

Horton Mill Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105679
Local Authority	Oldham
Inspection number	324253
Inspection dates	15–16 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Brenda Clarke

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)	244
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	Ms Anne Bromley
Headteacher	Ms S Crowson
Date of previous school inspection	6 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Southlink Glodwick Oldham OL4 1DJ

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	15–16 January 2009
Inspection number	324253

Telephone number
Fax number

0161 633 1711
0161 633 3270

Age group	3-11
Inspection dates	15-16 January 2009
Inspection number	324253

© Crown copyright 2009

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 two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Most of the pupils attending this average sized school are of Pakistani or Bangladeshi heritage. The neighbourhood surrounding the school experiences significant social disadvantage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school a meal is well above the national average and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) comprises part time nursery provision and a reception class. The school has gained The Healthy Schools Award, Activemark, Basic Skills Award and the Green Flag for its approach to environmental issues.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Horton Mill Community Primary School is a good school with outstanding features. The outstanding links between home and school enable pupils to settle quickly and confidently. Parents are pleased with the quality of education provided. They particularly appreciate the many opportunities to be involved in their children's learning. For example, improving their understanding of how the school teaches mathematics and developing spoken English.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding and pupils mature into confident, enthusiastic learners. Their behaviour is good and they are attentive in lessons. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, enabling them to become thoughtful and reflective about the world and its people. They have an outstanding understanding of healthy lifestyles and a good awareness of how to stay safe. The school takes good care of pupils and safeguarding procedures meet current requirements.

Pupils achieve well from very low starting points. Standards at the end of Year 6 in English and science have improved significantly since the last inspection and are now close to national averages. This is because the school has appropriately concentrated on introducing strategies to accelerate pupils' speaking and literacy skills. Achievement in mathematics is broadly satisfactory but standards remain well below national averages at both key stages. This is because the school has concentrated on raising standards in English. Also, in mathematics, teachers do not consistently plan work for the differing abilities of pupils, limiting the progress they make. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support and achieve in line with their classmates, but higher attaining pupils do not always make the progress they are capable of.

Teaching is good overall. Teachers have good behaviour management skills so that pupils behave well and adopt positive attitudes to learning. Teachers generally plan lessons that are relevant and grab pupils' attention. Teaching assistants give valuable support, enabling lower attaining pupils to contribute fully in lessons. In some lessons higher attaining pupils lack additional challenge, slowing their pace of learning. This goes some way to explaining why too few pupils attain the higher levels in national tests in all subjects.

The curriculum is good. It focuses on developing spoken English, with good opportunities for discussion, role play and drama. Regular themed weeks such as the stimulating 'Treasure Hunt' include all aspects of the curriculum and are thoroughly enjoyed by pupils and parents. Participation in national schemes such as Green Flag ensures that pupils gain a wider perspective of environmental issues.

The main reason for pupils' good progress is the dedicated and committed leadership of the school leaders. They are united in their efforts to meet the varying needs of every pupil. They do this by keeping an exceptionally close eye on how well pupils are getting on and making sure that they reach realistically challenging targets. They know, however, that pupils are not doing as well as they could in mathematics. Rigorous monitoring of provision and whole school systems to ensure a consistent approach to learning, and the impact they are having, demonstrates that the school has good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The quality of provision in the EYFS is good. Children start Nursery with skills much lower than expected for their age, particularly in spoken English and in personal and social development. Although children make good progress, gaining confidence as speakers, standards remain well below those expected at the end of the EYFS because of the amount of ground to be made up. An effective focus on developing social skills ensures that children, on entry to the reception class, have acquired the key skills of good listening, and they behave well. The learning environment is stimulating, although occasionally some activities lack a clear purpose so that opportunities to develop new vocabulary are missed. Provision is well led and managed. Planning and assessment is thorough and ensures good opportunities for children to develop speaking skills in interesting ways. Rigorously maintained standards of care, together with good links with parents, ensures that children are safe and happy. The school recognises that children are not given enough choice as to when to play outside, and that their learning is not always reinforced when they choose this option. There are plans in hand to tackle this.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics
- Improve the progress of high attaining pupils by planning work that is challenging and meets their academic needs.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils enter Year 1 with skills well below those expected. They make good progress, especially in language acquisition. However, standards remain well below average by the end of Year 2 due to the significant catch up required by pupils from their low starting points. Standards in reading, writing and science by the end of Year 6 are broadly at the national average, indicating good achievement. However, in mathematics, standards are well below average and pupils have some ground to make up, especially in knowing when to divide or multiply when carrying out long or more complex problems. Whilst progress is good overall few pupils achieve the higher levels in national tests in English and mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support and achieve in line with their peers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils behave well, develop very good attitudes to learning and become confident, sensitive young people. Through links with other schools both locally and internationally, pupils develop an outstanding understanding of their own and other cultures. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school, finding their learning interesting and enjoyable. They make an outstanding contribution to the smooth running of the school. For example, older pupils speak enthusiastically about their work on the anti-bullying and anti-racist teams, school council and 'ECO' team. Pupils are very aware of the benefits of taking exercise and healthy eating. Although many facets of the school's work prepares pupils very well for the future, weaknesses in numeracy skills limit this aspect. Attendance is broadly average overall but is affected by the high level of religious observance and some extended visits overseas.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers have good behaviour management skills resulting in calm, respectful classrooms. Activities are carefully explained so that pupils understand their learning. Teachers plan relevant activities that link pupils' learning in different areas; for example, a role-play fruit shop to reinforce pupils' understanding of money and basic addition and subtraction in numeracy whilst also promoting speaking skills in English. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to extend their language skills, developing their confidence as speakers. This aids pupils' written work and is a key reason why standards have risen across the school. Teaching assistants give effective support, often ensuring that the most vulnerable are fully included in lessons. Higher attaining pupils are frequently given the same work as their peers, which limits the progress they make. Teachers' marking does not consistently tell pupils what they must do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum has recently been redesigned to ensure that links are made across subject areas to help improve pupils' learning. This enables pupils to learn new skills and apply them in differing circumstances. To respond to the significant needs of most pupils who are learning English as an additional language there is a specific focus on spoken English in every lesson. This, together with carefully planned role-play in all classes, enables pupils to continually practice their speaking skills. Regular themed weeks and visits to exciting places add enjoyment and enrich provision. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well catered for and make good progress. Not all tasks are suitably tailored to pupils' differing abilities, however, sometimes reducing the progress they are capable of.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care and welfare of pupils is at the heart of everything that the school does. The school has robust systems in place to promote pupils' safety in school and during visits. All statutory requirements are in place. Excellent care is provided for vulnerable pupils, and they and their parents receive good, on-going support from experienced learning mentors. Resources such as the 'nurture area' and 'sensory room' are used very effectively. Outstanding links with a number of external agencies enable the early identification of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, who then benefit from a range of effective interventions. A new system of personal targets is in place to guide pupils' learning, but this has not had time to fully impact on pupils' progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher gives an excellent steer to the school. The leadership team enthusiastically encourages all staff be involved in development planning resulting in a united team with a strong sense of purpose. This approach is ensuring consistency in the quality of provision and is a key reason why standards are rising. The headteacher sets challenging curriculum targets

for each pupil and closely monitors progress towards them. Subject managers are becoming more proactive in developing their subjects, but they do not always have a sharp focus on setting targets and raising standards in their improvement plans. Links with parents are outstanding, building confidence and trust. Inclusion and promoting equality are good and at the heart of the school's mission so that all groups of pupils flourish. The school's contribution to community cohesion is outstanding and ensures wide ranging, positive links with the local and international community. Governance is satisfactory. Governors give good support but their role in challenging the school is underdeveloped. The school's evaluation is mainly accurate, although the judgement on progress since the last inspection is over generous, given that standards in mathematics are not as high as in English.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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?	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?	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/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	2
The extent to which 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	1
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 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?	2

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

We really enjoyed our visit to your school. You were very polite and friendly. Thank you for making us feel so welcome. We enjoyed talking to you about your work and were very impressed to hear about the many ways you help around the school. You enjoy school and behave well in lessons. You are developing good speaking skills. Your personal development is outstanding so that you grow into confident young people as you move through the school. You know how to stay healthy and safe and think about others less fortunate than yourselves.

Your school is a good school with some outstanding features. Staff take good care of you so you feel safe and happy. They show your parents ways to help you so that you can also work hard at home. Teaching is good and ensures that you make good progress, especially in English and science. Your progress in mathematics is not quite as good so we have asked your headteacher to get on quickly with plans to make you better mathematicians.

We think your headteacher has identified the right things to make your school an even better place for you and we have asked your school to do two important things to improve your learning:

- help to improve your standards in mathematics
- make sure that all teachers give you work that is not too easy for you so that you make the best possible progress in lessons.

I hope that you will continue to work hard and help your headteacher and other staff to further improve your school. Best wishes for the future.