

Seven Hills Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107824
Local Authority	Leeds
Inspection number	309511
Inspection date	9 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Joe Peacock

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	378
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Dewhirst
Headteacher	Mrs P Potter
Date of previous school inspection	27 April 1998
School address	Appleby Way Morley Leeds West Yorkshire LS27 8LA
Telephone number	0113 2527194
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the role of subject leaders and governors in monitoring and evaluating school effectiveness; the quality of provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; and achievement and standards. Evidence was gathered from observations of lessons, discussions with senior managers, governors and pupils, and a scrutiny of pupils' work, school documents and parents' 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, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The school is situated in an historic market town on the outskirts of Leeds. It is much larger than average. Most pupils are of White British heritage with 8% coming from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds. The movement of pupils into and out of the school is broadly average but does affect some year groups more than others. The proportion entitled to free school meals and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are both average. A new headteacher and deputy headteacher joined the school 12 and 18 months ago respectively.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding features. It provides good value for money. The school's own evaluation of itself is accurate in almost all respects but the level of care, support and guidance is outstanding, rather than good as the school believes. This high level of support, guidance and care reassures pupils, builds their confidence and enables them to be successful. All clearly enjoy coming to school and have a good attitude to learning. 'We have great teachers.' was the view of the pupils in the school council. Equality of opportunity is outstanding enabling all pupils to achieve their potential.

Pupils make good and often very good progress as they move through the school. This is because underachievement is quickly spotted and appropriate action taken to improve pupils' progress. In the national tests for Year 2 in 2007, standards were above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. This is partly due to the consistently good quality of teaching in the smaller than average classes in Years 1 and 2. The strong emphasis in learning letter sounds in Year 1 is also having a positive impact on standards in literacy. The weakest performance was in writing with relatively few pupils achieving above average standards.

In the 2007 national tests for Year 6, standards overall were average in mathematics and science but below average in English. Standards in writing again adversely affected the performance in English. Nevertheless, the school's data clearly shows that almost all pupils made at least good progress. Most achieved well in relation to their prior attainment and this is due to the good quality of teaching and learning and high quality of support and guidance for individual pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are particularly well supported by skilled teaching assistants. The good quality of teaching is directly responsible for pupils enjoying school so much and for them achieving as well as they do. Teachers' enthusiasm and the way learning is made fun, exciting and challenging are key strengths helping to create a purposeful atmosphere for learning throughout the school.

The specific needs of every pupil are carefully assessed using effective assessment procedures. The school now has a detailed, accurate picture of how well individual pupils are doing and what each needs to do next. A recent development is to involve pupils more in assessing their own progress and this is helping pupils to improve markedly as they are clear about what is expected of them. Care is taken to ensure that the more able are successfully challenged in each class and that pupils who may be underachieving in any area are quickly guided and supported. As a result, all pupils make at least good progress throughout the school.

Pupils' personal development is good and reflects their positive attitude towards learning and good behaviour. 'The amount of bullying is so small: smaller than smaller than tiny.' according to the school council. Pupils clearly love coming to school and are extremely enthusiastic about their learning. Attendance is average and unauthorised absence has been successfully reduced by school initiatives which praise and reward attendance and punctuality. The Healthy School Award demonstrates pupils' secure understanding of how to live healthily. Community links are strong and pupils are exceptionally well prepared for their future as they learn by example from staff how to be kind, considerate and polite. All are proud of the Stephen Lawrence Award and good opportunities to develop cultural awareness equip them well for their future in multicultural Britain.

A lively curriculum, with an international flavour, links subjects imaginatively together so as to make learning relevant and fun for pupils. Pupils say that they enjoy the topics such as

'Chocolate'. Visits and an extensive range of activities further enhance provision. Computers are used effectively to support learning in most curriculum subjects.

Parents and pupils alike appreciate the outstanding level of care, support and guidance that the school provides. Systems are firmly in place to ensure health, safety and child protection. A very close check is kept on the welfare of vulnerable pupils and there are strong links with outside agencies to support this work.

Good leadership and management are driving the pace of change. The school improvement plan reflects the commitment of everyone to raise standards further, but there are too many priorities and some of these are not very precise. Nor is it made clear how the school will measure how successfully it has tackled these priorities. The governing body has a high level of expertise and governors visit often. Their role in helping to monitor school effectiveness is developing. Overall, the school has a good capacity to continue improving.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage has improved significantly because of effective leadership and management. This has resulted in consistently good teaching enabling children to enjoy their learning in an attractive and exciting indoor learning environment. There are plans to further improve the outdoor area to make it even more exciting and interesting. All children, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from the good quality of teaching and close adult support. This gives children confidence and encourages them to succeed. Children enter school with skills that are below average for their age. They make good progress and by the end of the Reception year almost all achieve the skills expected for their age and many exceed them. Most join Year 1 as happy, keen and confident learners. Exciting learning opportunities are carefully planned to stimulate children's curiosity and their desire to learn in the Nursery and two Reception classes. Speaking and listening are developed effectively but, in some areas in the Nursery, the opportunity to develop early writing skills is not sufficiently emphasised.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English with a particular focus on improving writing.
- In the school improvement plan, identify more clearly the key priorities for development and how success for each priority will be measured.

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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?	2
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?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

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	1
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
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?	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?	2
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	2
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	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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**

I really enjoyed my day with you. It is easy to see why you and your parents are so proud of your school. It is a good school. After visiting all your classes and talking to the school council members, I can see why you really enjoy being at school. It was good to see everyone getting on with one another and behaving so well.

Your teachers are working hard to plan lots of interesting things for you to do in lessons, on trips and in after school clubs. It was good to see you using computers so much and I can see why you like the topics you do. The topic on chocolate looks fun. I particularly liked the rainforest display in Year 3, but the wedding display in the Nursery was my favourite.

I enjoyed my visit to the Nursery and Reception. Everyone was so busy enjoying themselves. It was good to see all your work on display and to watch you working hard with all your helpers. Playing outdoors looked fun and I had to be careful not to get run over by speeding trikes!

You are so lucky that the school takes such very special care of you all and is quick to support you if you need help. It was good to see WALT being used in every lesson. I could see that all of you knew precisely what you were expected to learn every time. I have asked your teachers to plan plenty of opportunities for you to write in topics, literacy sessions and on the computers, so that you can all improve your writing.

Your new headteacher has done so much since starting at the school. Governors and staff know the school well and seem to have a big agenda for improving things. I think they need to make sure everyone knows exactly what is expected and perhaps concentrate on fewer things to make better.

I hope that you will carry on enjoying everything that it offers and go on trying your best to make it even more successful.