

# New Road Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107518
<b>Local Authority</b>	Calderdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	309421
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ronald Cohen

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	79
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr R Booth
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr C Rowland
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 March 2004
<b>School address</b>	Sowerby New Road Sowerby Bridge West Yorkshire HX6 1DY
<b>Telephone number</b>	01422 831351
<b>Fax number</b>	01422 831862

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

New Road Primary is a much smaller than average school, with declining numbers. Pupils are almost exclusively from White British families. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is more than double the national average. Some year groups are as small as eight. This means that non-attendance or underperformance by one or two pupils has dramatic effects on overall test results. Mobility of pupils is volatile. The arrivals are, increasingly, children with learning and/or behavioural difficulties. More than two-thirds of pupils require some form of additional help and/or care. In 2006, the school had a building programme, which meant decamping to a local church for several months, where pupils were taught in the pews of the church.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and improving school with some good features. These are founded on the school's strengths which lie in the outstanding quality of its pastoral support and care for pupils. In this, it uses its very good partnerships with other agencies to enhance the provision for pupils. The school is warm and welcoming and the provision of an exciting range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities enhances pupils' learning.

However, there are some weaknesses which detract from the school's overall effectiveness. For example, achievement, despite being good in the Foundation Stage and in the final years of school, is only satisfactory overall, because of the poor performance of pupils at Key Stage 1 during recent years. Although strategies taken by the school have successfully resulted in these trends being reversed, nevertheless, the school recognises the need to continue to improve standards in all core subjects in this key stage. The weakness of Key Stage 1 has left a three-part legacy for Key Stage 2. First, the particularly low levels of skills in writing mean that this is the weakest subject at Key Stage 2 and continues to need support. Second, the amount of lost ground that pupils have to make up in their learning limits the standards they attain by the time they finish Year 6, despite their good achievement overall in Key Stage 2. Third, because the teachers in the upper part of the school have concentrated so much on countering the effects of the pupils' Key Stage 1 experience, they have not taken up opportunities to develop the full capacity of the higher ability pupils. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are very close to average.

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. They make good use of the many opportunities created by the school for them to exercise responsibility. Their attendance has improved and is now satisfactory, as is their general behaviour. Their behaviour in class is related directly to the teaching they receive. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall: some elements are good, but they are not sufficiently replicated across the school. Where teaching is good, it is characterised by a fast pace of learning, high expectations of behaviour and good explanations. Where teaching is less strong, work is not always well matched to pupils' different abilities, explanations of what pupils must do are not always clear enough and some pupils who are distracted from their work go off task, and sometimes engage in unacceptable behaviour.

The curriculum offers all the subjects of the National Curriculum, but music and physical education are provided by external agencies. The school does not sufficiently monitor the provision by these agencies to ensure that the programmes of study are fully covered.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The senior leadership team's strong support for involvement in a national strategy, the Intensifying Support Programme, has contributed to the recent improvement in standards at Key Stage 1. Weaknesses in teaching in Key Stage 1 have been tackled. Issues identified in the last inspection report have been resolved. Good use has been made of challenging targets to raise standards and achievement at Key Stage 2. A more concerted and robust monitoring of all these aspects is planned for the future. The school provides satisfactory value for money. The quality of its self-evaluation is satisfactory overall. The school has improved since the last inspection and has a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children's skills when they start school are below those typical for their age, particularly their communication and language skills and their social and emotional development. Sensitive induction arrangements assist in establishing a strong partnership with parents. This helps children to settle quickly by encouraging them to feel confident and safe. Children behave well, work well together and listen well. In their time in the Foundation Stage they make good progress and most reach standards close to those expected for their age by the start of Year 1. Progress in reading is particularly good because of the well-planned opportunities that help children understand the links between letters and sounds. However, speaking skills remain weak for a number of children who find it hard to explain what they are doing. Good use of the space and resources, internal and external, offers a wide variety of stimulating activities. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Recent good initiatives by the newly appointed coordinator have ensured that meticulous assessment procedures are now in place. However, checks on the quality of teaching have not had time to become sufficiently embedded to ensure that progress is as good as it could be.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in all core subjects at Key Stage 1 and in writing at Key Stage 2, and ensure that pupils of higher ability attain the appropriate higher levels in national tests.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is at least good in all classes.
- Ensure that more robust monitoring embraces all areas of the curriculum.

A small proportion of 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

Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils enter the school with skills below those expected at their age. Standards by the end of Year 6 in 2007 were below average. However, the overall rate of progress is not uniform across the school. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage and they enter Year 1 with standards appropriate for their age. In Key Stage 1, over the three years to 2006, the rate of progress slowed: standards in all subjects continued to decline and remained significantly below average. In 2007, the decline was halted, but not reversed. Current evidence, however, indicates that the strategies employed by the school are having effective impact. There is a definite upward trend and a strengthening picture. Pupils are now making satisfactory progress. Current standards in Key Stage 1 have improved, though they are still below average. In the current Year 6, pupils' work and interim test results indicate that standards are very close to average and that this group of pupils is achieving well. This is testimony to the hard work of the teachers in Key Stage 2. However, they recognise that writing continues to be relatively weaker than other subjects. Targets for 2008 are challenging but the evidence shows that they are realistic. The good support which the school gives to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities allows them to make at least satisfactory progress. However, the more able pupils are not challenged enough and their progress is more uneven.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Their cultural development is particularly well provided for, giving them a strong awareness of other cultures and world faiths. Behaviour throughout school is satisfactory. Where tasks in lessons are not sufficiently challenging, or the pace of learning is too slow, pupils lose interest and their concentration wavers. Attendance, which has been below average in recent years, has improved recently and is now satisfactory. Pupils respond enthusiastically to any responsibilities given to them. Pupils' contribution to the community, both within and outside the school, is another developing strength. For example, their work has resulted in the provision of a park/playground, not in school but in an area nearby, where large numbers of the pupils live. These experiences are effective in preparing pupils for the future. However, weaknesses in key skills, such as writing, affect their potential future economic well-being. Most pupils have a good understanding of the importance of leading a fit and healthy lifestyle. They engage in many of the sporting activities promoted by the school. They understand the importance of healthy eating, but do not always avail themselves of the opportunities to eat healthily.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, but range in quality. Good teaching is typified by lessons progressing at a fast pace with activities that challenge pupils. Expectations are high and the match of work to the needs of individual learners is good. In such lessons, teachers use perceptive questioning that extends pupils' thinking. Where teaching is only satisfactory, there is often too much talking by the teachers. Pupils become passive recipients rather than active participants in their own learning. As a result, pupils lose concentration and progress slows. The quality of marking also varies in its contribution to raising standards. The best marking informs pupils clearly not only how well they have done, but also gives clear indications of what they need to do in order to improve. Such systems are not used consistently enough to challenge all pupils.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum ensures a satisfactory breadth and balance of subjects and there is evidence of the positive impact of some recent developments, such as the introduction of Spanish for pupils in Years 1 to 6. There is a good range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities, which includes a very popular ukelele band and ballroom dancing. The school does not monitor its provision of music and physical education sufficiently to ensure that pupils cover all the programmes of study which they need to complete in order to comply with the requirements of the National Curriculum.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good overall with some outstanding features. The pastoral care for pupils is outstanding. Staff know the pupils and their families well and this helps them to support any pupils experiencing learning difficulties and/or disabilities or emotional problems.

Procedures for safeguarding pupils meet all statutory requirements. Pupils say they feel safe and cared for. Support staff work hard to ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive the help they need during lessons. Relationships with outside agencies are very good and ensure the highest degree of care. The recently developed quiet room in school offers very good opportunities to give personal and emotional support to those pupils who need it. The lounge of the children's centre is also used well to provide guidance for parents in helping their children. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Pupils do not always have a sufficient understanding of what they need to do in order to improve their work and this restricts their progress.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management, including governance, are satisfactory. The headteacher and senior staff have set clear directions for the promotion of high standards of care. In this, they are very successful. They have not yet attained a similar degree of success in terms of promoting high standards of education throughout the school and they recognise that much more has to be done to raise standards and achievement. However, against the background of severe disruptions caused by a rebuilding programme, they have had success over the last year and this is shown in burgeoning standards and progress. Their determination to succeed is marked, as much as anything else, by their willingness to embrace the Intensive Support Programme which they are steering through the school with good effect. They are fully supported in this by their staff, who have taken on new middle management roles, which they are fulfilling with resolve. They recognise the need for more robust monitoring of all areas of the curriculum. Governors have a clear vision for the development of the school. They are fully committed to the achievement and well-being of pupils, but the lack of a full complement on the governing body has meant that they have not been sufficiently involved in monitoring how well the school is doing.

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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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	3
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?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	3
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	3
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

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

This letter is to tell you about the findings of the recent inspection and to thank you for taking the time to talk to me about your school and your work. The school provides you with a satisfactory education and I agree with what you told me - it is getting better and better. The headteacher and teachers have created a caring school community where you enjoy learning and feel safe. You mostly behave well in lessons and like to concentrate on your work. You also enjoy and benefit from the range of opportunities the school provides in clubs and visits to interesting places.

Some of you told me that you find some of the lessons less interesting than others because you just listen and do not do enough things for yourselves. I have asked the headteacher to make sure that all your classes are as interesting and challenging as they can be. I have also asked the headteacher and teachers to make sure you always understand what they have told you to do so that you all make good progress in every lesson and more of you reach the highest possible levels.

The headteacher is keen to keep improving the school and, with the staff, knows exactly what to do to make it even better. We have asked the teachers to concentrate on helping with your reading, writing and numeracy in Years 1 and 2 and to be especially careful to help you with your writing in Years 3 to 6. You may also notice that the headteacher comes round more often to check on all the subjects you study.

I wish you all the best for the future.