

Clapgate Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107958
Local Authority	Leeds
Inspection number	309548
Inspection dates	22–23 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Keith Bardon

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	253
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Martin Bartholomew
Headteacher	Mrs Lesley Simpson
Date of previous school inspection	29 March 2004
School address	Cranmore Drive Leeds West Yorkshire LS10 4AW
Telephone number	0113 2716700
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average sized primary school serves a disadvantaged area on the outskirts of Leeds. Most pupils are of White British heritage and, with very few exceptions, speak English at home. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average, but the proportion that has a statement for their special educational need is below average. The school has achieved a number of awards including Advanced Healthy Schools, Investors in Pupils, Artsmark Silver and Activemark. The school works in conjunction with others in the local area to provide after school clubs for pupils and there is a daily breakfast club on site. Since it was last inspected there have been a large number of staff changes.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Clapgate is a satisfactory school working in challenging circumstances. By breaking down barriers to learning, leaders have begun to address the low standards that have characterised pupils' attainment for some time. However, there is still some way to go and, despite pupils making satisfactory progress, standards in Year 6 are well below average. Improvements to teaching and provision have ensured that standards are rising in the younger age classes but it is too early to see their effect throughout the whole school.

Pupils enjoy school. They feel cared for and valued because, as they say, 'Our ideas and views are always listened to.' Parents are equally positive: 'I'm totally happy with this school.' and 'Our children can't wait to get to school on a morning.' are typical comments. Most pupils attend school regularly and behave well. Some of the younger pupils have difficulty concentrating for long periods but this improves substantially as they grow older. The school fosters pupils' personal development well and they mature into sensible and sociable young people with a well defined sense of right and wrong. Opportunities to help in school are grasped with relish. The support pupils get from all staff makes them feel safe and secure, happy in the knowledge that if they have a problem someone will help them solve it. Pupils recognise fully the importance of leading a healthy life and try hard to eat sensibly and take regular exercise. Preparation for life in the future is satisfactory, although weaknesses in their literacy and numeracy skills could prove a problem for some pupils.

While teaching is satisfactory overall, some lessons provide much better opportunities for learning than others. Variations in quality are often linked to the amount of pace and challenge teachers generate and to how well lessons are organised. All pupils are set targets to work towards. Some of these are sharply defined and reviewed regularly by teachers, but others lack clarity and are not checked often enough to help pupils know what to do to improve. While the sharing of objectives at the start of lessons is an established practice, these are not always referred back to as lessons proceed. Consequently, opportunities to help pupils understand how to measure the progress they are making are missed. Most pupils find their lessons interesting, especially when they are given practical tasks to perform. A well structured series of topics form the backbone of the curriculum. This ensures that pupils are regularly learning something new. The school takes good care of its pupils and effective support is readily available to those who need it. Systems for measuring and tracking pupils' progress are satisfactory and becoming increasingly effective as the quality and quantity of the data they contain builds up.

The headteacher, supported by senior staff, is working with vision and determination to make Clapgate a more effective school. With support from governors, they have made substantial changes to staff and procedures. Many of these are still bedding in but the school is moving in the right direction and its capacity to improve in the future is satisfactory. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall and the school runs smoothly. The role of subject leaders is under-developed and their contribution to the raising of standards and school management is limited. Governors work closely with the school, supporting its development and holding it increasingly to account.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter Nursery with skills and knowledge that are overall low for their age. They are taught well in the Foundation Stage and make good progress. Even so their attainment is still well below national expectations by the end of Reception. Children make substantial progress in all aspects of language but often communicate in very short sentences and with a limited vocabulary. Teachers provide children with stimulating activities which encourage them to talk to each other and staff and provide a secure start to writing. Regular opportunities to count and talk about numbers promote children's mathematical development well. When they start Nursery many children have difficulty relating to others. With constant encouragement from teachers and frequent opportunities to share tasks and play together in enjoyable ways, children develop personal and social skills at a good pace. Despite this many have a short attention span and do not always listen to others as closely as they might. Provision in the Foundation Stage is led and managed well. Nursery and Reception staff work closely and effectively as a team. With careful and frequent assessments they build a detailed and accurate picture of each child's progress and use the information well to extend and develop learning. Children progress seamlessly from Nursery to Reception.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase pupils' rate of progress and raise standards, particularly in literacy and numeracy.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, making sure that pupils know what to do to improve and how to measure their own progress.
- Increase the contribution subject managers make to school improvement, particularly to the raising of standards.

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

Many pupils enter Year 1 with standards that are well short of the targets for their age. Despite pupils making satisfactory progress during their time in Key Stage 1, standards are well below average at the end of Year 2. The school is steadily addressing past weaknesses in provision and pupils' progress is starting to improve. However, the residual effects are still evident, particularly in the older classes, and standards at the end of Year 6 are well below average. A smaller than average proportion of Year 6 pupils attained the expected level in the national tests in 2007 and relatively few attained the higher level. However, when the attainments of individual pupils' are compared with their starting points, the progress they make in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. The current Year 6 is particularly low attaining: six out of ten pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Challenging targets have been set for their performance, particularly at a higher than average level, and a concerted effort is being made to meet them. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities maintain a similar rate of satisfactory progress to other pupils. There is no significant difference in the standards attained by boys and girls.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils say they enjoy school and parents endorse this. Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is close to the national average. Pupils' behaviour, particularly that of older pupils, is good. Most are attentive in class and work hard. On occasions younger pupils need reminding about what is expected and can be rather boisterous at times. Pupils are very aware of how to keep themselves safe and what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. They know about road safety and appreciate the dangers associated with drugs, alcohol and tobacco. Many pupils join in sports clubs after school and take exercise at breaks. Year 6 pupils regularly monitor the content of school dinners and discuss findings with the headteacher. Pupils willingly help around school. They apply for jobs such as play-leaders and take their roles very seriously. School councillors and health representatives are effective in making pupils' views known and are confident that the school will consider them. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. A special feature is the good understanding children have of diversity in society. A few pupils undertake a regular audit of school resources to ensure a balance of gender, ethnicity, race, disability and culture. Older pupils talk confidently about the link between 'working hard' and success in future life. Pupils develop a range of skills but weaknesses in their literacy and numeracy skills put many of them at a disadvantage.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, resulting in pupils making satisfactory progress. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and most classrooms have a lively and productive atmosphere. The best lessons are stimulating and interesting, with strong lesson pace and challenging tasks the key strengths. Pupils show a genuine enthusiasm for learning in these lessons and try hard to answer the questions they have been set. Variations in the quality of teaching and learning detract from this otherwise positive picture. In some lessons poor organisation wastes time and pupils have insufficient opportunities to practise and develop what they have been taught. Most lesson objectives provide a clear focus for pupils' learning, but others are too broad or overly complicated. Well managed systems are in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Support staff work well with teachers to address the needs of different groups and individuals so that they can participate fully and make progress. Teachers' marking often gives pupils an idea of how well they have done but does not always provide clear guidance as to how they could improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with some good features. Staff plan a well balanced programme of work which makes good provision for pupils' personal development. Continuity in learning is provided by an effective rolling programme of 36 cross-curricular topics which all pupils access. However, the impact of the school's developing curriculum on pupils' key skills, particularly in literacy and numeracy, is not fully apparent. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive well targeted support through individual learning plans with curriculum adjustments to ensure relevance and enjoyment. Personal, social and health education helps to ensure pupils understand the importance of staying safe and being healthy and prepares

them well to make an effective contribution to the community. The curriculum is strongly enriched by a wide and interesting range of clubs, visits and visitors, such as a popular drama group.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The quality of care, guidance and support provided for pupils is satisfactory overall and there are good features. Child protection procedures and arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements. Vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported because of the close and effective links with parents and external agencies. 'This is the best day of my life.' typified the comments made by pupils attending the school's family support sessions with their parents or carers. Older pupils say that they feel safe because they are certain there is someone to turn to if they have a problem and that action will be taken to address it. Support for pupils' academic development is satisfactory. Improvements made to assessment systems have increased the reliability of the data available to staff. Tracking procedures are beginning to provide a much clearer picture of pupils' progress but many of these are at an early stage of development. Lesson objectives and individual targets are set but their use and effectiveness in promoting pupils' learning lack consistency.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Since the previous inspection the school has made satisfactory progress. The health and safety issues identified in the last report have been addressed and provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is much better managed. Finances are managed efficiently and the problems caused by a deficit budget are a thing of the past. Low standards have proved a difficult problem to resolve but inspection evidence demonstrates that past weaknesses are being overcome and pupils' progress is starting to accelerate. Management systems provide an accurate picture of how well the school is performing and help staff to identify accurately the areas that need further development. Now that the school has reliable assessment data, teachers are able to make better informed judgements of the impact of its work on pupils' progress. The quality of teaching is checked regularly and effective measures taken to promote improvement. The work of subject leaders focuses mainly on checking curriculum content and they do not have a strong enough role in raising standards and promoting school improvement. The work of the governing body is satisfactory and is becoming more effective as their understanding of how to hold the school to account increases.

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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 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?	3
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	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

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

Thank you very much for the very friendly greeting you gave the inspectors when we visited your school recently. Lots of you smiled and chatted to us, which made us feel comfortable and welcome. We thoroughly enjoyed finding out about the work you do and a special thanks to those who talked with us about the school.

Clapgate is a satisfactory school with a pleasant atmosphere. We were pleased to hear that you enjoy school and feel that your ideas and views are listened to. Your behaviour in and around school is good although younger pupils get restless quite quickly. The many things you volunteer to do around school are a big help to staff and those who audit the school meals and the books and displays do an important job. You clearly understand how to keep yourselves fit, healthy and safe and have a strong sense of right and wrong. You grow into sensible and friendly young people, who get on well with others. From the attendance figures we could see that the number of pupils who attend school regularly is growing. This is good and needs to continue so that everyone benefits as much as they can from school.

Most of you are making satisfactory progress in the things you learn and the skills you develop. We think that you can do even better, particularly with your literacy and numeracy. It is important that teachers give you opportunities to measure your own progress and we have asked them to teach you how to do this and to help you to know what to do to improve. When these opportunities arise try to think carefully about what you have achieved and what you could possibly do better to achieve even more.

We have also asked your school to find ways for your teachers who are subject leaders to gain greater experience to help them contribute to the school's future improvement.

Thank you once again for a very enjoyable two days and I wish you well in the future.