

Ossett Towngate Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108196
Local Authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	309612
Inspection date	26 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Rosemary Eaton

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	223
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Neil Kimbley
Headteacher	Ms Naoimh Sampson
Date of previous school inspection	24 January 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Whitley Spring Road Ossett West Yorkshire WF5 0QA
Telephone number	01924 302865
Fax number	01924 302866

Age group	3–11
Inspection date	26 September 2008
Inspection number	309612

© 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 one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' personal development and well-being; the quality of teaching and learning; and how well pupils are cared for, guided and supported. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation; national published assessment data and the school's own assessment records; observations of the school at work; discussions with pupils, the headteacher and representatives of staff and the governing body; a scrutiny of 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

This is an average-sized primary school. Fewer than average pupils are eligible for free school meals. When they join the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) children's skills vary but are broadly in line with the expectations for their age. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than average. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The school has gained Investors in People status, the Basic Skills Quality Mark and Activemark, and the Bronze Eco-Schools Award. There have been several changes in leadership since the previous inspection. The headteacher joined the school in September 2007 and the deputy headteacher in September 2008. Before- and after-school childcare on the school premises is managed by a private provider.

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. Pupils' exceptional personal development is demonstrated vividly at every turn. They enjoy school enormously. 'We come in with a smile on our face, and so do the teachers!' Pupils are extraordinarily committed to supporting each other. The school provides many and varied opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities and contribute to their community. They grasp these enthusiastically and take them very seriously. Buddies and peer mediators are fully trained and quite clear about their respective responsibilities. They are united in their intent to help people, for example by suggesting practical and peaceful ways of resolving arguments between friends. From an early age, all pupils are urged to care for others. During an assembly, the whole school applauded a Year 2 pupil's actions the previous day. He had noticed that a younger child had fallen over, rushed to comfort her and then fetched an adult to help.

The school's leaders and staff provide excellent role models for pupils through the outstanding attention they pay to all aspects of pupils' safeguarding and pastoral support. Weekly 'Care and Concern' staff meetings are an exemplary method of sharing information. Slight changes in pupils' behaviour are noted and any necessary actions, such as a chat with parents, are agreed. Unsurprisingly, pupils are adamant that they feel safe in school. They know exactly what to do if they have any concerns, for example about bullying, and are certain that staff will do their utmost to deal with the problem. Pupils' safety is enhanced because they learn to value themselves and to be assertive. They are praised for 'taking responsibility for their own happiness' and are prepared to tackle injustice and stand up for pupils who are most vulnerable. Behaviour is good. It is often excellent during lessons.

Pupils in Years 5 and 6 lead 'Wake up and Shake up' sessions at the start of each day. Pupils, staff and parents join in the dance routines enthusiastically. Pupils report that these 'keep us healthy and awake for lessons'. They have an impressive awareness of health and fitness. 'Golden Time' is a greatly appreciated element of the good quality curriculum and enables pupils to choose from a variety of activities. Keeping fit through sports, dance or work in the vegetable garden are always popular. Through pursuits such as these, pupils are prompted to use their leisure time beneficially and they develop skills, including working as a team, that help to prepare them extremely well for their lives beyond school.

All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, achieve well during Years 1 to 6, building on the good progress made in the EYFS. By the end of Year 6 pupils consistently reach above average standards. This good achievement is the outcome of good teaching. Lessons include interesting activities that motivate pupils to get involved and try hard. Pupils have good opportunities to learn outdoors and to use community resources. In English lessons, Year 6 pupils learn about biographical writing through a study of Anne Frank's life, supporting their history topic about the Second World War. However, leaders have identified that the curriculum does not always offer enough of these planned occasions for pupils to consolidate their learning and develop and practise key skills in meaningful contexts. Pupils strongly approve of the new arrangements for teaching spelling and mathematics where they are organised into groups according to their abilities rather than their ages. 'It helps you, because the work is at the right level.' This is an example of how teachers' assessments of pupils' learning are used well. However, during lessons, some teachers do not consistently make full use of this information. In a few instances, activities and resources are the same for every pupil, regardless of what they have learned already. In these circumstances, progress slows

down because the more able pupils do not have to try hard and those who find learning difficult need significant help in order to be successful.

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher provides strong and determined leadership, focused on doing what is best for each aspect of every pupil's learning and development. She has put in place systems such as discussions about the progress made by pupils in each teaching group. These help to provide a highly accurate view of the school's strengths and the areas needing more attention. Staff and governors take part in evaluations of the school's performance and in planning for improvement. As a result, they share the headteacher's high expectations and contribute to the school's good capacity to continue to improve. Leaders promote community cohesion strongly, for example by ensuring that pupils understand and take pleasure in the diverse nature of society. Extensive partnerships in the local community and with support agencies augment what the school provides and enhance pupils' personal development and learning extremely well. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their school. After identifying many strong features and a couple of areas to improve, their final judgement is, 'Ace. We are just generally proud of it.'

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The EYFS provision is good. By the time they leave the Foundation 2 class, children's skills are mostly in line with or beyond the expectations for their age. They start making good progress from the moment they join Foundation 1. Children settle in quickly because staff take such good account of their individual needs and stages of development. Staff visit children's homes to help identify children's interests so that these can be incorporated into planning. Teaching is good and children need little encouragement to get involved because activities are so exciting. In Foundation 1, children were intrigued to match pairs of socks, peg them on a line and consider which would fit a teddy. The teacher extended their learning very well by asking questions to extend their vocabulary and their thinking. Children are encouraged strongly to be independent learners and their personal development is outstanding. Resources are labelled clearly and children can access them easily. There is plenty of time for pupils to follow their inclinations and choose to pursue a particular area of learning, indoors or outside, but teachers ensure that key skills such as literacy are taught regularly. Children's social skills are enhanced by regular sessions during which they play freely with pupils in Years 1 and 2. The EYFS is led and managed well. Assessment is well organised and thorough. The information collected is used well to set targets, which are shared with parents and children. Leaders monitor children's progress very carefully. They are quick to identify any difficulties children may experience, and involve other agencies promptly. Children's welfare is given the utmost priority.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that work in lessons is consistently matched accurately to the needs of all pupils.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to consolidate their learning and apply their skills during activities that link subjects together.

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?	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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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**

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when I visited your school. I would especially like to thank those of you who produced the welcome pack and the pupils who met me to talk about the school. I now need to tell you what I found out about the school.

You told me you think it is a good school and I agree. It also has some outstanding features. One of these is your own personal development. I was extremely impressed by the way in which you all care for each other. Many of you do important jobs to help other pupils and the staff. You make an excellent contribution to your community. The skills you learn help to make sure you are prepared exceptionally well for moving on to secondary school. You were clear that you feel safe in school. This is because the school looks after you exceptionally well and makes sure that you know how to keep yourselves safe.

You make good progress and reach above average standards. You are taught well and have lots of interesting activities in lessons and during visits. I have asked the school to link subjects together more, so you can practise important skills in all sorts of different situations. Your teachers collect a great deal of information about your learning. I want them to make sure that tasks are just hard enough for each one of you. You can help by always trying hard and letting your teachers know if work is too hard or too easy.

Your headteacher, staff and governors have lots of plans for making the school even better, and I know that you have good ideas too. I would like to send each of you and all the adults my very best wishes for the future.