agencies and organisations further support this positive picture. The curriculum, while good, does not yet provide enough opportunities for pupils to strengthen and develop their key skills through linking learning between subjects. The overall quality of care, guidance and support is good. Staff take very good care of pupils and there are robust systems to ensure that pupils are safeguarded well. Marking usually offers advice as well as praise. However, pupils are not always clear about their targets or what they have to do to achieve them and this slows their progress.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The relatively small staff team is clear about its role in checking pupils' progress and evaluating how well the school is doing to meet its priorities. There is a realistic and sensible way forward, with a clear priority to speed up pupils' progress. The changes already made are providing a very positive platform upon which to achieve this goal and parents' views support this. Governors provide good oversight of the school. These initiatives demonstrate the school's good capacity to improve in the future, even though as yet, there has not been sufficient time to increase pupils' progress fully across all year groups.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in Reception thrive in the secure, lively, stimulating environment and their learning moves on at a good pace. When they join the Foundation Stage, children's skills are generally

below national expectations, although there is a wide range of ability. Children enthusiastically take part in a good range of stimulating and fun learning activities which meet their needs well. They enjoy using the quality role play area and such practical activities increase children's capacity to concentrate for extended periods of time. Consequently, children in the Foundation Stage make good progress from their starting points with a number reaching expected levels by the time they start in Year 1. The balance between activities chosen by children and learning led by adults is generally adjusted as the children approach the end of Reception. This aids a smooth transition to Year 1. Leadership and management are good. Foundation Stage staff are currently working hard to improve the outside learning area.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and improve achievement, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
- Develop the curriculum to provide more exciting and challenging opportunities for pupils to consolidate and improve their key skills across a range of subjects.
- Ensure that all teachers involve pupils in setting individual targets and check that pupils know how to improve their work so that they move forward in their learning more rapidly.

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

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. There is a rising trend of attainment by the end of Year 2. Standards have risen to broadly average, which represents good progress during Key Stage 1. Pupils joining the school in Years 3 to 6 often arrive with much lower attainment but they achieve satisfactorily. Irregular progress in all subjects between Year 3 and 6, which caused the low standards in the past, is being eliminated even for those who are admitted later than most. The attainment and progress of all pupils are accurately analysed and extra support provided for those who may be underachieving. As a result, pupils are making satisfactory progress overall even though standards are below average in the current Year 6. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make similar progress to their classmates largely due to the additional provision they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils have good attitudes to learning and are keen to participate in lessons and activities after school. As older pupils say, 'School is good fun.' They recognise how much they have benefited from the recent changes. Behaviour is good, although occasionally some older pupils become restless in lessons and sometimes lose concentration. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils take on responsibilities such as setting up the hall for assembly. Links with the local village give pupils a wider perspective of life beyond school. Pupils get on well with one another and show sensitivity to the needs of others. As a result, they contribute well to the creation of a safe and secure environment. Pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles is good. They enjoy sporting activities and make good efforts to eat healthily. The school council successfully considers ways to improve school life. Rates of attendance are satisfactory. The school does all it can to support pupils who do not attend regularly. Given their progress in basic skills, pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the next step in education and future life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The rigorous system of assessment has virtually eliminated lessons where pupils make too little progress. Currently, teaching is often good and has some outstanding elements but is satisfactory overall in its impact on pupils' learning because it is taking time to close the gaps in pupils' skills and knowledge created by previous staffing disruption. Teaching is well planned, optimistic in its approach and effective in getting all pupils to contribute practically and orally. In the best lessons teachers and pupils share the task of evaluating learning and lessons maintain a good pace but this practice is not yet consistent. Not all teachers ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of how well they are doing or what they need to learn next. Behaviour is well managed and teachers have good relations with their pupils. Teaching assistants are well deployed and make a big difference to the quality and pace of pupils' learning, especially when they give special support to a group of pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum has a good effect on pupils' personal development and contributes well to their increase in learning. The influence of the curriculum is not stronger because pupils' progress is not yet fast enough. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are supported well in their learning by a range of 'hands on' activities. A visit to the seaside, for example, effectively supports their personal and social development. Links between subjects to add challenge and excitement to learning are developing well in Years 1 and 2. Opportunities to widen key skills across a range of subjects in Years 3 to 6 are not as strong. Nevertheless, weekly enrichment afternoons in Key Stage 2 are helping develop talents and investigative skills. Lunchtime sports and Taekwondo sessions add to pupils' enjoyment of school. Learning French provides a 'flavour' of life in another country. Regular visits and visitors are successful in broadening horizons and bringing relevance to learning. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from a tailor-made curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

These aspects have been strengthened owing to the need to accommodate a significant proportion of pupils who arrive at irregular intervals throughout the school year. The learning mentor provides a key role in supporting these pupils and they settle in quickly as a result. Pupils generally feel safe and well cared for because rules are established and security is a high priority. Consequently, this is a happy and orderly school. Pupils respond well to the strong advice from adults about keeping fit, healthy and safe. Protection procedures for pupils, adult vetting and risk assessments are in place and working. The headteacher has introduced an effective way of regularly assessing and checking the progress each pupil is making. All pupils have academic targets. However, not all teachers ensure that pupils are fully aware of their targets to improve their English and mathematics or of what they need to do in order to achieve them.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher and the assistant headteacher share a clear commitment to raising standards. They have worked together well to steer the school successfully through a challenging period. This is resulting in better achievement. It is currently too soon for this strong impetus to be demonstrated in sustained success but it is clear from all that has been achieved so far that the capacity for it to happen is strong. Standards are rising. The school knows its strengths and what to do to improve academic achievement. It has made a good start; in for example, the way in which Year 5 pupils are currently being prepared for Year 6 is extremely apt and fully supported by staff. Staff relatively new to the school understand their roles and responsibilities and have begun to be involved in checking the quality of the school's work. However, this aspect of their work needs to be developed further. Governance is good. The governing body understands what needs to be done to improve standards and achievement and is now using the information from academic assessment to monitor pupils' achievements. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

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?	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	2
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	2
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?	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?	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I would like to thank you for the warm welcome you gave me. I enjoyed talking to you about your work, speaking to the staff and joining you in lessons, in the dining hall and in assembly. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education which is rapidly getting better.

This is what I particularly liked about your school.

- Children in the Reception class make a good start in the school.
- You are happy at school, behave well and know how to stay fit and healthy.
- You particularly enjoy educational visits and the 'penalty shoot-out' competition. This tells me that you do far more than the daily reading, writing and mathematics.
- Your headteacher and all the adults at school work hard, look after you well and make lessons interesting.
- You are polite and behaviour is good, although sometimes a few of you lose concentration.

Here are some things we have asked your headteacher and teachers to do.

- To make sure all of you, especially those of you in Years 3 to 6, do as well as you can to improve your work.
- Provide even more exciting and challenging activities for you to improve your skills across a range of subjects.
- Share targets with you so that you can improve your work and make even better progress.

You can help too by making sure you know your targets and doing your very best to achieve them.

I wish you well in the future.