

Oxenhope CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107349
Local Authority	Bradford
Inspection number	309389
Inspection dates	12–13 December 2007
Reporting inspector	Judy Jones

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	147
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr A Bennett
Headteacher	Mr M Wragg
Date of previous school inspection	10 November 2003
School address	Cross Lane Oxenhope Keighley West Yorkshire BD22 9LH
Telephone number	01535 642271
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small school serving the village of Oxenhope and its surroundings. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds, and English is the home language for all. The proportion of pupils having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average overall, though the proportion with a statement of special educational need is above average. Fewer than average pupils are entitled to free school meals. The number on roll fluctuates from year to year and is currently a little lower than at the time of the previous inspection. A new deputy headteacher was appointed 18 months ago and an inclusion manager was appointed at the start of the school year. The school holds the Healthy Schools Award, the Sports Activemark and is a Football Association Charter Standard school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. It has important areas of strength and its capacity to improve is good. Pupils enjoy school, attend regularly and behave well in lessons and at playtime and lunchtime. They are confident and self-assured and are polite to visitors and teachers because of the supportive and safe environment the school provides. Most pupils are keen to learn and can be trusted to work sensibly and independently. Parents are very supportive and many are very pleased with the school, but a significant number of questionnaires received during the inspection commented on the variability of teaching, and a number feel the school should communicate better with parents. In the inspection it was found that information given to parents with children in the Reception class is extremely good, but the information elsewhere is inconsistent in quality and detail about the curriculum.

Teaching is satisfactory overall but of inconsistent quality in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Consequently, pupils' achievement, though satisfactory is also inconsistent. Standards at the beginning of Year 1 are above average and are above average by the end of Year 2. Similarly, standards at the end of Year 6 are generally above average by about the same margin as at the end of Year 2. In lessons the most able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged; sometimes they wait quietly for the others to catch up. A new system for identifying pupils who are at risk of underachieving has been in place for three terms, and this is already helping to identify individuals and groups of children who need additional support in particular subjects or skills. Information from assessment shows that progress is improving and many pupils are making good progress in most years. However, less effective teaching in some classes is preventing all pupils from making good progress. The good quality curriculum is enriched through the effective development of information and communication technology (ICT) skills in many subjects, and through visits and links with external organisations.

The school has undergone significant staff changes in the last 18 months and this has led to important restructuring of the leadership team. There have also been a number of changes in middle management and at governor level. The leadership is handling these changes well and has used them as an opportunity to streamline systems for planning and monitoring. While not all the changes are fully embedded in the school's practice, senior and middle leaders, several of whom have recently joined the school are very focused on ways to improve teaching and achievement and the potential for improvement is therefore good. Improvement on the key areas identified at the previous inspection is satisfactory.

An immediate result of the changes in leadership has been the need for effective self-evaluation and the school has done this honestly and mainly accurately. Governors, too, have undertaken rigorous self-evaluation and restructuring. As a result, the school knows its strengths and areas for development very well. These are confirmed by the inspection outcomes.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children start in the Reception class in the academic year in which they have their fifth birthday, from a variety of pre-school backgrounds. Some come from local nurseries, some have been to playgroups, and a few have not been to either. As a result, children enter with a wide range of age and experience and the Reception teachers deal with this very well. Although children enter with a wide range of skills, overall they are broadly as expected for their age. By the end of

Reception, children exceed the goals set for them nationally in all areas of learning. A good three-day transition programme enables teachers to gather much useful information about incoming children, and further observation and assessment once children join the school is used very well to match the teaching to the learning. Parents speak highly of the good progress their children make and the praise is well deserved. Teaching is based on a very thorough assessment of individual progress. Teachers and assistants are caring and kind and children develop good social skills from their examples of high standards of courtesy and politeness. Communication with parents about curriculum, events and individual children's progress is exceptionally good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure teaching in Years 1 to 6 is consistently good so that pupils, particularly the most able, maintain the good achievement established in the Foundation Stage.
- Improve communication with parents so that they are better informed about events and curriculum, and about school policies such as homework and marking.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged 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

Provisional results in tests at the end of Year 6 in 2007 show standards to be above average, in all subjects tested. While these results fluctuate year by year because of the varying ability of the small number of pupils, the achievement of pupils in relation to their individual starting points has remained satisfactory for the last three years. Standards seen in lessons are generally above average in most years, though there is a wide spread of ability overall. The focus on improving writing has been successful in raising standards in this area; by the end of Year 6 most pupils can write for a range of purposes and spell and punctuate accurately. Pupils use a range of computer programs competently.

Until recently, teachers did not set sufficiently demanding targets for all pupils, but the tracking process introduced in January 2007 is enabling senior leaders and classroom teachers to keep a close watch over pupil's progress and to set ambitious targets in all classes. The full impact of this has yet to be felt but information from tracking is being used already to see which classes and individuals need additional support to ensure all meet the school's targets. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities progress as well as the rest.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are positive about school and their enjoyment in the best lessons and in the extra-curricular activities is a pleasure to see. They respond well to the good example set by all adults to treat each other with respect. Following the recommendation in the previous inspection report, the school has given pupils more opportunities to take responsibility and they have responded conscientiously and reliably. The school council is taken seriously by the school and governors and has had an impact on a number of developments, including setting priorities for refurbishment. Spiritual development is good and reinforced by the good links with local churches. Cultural education, through, for example, very good music provision, is

good. Links with other schools, particularly ones with more ethnically diverse populations, enrich pupils' experience and build firm foundations for their future life in a multicultural society. In addition, standards in numeracy, literacy and ICT prepare pupils well for their future economic well-being. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good, partly because the pupils themselves have high expectations of each other and do not want bad behaviour in their school. Attendance is good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching has many strengths and at its best is outstanding, but it is uneven and for a significant minority of pupils it is not sufficiently challenging. The senior leadership has good knowledge of these strengths and weaknesses and is providing suitable support where necessary. At its best, teaching is very well matched to the levels of understanding of individual pupils. In a Year 1 numeracy lesson learning about halves, some pupils reinforced the concept by folding paper shapes in half, while others designed a pattern of coloured squares with two colours in with equal numbers of each colour. Pupils enjoy and learn from activities such as impromptu mock interviews in a lesson on question techniques.

However, in satisfactory lessons not enough is expected of the most able, and sometimes work of too low a standard is accepted. Some work is marked very carefully, but some marking is mainly encouragement without enough indication of how to improve. In all classes the high quality work of the support assistants is an important strength in pupils' learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is broader than could be expected for a small school because the leadership takes very good advantage of additional music and sporting opportunities. Pupil's successes in inter-school sport and in appearances in stage productions in Bradford are celebrated and respected and help to increase the confidence and extend the aspirations of all. There is good provision for physical education and swimming, and ICT is taught well and used widely by pupils of all ages. The statutory curriculum is covered fully and enriched further through the links with the local churches. Pupils speak enthusiastically and knowledgeably about the many trips and visits that broaden their knowledge in a number of subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school is a harmonious and supportive community. Arrangements are in place to ensure the safeguarding of pupils and promote their safety and well-being. Pupils and adults are at ease with each other and rules are sensible, few, and not oppressive. Pupils feel they can talk to teachers and that they are listened to respectfully. The school council thinks, with some justification, that the rewards and sanctions system needs to be reviewed and that rewards need to be more attractive and recognise achievement more clearly. Bullying is rare and dealt with quickly as a rule. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is satisfactory; gifted and able children are identified but sufficient additional provision has yet to be made. This was an issue in the previous inspection report.

Targets for individual education plans are clear and appropriate. The wider use of targets for raising pupils' achievement is beginning to be used by most teachers most of the time but is not yet fully embedded in practice.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The senior leadership team and the governing body are united in their focus on raising academic standards. A number of strategies have been put in place to improve the consistency of practice in teaching and assessment. Most middle managers are new in their roles and have yet to make an impact on standards, but their plans for developing the curriculum in line with the new framework are good. Support from the local authority is used efficiently. Monitoring teaching by senior leaders is effective. Subject coordinators play a key part in training and supporting colleagues but their monitoring role is not yet fully defined or practiced.

The leadership manages the fluctuating numbers of pupils on roll very well. This necessitates a number of mixed age classes and grouping of these changes year by year. However, pupils and teachers adapt to this well and parents are usually satisfied with the arrangements.

Parents support the school well but are not always as informed as they would like about what is happening in school. The Foundation Stage is an exception: high quality newsletters tell parents about the curriculum and events in the Reception class.

Governors are a strength of the school. There is a good mix of experience and new blood and a wealth of informed enthusiasm. Governors have realistic ambitions for the school and help to guide the school through very active involvement in its work.

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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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	2
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?	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?	3

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	3
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	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 making me so welcome when I visited the school. I very much enjoyed being with you in lessons, talking to you and seeing you perform in the Christmas plays. I was particularly impressed with your singing because you are so enthusiastic and tuneful. You made me feel at home and it was a pleasure to have lunch with you and see how healthily you eat. Your school provides you with a satisfactory standard of education.

The school is a safe place where people know each other well. As a result, you are growing up into confident kind people who can think for themselves. Your school council represents you very well and has a lot of good ideas.

You learn well in most lessons. You use computers very well and better than many adults, and I have asked your teachers to see that you have work that stretches you in all your lessons. This will help you to do even better in subjects such as numeracy and literacy. You will be able to play your part here by trying very hard even if the work sometimes seems difficult at first.

Some of your parents would like more information about what you are learning, about the events happening in school, and how your work is marked. I have asked your teachers to see that parents and carers are given more details about these matters.

I would like to wish you all the best for the future.