

Austhorpe Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107939
Local Authority	Leeds
Inspection number	323129
Inspection dates	5–6 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Elizabeth Godman

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	205
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 Peter McIntyre
Headteacher	Mrs Caroline Robinson
Date of previous school inspection	6 December 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Austhorpe Lane Leeds West Yorkshire LS15 8TP
Telephone number	0113 2640450
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

When Austhorpe Primary School was inspected in December 2006, it was judged to require special measures because it was failing to provide an acceptable standard of education for its pupils. Subsequently Ofsted inspectors have made five visits to monitor the school's progress. This inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average-sized primary school, which serves a relatively advantaged area on the outskirts of Leeds. The percentage of pupils entitled to a free school meal is well below average. A smaller number of pupils than average have a learning difficulty and/or disability. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and all pupils speak English as their first language. The school's Reception class provides for 24 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). There is privately run breakfast and after-school club on the school site.

The headteacher took up post in September 2007 and a new deputy headteacher joined the school in September 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. The school now provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and some aspects of its work are good. Good leadership has proved effective in tackling weaknesses and leaders and managers have a very clear view as to what to do next to make further improvements. This gives the school good capacity to improve.

Monitoring and evaluation are rigorous and used well to identify priorities, set targets and to check on progress. There is a common sense of purpose shared by staff. Senior leaders encourage and support teamwork, helping staff to work in partnership with other colleagues and to feel more confident. The governing body has a clear and shrewd understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and of the actions needed to secure further improvement.

The quality of teaching has improved and is good because of the effective management focus in this area. This good teaching has accelerated pupils' progress. In the best lessons, teaching is lively and animated and exciting activities allow pupils to investigate problems and to think for themselves. Accurate assessment of pupils' skills has been used to good effect to raise standards. For example, following an initiative to boost pupils' writing, this has improved considerably. Pupils reach standards that are above average at the end of Year 6. However, at present pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall as they are still overcoming the effects of previously weaker teaching. Challenge for higher attaining pupils, is not consistently strong enough to help them reach the high levels of which they are capable. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make the same satisfactory progress as other groups.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. Their social and moral development is good but their understanding of Britain as a diverse society is limited, as is their experience of cultures other than their own. Pupils' positive attitudes to school are reflected in their above average attendance. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe and reflect this in their sensible approach to all aspects of school life. Although often enthusiastic, pupils' enjoyment varies, because the curriculum and lessons do not always interest them fully. Pupils are capable of taking on responsibilities and contribute to the wider community, as the excellent Year 6 'Hope for Harry' campaign shows. However, they do not have regular opportunities to use their initiative or to show such leadership skills and this limits the extent of their contribution to the wider community. The curriculum is effective in ensuring pupils get a good grounding in the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and in the use of information and communication technology (ICT). Although their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are well developed, the development of independence and leadership skills are weaker.

Leaders secure pupils' health and safety well. Procedures for safeguarding pupils meet requirements. The school is supportive and every child is cared for well. Pupils' work is marked regularly. This, along with individual and whole-school targets, provides pupils with suitable guidance as to how to improve their work. Increasingly, the school is working in partnership to secure pupils' well-being and to extend their horizons.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children join the Reception class with skills that are typical for their age. Good teaching ensures they make good progress. By the end of the Reception year, most children are working securely at the levels expected for their age and a significant number achieve beyond this. Last year, good use of accurate assessment information highlighted a relative weakness in writing. As a result, an increased emphasis with the current Reception class on linking sounds and letters has ensured that children are getting off to a good start in language and literacy. The Reception classroom is well organised to allow children to experience all of the areas of learning, both indoors and outside. Adults are effective in engaging individuals and groups in exploration and play. However, opportunities for children to initiate their own learning are less well developed. Children are well cared for and this ensures they settle quickly into class routines and school activities. Good leadership and management enable all adults to work well together. This ensures children achieve well in Reception.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the consistency of challenge for higher attaining pupils.
- Provide more opportunities in the curriculum to promote pupils' enjoyment and interest in learning.
- Enable pupils to show greater independence, responsibility and initiative in order to help them extend their contribution to the community and further develop the skills they will need for future life.
- Extend pupils' understanding of cultures other than their own.

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

In 2008, from average levels at the start of Year 1, pupils had reached standards which were broadly average by the end of Year 2, indicating satisfactory achievement. The school's current actions to boost the achievement of pupils in this key stage are starting to prove effective, with more pupils demonstrating high achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. Provisional results of national tests in 2008 indicate that pupils reached above average standards by the end of Year 6, although the progress of these pupils had been inconsistent through the key stage. Improvements to the quality of teaching throughout Key Stage 2 have started to eradicate some of this inconsistency and have increased the rate of pupils' progress across the key stage. However some underachievement, particularly of higher attaining pupils, remains. Recognition that writing was a weaker area, resulted in a concerted and successful effort to improve this throughout the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

When given the opportunity, pupils are able to reflect sensitively about the needs of others, but their knowledge of cultures other than their own is limited. Pupils behave consistently well and work cooperatively with one another. They are respectful and polite. Pupils know why it

is important to adopt a healthy lifestyle and choose the healthy options at lunchtime and participate with enthusiasm in physical activities. Although often enthusiastic, pupils' levels of enjoyment and interest vary considerably. This is because, on occasions, the curriculum and lessons do not engage them fully and restrict their independence and initiative. Similarly, when enabled to do so, pupils show themselves to be very capable in taking on responsibilities and contributing to the wider community. For example, Year 6 campaigned successfully to organise fund-raising to provide 'Hope for Harry'. This is not consistent and pupils do not have regular opportunities to develop their leadership and organisational skills. Although their literacy and numeracy skills are well developed, deficiencies in these other aspects place some limits on the growth of their future life and work place skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is now good overall, having improved considerably since the last inspection. This good teaching is a significant factor in starting to boost pupils' progress. All lessons are characterised by good relationships that secure good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. Lessons are planned and organised well. This ensures that the vast majority of pupils move on to the next step in the lesson at a good pace. Effective support from teaching assistants allows pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to take a full part in the lesson, but the work set for these pupils is not always sharply matched to their needs. There are some examples of outstanding teaching. In the majority of lessons lessons, teaching is lively and animated and exciting activities allow pupils to investigate and to think for themselves. In these lessons, teachers' questions encourage this and so learning accelerates rapidly. These lessons are also planned very carefully to provide work closely matched to the different needs of the pupils in the class. In particular, these lessons provide challenge to the higher attainers who rise to the high expectations the teacher has of them. In the small proportion of less effective lessons, pupils' progress is not as great because teachers' questions do not challenge them enough to think and the pace slows.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is effective in ensuring pupils get a satisfactory grounding in the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and the use of ICT. In some subjects, and in some classes, teachers' imaginative approach to the curriculum secures pupils' enjoyment and fascination. During the inspection, examples of this were seen in science in Year 6, history in Year 2 and literacy in Year 5. However, this enlivened and enriched approach to the curriculum and the links made between different subjects is not consistent. Visits and visitors increasingly extend pupils' experiences of the curriculum. However, this does not sufficiently extend pupils' understanding of cultures other than their own, although the teaching of the French language has been introduced successfully. The curriculum as a whole makes a good contribution to pupils' health awareness and to their good moral and social development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school has a strong commitment to securing pupils' well-being. As a result, pupils stay safe, are free from bullying and harassment and lead healthy lives. The school promotes good attendance well. However, strategies for promoting and ensuring economic well-being are less developed because pupils' independence and initiative are not promoted consistently. The school carefully identifies those pupils at risk and provides suitable interventions. However, partnerships with other schools and agencies are at a very early stage of development and, as a result, are not yet fully effective in promoting pupils' personal development. The school works well with parents. Recent innovations such as 'learning logs' and school diaries are supporting partnerships with them and are helping to accelerate progress in some classes, but this is not yet consistently evident throughout the school. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is helpful and informative. It is used outstandingly well by pupils in Year 6 to set their own targets, but this is not consistent across the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leaders are effective in enabling the school to improve. Following identification of writing and mathematics as priorities, they took concerted actions and these areas have now improved across the school. Senior staff are also giving subject leaders more responsibility. This has encouraged staff to take the initiative in developing their subject and in planning a more exciting curriculum, for example, in physical education. However, senior staff acknowledge there is more to do to develop pupils' independence and to extend opportunities for pupils to show initiative. Findings from leaders' monitoring also inform staff development. For example, an identified weakness in provision for more able pupils led to a recent training day for staff focusing on this, although it is too soon for this to have changed practice or to have raised achievement. The school knows its own pupils well and recognises that there is more to do to extend pupils' cultural experiences beyond the immediate area of the school and so promote community cohesion more effectively. Staff and resources are deployed well to aid pupils' progress. The governing body is effective in supporting change and in challenging the school to improve.

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?	3
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?	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

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

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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
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	3
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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 learners' needs?	2
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

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	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	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**

Inspection of Austhorpe Primary School, Leeds, LS15 8TP

On behalf of the inspectors, thank you for the welcome you gave us when we came to inspect your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and joining you in lessons. Particular thanks go to the school council for giving up their lunchtime to talk to us.

We decided that your school has improved a great deal and so it no longer requires 'special measures'. We think that you are now getting a satisfactory education and that some aspects of your school's work are good.

Children in the Reception class have settled quickly and are getting off to a good start. Those of you in Years 1 to 6 are now taught well almost all of the time and this is starting to help you to make faster progress. Some of your lessons are excellent and you tell us you really enjoy them and learn very quickly, for example, by finding out things yourselves in science or history. You know how to stay healthy and safe and we were pleased to see you choose healthy lunches. You told us how much you enjoy PE. You behave well and are polite and sensible in lessons and around the school. You come to school regularly, so that in the inspection in a number of classes no one was away. We think that your headteacher, the staff and the governors know exactly what they need to do to make the school better for you. Many of the changes they have made so far have already helped you to learn more quickly.

We have asked your headteacher and her team to do these things to help your school go from strength to strength.

- Provide more challenge in some lessons for those of you who learn very quickly.
- Give you more activities in lessons that you will really enjoy and find interesting to do.
- Give you more independence and responsibility, like Year 6 had in their 'Hope for Harry' campaign. We think this will give you useful skills for later life and help you to contribute even more to the wider community.
- Help you to learn more about the different cultures in Britain and the world.

We send you our very best wishes for the future in rising to these challenges and in continuing to work hard.