

# Walton Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	135020
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wakefield
<b>Inspection number</b>	319594
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 September 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ann Sharpe

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.

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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 (total)	315
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Sheila Loosemore
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Kathryn Nash
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	The Grove Walton Wakefield West Yorkshire WF2 6LD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01924 303560
<b>Fax number</b>	01924 303561

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This above average sized school opened in April 2007, following the amalgamation of Walton Infant School and Walton Junior School. Staff and pupils moved into newly built premises in May 2007. Most of the pupils are White British, and about 10% are from a wide range of minority ethnic heritages. The proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal is well below the national average, as is the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school makes provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), and started to take three-year-olds for the first time in September 2008. The number of pupils in each year group means that some pupils are taught in mixed-age classes.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Walton Primary is a good school with an accurate view of its effectiveness. It is a happy and welcoming school that gives good value for money. As a result of good leadership, management and governance, particularly the united approach of the headteacher and deputy headteacher, two former village schools have been amalgamated smoothly and successfully. A lot has been achieved in a short time because of their enthusiasm, dedication and efforts to help everyone to live up to the pupils' new motto, 'Moving Forward Together'. The new premises provide an exceptionally desirable environment, where pupils enjoy learning, both indoors and outdoors. Careful management of the budget has ensured that pupils work in a well resourced setting, where their health, safety and welfare have high priority. Most parents think highly of the school and welcome the changes to their children's education that the new school has heralded.

When children start in the EYFS, their skills, although variable from year to year, are above what is typical for their age. Pupils of all ages and abilities achieve well, as a result of good teaching and learning. The standard of their work is well above average by the time they leave at the end of Year 6. Teachers' strong emphasis on teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy pays dividends, as shown in an improvement in standards since the school opened, and improved provisional Year 6 national test results for 2008. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, or any other barriers to their learning, achieve well. This is because of the well organised and good quality support they receive from classroom assistants and visiting specialists. Pupils' work in other subjects, too, is often of a standard above expectation for their ages. In art, design and technology, for example, Year 3 pupils have thoughtfully designed and made interesting models of chairs, using natural materials gathered in the school grounds. However, pupils do not always achieve this well in practical aspects of their work in English, mathematics and science. This is because opportunities to practise skills are not a regular and integral part of day-to-day lessons.

Pupils' good personal development and well-being, together with their outstanding behaviour, help them to take good advantage of their education. They rise to teachers' high expectations of them to listen carefully, work hard and cooperate. The good quality curriculum helps pupils to understand and follow guidelines for living safe and healthy lifestyles. They enjoy getting involved in activities within the school, the locality and beyond. The Harvest assembly, for example, provided an opportunity to work with a representative from the Salvation Army and to extend an already impressive partnership with people in Ghana, through the Grace Project.

The enriching curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to participate in musical and sporting activities, and to visit areas further afield on residential visits. Pupils are well prepared for their adult lives because of their good social and academic skills and their growing understanding of living together in harmony. Pupils are capable of taking more responsibility for their own learning than teachers currently expect of them. They are not fully aware of what they need to do in order to improve their work, so that they reach their learning targets. This is because of teachers' inconsistent approaches to marking pupils' work and to informing them what their learning targets are. This is why the overall quality of care, guidance and support is satisfactory.

As a new school, data about pupils' attainment and progress is limited and procedures for checking that pupils are making enough progress are fairly new. Nevertheless, there is now good data becoming available, and the school leadership uses it well to check which pupils

need a boost to their learning. Teachers do not use the available information robustly, however, in order to plan work for pupils of differing ages and abilities in their classes, so that pupils always have the right opportunities to reach their learning targets.

This new school has already established itself as an important part of the local community, through its good links and partnerships, for example with the village library. It strives to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of being a member of the school and local communities, and has made a good start with reaching out beyond the locality. This, along with evidence of good improvements so far on all fronts, signals good capacity to continue to improve in the future.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children in the EYFS make good progress because of good teaching and learning and because of the good standard of care and welfare they receive. Good leadership and management ensure that enthusiastic and caring staff work together well as a team. Children settle quickly into school. Most meet all the national goals for their learning by the end of the EYFS and many exceed them. Staff have responded positively to new arrangements for taking three-year-olds. Children's personal development and well-being, including their behaviour, are good. Even the very new and youngest children take part happily in activities, such as the Harvest assembly, and join in with other children and adults in a wide range of activities indoors and outdoors. Children make a successful start with learning communication, language and literacy skills, and problem solving, reasoning and numeracy skills. This ensures that they start work in Year 1 well equipped for their future education. Staff get to know children and their parents well. They know that they do not yet make use of data about children's attainment robustly in order to match activities closely to their differing learning needs.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Make robust use of assessment data in order to match the work of pupils of all ages and abilities to their differing learning needs.
- Keep pupils well informed about what they have to do next in order to improve their work and reach their learning targets.
- Provide regular opportunities for pupils to become actively involved in their learning through practical investigations.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Since the school opened, there has only been one complete year of Year 6 national test results, and these are still provisional. The school's records of pupils' attainment and pupils' work, however, show that standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6. This is in line with the provisional 2008 national assessment and test results, and indicates good improvement on the 2007 results. Pupils make good progress and achieve well from their starting points because the teaching of basic skills is good. The school ensures that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and vulnerable pupils have extra support to reach their potential. The school sets challenging learning targets, and records show that most pupils meet or exceed them. Pupils do not achieve as well, however, in those aspects of English, mathematics and science that require them to work practically and take part in investigations. This is because they have limited opportunities to learn these skills in lessons.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Pupils have settled very well into their new school and take a pride in it. They move around safely and sensibly and treat resources, such as computers, with respect. Outstanding behaviour contributes significantly to pupils' good academic achievement. Pupils enjoy school and work and play together happily. Attendance is broadly in line with national averages. Pupils have a good understanding of safe and healthy lifestyles. They take regular drinks of water, play energetically outdoors and most eat healthy food at lunchtime. Pupils enjoy charitable fund-raising, and the outdoor peace garden reflects their thoughtfulness for others. Good speaking, listening, literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) skills, along with a thirst for learning, equip pupils well for their adult lives. Their mature personal development means that they are capable of taking greater responsibility for their own learning and progress than teachers expect of them.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils of all ages and abilities make good personal and academic progress as a result of good quality teaching and learning. Hardworking teachers have helped pupils to feel safe and happy in a very different setting from what they were previously familiar with. Teachers prepare well for lessons and deploy classroom assistants and other support staff thoughtfully. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, and good relationships mean that they rarely have to waste time dealing with problems. Teachers are good at teaching basic literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils enjoy their lessons, for example many love responding to mental challenges in mathematics. Teachers know what pupils can already do and they suitably adapt their questioning to pupils' individual needs. They do not yet involve pupils enough in reaching their longer-term learning targets or make sure that they have enough opportunities to reach them in day-to-day lessons.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum meets requirements and is matched to the needs of pupils, with good emphasis on basic skills in literacy and numeracy. It is enriched well by enjoyable opportunities to take part in residential visits, clubs and sporting events. A good programme for personal, social, health and citizenship education ensures that pupils understand the importance of healthy and safe lifestyles. The school has started to link subjects together thoughtfully in order to make learning even more relevant to pupils' interests. Pupils love working in the new ICT suite, for example, and have good opportunities to use ICT as part of work in other subjects. There is good provision for participating in musical activities and events, learning to speak French, enjoying the spacious and beautiful school grounds and joining in community events. Lack of regular opportunities for undertaking practical investigations in English, mathematics and science, however, restricts pupils' potential for excitement in finding out things for themselves.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 3

The school provides a good quality of care for all its pupils. Procedures for protecting and safeguarding them are in place. Pupils say that incidents of bullying are rare, and there is always someone to turn to for help. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well by a team of committed and knowledgeable teaching assistants. Vulnerable pupils have specific help to overcome barriers to their learning. Good links with outside agencies ensure that specialist help is on hand if needed, for example to boost the attainment of pupils who have missed schooling. Gifted and talented pupils and higher-attaining pupils sometimes benefit from extra challenges. The popular breakfast club enables pupils to have a calm and healthy start to the day. Pupils often receive good feedback from teachers in individual lessons, but marking of their work is inconsistent. Most pupils know little about their learning targets. Although they are eager learners who are capable of being involved in reaching targets, this is not yet a consistent part of their day-to-day learning. This means that the overall quality of support and guidance for pupils is satisfactory.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Good leadership, management and governance have helped the school to rise successfully to the challenges of amalgamation. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work as a strong team and check that the school's provision meets the varying needs of pupils. They have quickly created a safe, happy, healthy and well resourced learning environment, and standards have improved in the short time since the school opened. The school has identified the right priorities for improvement; a primary aim is uniting staff and securing a more consistent approach to following policies and practices. The headteacher and deputy headteacher know that there is further work to do. This is especially the case in relation to teachers' use of data about pupils' attainment and progress in order to drive up standards even further. Nevertheless, the school meets or exceeds most of its targets. It makes a good contribution to community cohesion through its links with many organisations, outside agencies, other schools, and local and worldwide partnerships. Although many governors are new to their position, they have familiarised themselves with the school quickly, and play a central role in its improvement.

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## Annex A

**Inspection judgements**

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<b>School Overall</b>
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**Overall effectiveness**

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

**Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?</b>	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?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

**Achievement and standards**

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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?	3

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	2
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 making inspectors feel so welcome when we inspected your school, and for answering all our questions politely and thoughtfully. We thoroughly enjoyed our time with you, and were very impressed with your new school premises. No wonder your parents are so pleased with the school. Your school motto 'Moving Forward Together' looks superb picked out in bold lettering on the blue corridor floor. It was also lovely to see that you still have fond memories of the old schools and people who were special to you there.

Your school is a good school. Your headteacher and deputy headteacher have helped everyone to settle in and get off to a really good start. You make good progress because all the adults care about you a great deal. Your teachers and classroom assistants work hard to help you to learn, especially in English and mathematics. Inspectors thought that your behaviour was excellent. We could see that you really enjoy school, and know a lot about keeping yourselves healthy and safe. You like helping to make your school better, and also work hard to make life better for other people.

Many of you will remember that inspectors asked you about your learning targets. You could not say much because teachers in your new classes have not told you what your targets are yet. We have asked the school to make sure that you know more about what you have to do to improve your work, so that you reach your targets. Linked with this, we have asked teachers to make sure that they always give you work at just the right level to give you chances to reach your targets. Although you have a few chances to do exciting things in lessons, you should have more. This is why we have asked the school to let you spend more time doing practical things that make you keen to find out more.

You can help by continuing to try hard in lessons and by asking your teachers what you have to do to reach your learning targets. If your work seems too hard or too easy, talk to an adult. Most of all, continue to enjoy activities, such as working in the information and communication suite, going out on school visits, playing on the new playground equipment and taking part in musical and sporting activities.