

# Thackley Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107221
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bradford
<b>Inspection number</b>	324551
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 January 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kath Halifax

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)	382
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>	Mr Mike Williams
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Nicola Howe
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	31 October 2007
<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>	Town Lane Thackley Bradford West Yorkshire BD10 8PJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01274 414437
<b>Fax number</b>	01274 414438

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 January 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This larger than average size school serves an area where many of the families are in employment. This is reflected in the low take up of free school meals. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average and very few have a statement of special educational need. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises 74 children who attend the Nursery either morning or afternoon, and 46 children in the Reception classes. The school has gained the ECO bronze award and the Activemark Gold.

At the time of its last inspection in November 2007, Thackley Primary School was judged to be inadequate in its overall effectiveness and given a notice to improve. A subsequent monitoring visit in June 2008 found that the school was making good progress.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school no longer requires significant improvement. Good support by Education Bradford and inspirational leadership by the headteacher have enabled this school to make remarkable progress since the last inspection. This is now a good school that provides good value for money.

On entry to the school, children display levels of ability which are overall typical for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage with the majority achieving the expected levels in all areas of learning. Until the most recent tests, standards in Key Stage 1 had declined for a number of years and were below average. Furthermore, pupils in Key Stage 2 were not achieving as well as they should. As a result of significantly improved teaching and a good, imaginative curriculum, achievement is now good. The provisional 2008 test results for pupils show substantial improvement. Standards are now broadly average and improving, so that by Year 6, standards in reading and mathematics are above average. The number of pupils achieving at the higher than average levels is also improving; this is especially so in reading and mathematics. Inspection findings show that pupils' progress is accelerating and is swifter than would be expected so that standards continue to rise at a good rate. However, standards in writing are an area for improvement for all age groups.

The quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now good overall, but leaders recognise there are still inconsistencies between classes. Nevertheless, all teachers plan their work conscientiously and ensure that pupils are clear about the overall aim of the lesson. In some group activities, however, learning slows because the planning concentrates more on the activities to be covered rather than the desired learning outcomes for pupils during these times.

The good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is evident in pupils' good personal growth. They are well behaved and have acquired an excellent attitude to learning. Adults are successful in instilling in pupils a love of learning, while enabling them to acquire a range of skills that prepare them well for the next stage of their young lives. In addition to acquiring new skills, good links with other schools, for example, for physical education and information and communication technology (ICT), contribute enormously to pupils' personal development.

Leadership and management are good. Since the last inspection, staffing issues and deficiencies in the accommodation have been dealt with sensitively and resourcefully. The headteacher's passion and enthusiasm for education is infectious. Staff have worked their hearts out to turn the school around. Alongside pupils and parents, they comment on how the changed environment has produced an atmosphere conducive to learning, where all feel valued, and which meets the school's aims of 'achieving the best' and providing 'happy memories'. Excellent recent appointments and 'home grown' talent have brought considerable expertise to the leadership team. An outstanding programme of professional training has given teachers confidence, new skills, and allowed them to blossom. This is reflected in pupils' vastly improved rate of learning. With the considerable improvement to staffing, under the dynamic leadership of the headteacher, the school has good capacity to improve.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

The children's merry laughter as they danced in time to African music as part of their multicultural studies is just one example of the enormous enjoyment they gain from the good Early Years Foundation Stage provision. Children are eager to learn, and even the youngest children in Nursery settle quickly into classroom routines. The new first-rate accommodation is having a considerable impact on the provision. The additional space and opportunities have resulted in excellent progress in children's attitude and behaviour, their personal, social and emotional development, and in their well-being. Through a good range of adult-led and child-centred activities, children make at least good progress in all areas of learning. Their broadly average skills stand them in good stead for the transfer to the National Curriculum in Year 1. While staff make very good use of the shared classroom for more physical activities, leaders recognise that they could make better use of the outside area to support all areas of learning. Teaching is of a good standard. Assessment is excellent. Accomplishments are noted and photographed to form attractive records for parents of their children's magical moments. In addition to celebrating achievement, staff use the records effectively to plan the next stage of learning. Teamwork between support staff and teachers is outstanding, as are links with parents. Parents especially enjoy the twice weekly 'learning together' sessions, happily reading books with their child. Very good use is made of volunteer help, for example, to act as a role model for boys from single parent families. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and all welfare requirements are met.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing.
- Ensure consistency in the quality of teaching.
- Ensure the planning for group activities identifies the knowledge and skills pupils will acquire.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

After a period of decline, standards are now rising rapidly and are average overall because of the much improved quality of teaching. The greatest improvement has been at Key Stage 1 in the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 in their end of key stage assessments. In most classes in all age groups, pupils are making double the rate of progress expected in reading and mathematics. Progress in science is good, but progress in writing is too variable and standards here are not yet high enough. Standards in reading are above average throughout the school because teachers and teaching assistants are very knowledgeable when teaching pupils to recognise new words and to understand the meaning of texts. Skilled additional help and daily reading activities ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make similar, good progress. Standards in mathematics are above average because teachers have a very good knowledge of this subject and expect pupils to explain and reason their answers, giving them confidence in solving problems. As a result, over half the pupils attained the higher Level 5 in the provisional 2008 Year 6 national tests. Progress in ICT is accelerating because of a considerable investment in equipment and because pupils are taught specific skills. They use computers confidently for research, multi-media presentations, and to support learning in all subjects. Furthermore, effective links with a local secondary school have provided pupils with skills such as podcasting and using technology to control their environment.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

The school's aim of giving pupils 'skills for life' is seen in the effective and consistent way adults promote pupils' personal development. Pupils say how much they thoroughly enjoy school now and state that the stricter uniform code has 'made us feel more important and made us want to do well in our work'. This encourages them to try their hardest and achieve well. Their confidence and self-esteem have blossomed because their achievements are valued, celebrated and rewarded. Pupils refer to doing 'lots of different and fun things', 'being challenged' and 'doing things together', all of which have a positive impact on their learning and help them to make good progress. Attendance is broadly average and continues to be affected by a few parents who persist in taking holidays in term time. This affects their child's achievement. Pupils are cheerful and happy, and their behaviour is good. They say bullying is rare and they know who to turn to if they have a problem. All pupils know the importance of leading a safe, healthy lifestyle, and participation in the wide variety of sporting activities on offer is good. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and local community. The recently reformed school council gives pupils a voice in school life. Members are proud of the part they played in convincing the school to adopt a house system, and of their suggestions for rewards for effort. Links with a city school with pupils predominantly from Bangladeshi and Pakistani backgrounds increases pupils' understanding of other cultures. Coupled with their good achievement and very positive attitudes to school, enterprise projects such as marketing and producing biscuits prepare pupils well for their future.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Focused monitoring by leaders, coupled with outstanding training for all staff and vastly improved resources, have resulted in far better teaching and learning. Lessons are now more interesting, and have better pace and variety. During the inspection no inadequate teaching was observed, and the proportion of good and outstanding lessons is growing rapidly. As a consequence, pupils make much greater progress and reach higher standards. Lessons are planned and structured to meet the needs of all learners but the planning sometimes concentrates more on the activities than the desired outcomes for pupils. The intended learning, and the steps needed to be successful, are usually shared with all pupils. While pupils are familiar with this, some teachers occasionally forget to remind pupils to use this information as an aid if they get stuck.

Most lessons capture pupils' attention from the outset with imaginative ideas, but occasionally the pace of lessons slows and pupils are kept too long on the carpet. Some become fidgety and this affects the learning of others. Overall, teachers use questions well to assess pupils' understanding and further knowledge. The very good use of paired and group work in all classes advances pupils' speaking, listening, and reasoning. In all age groups, skilled teaching assistants extend very effectively the learning of individuals and groups. The marking of pupils' work and the setting of targets is rigorous and consistent in all classes. This makes certain all pupils are aware of what they need to do to improve their work, and is making a significant contribution to learning and progress.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum matches pupils' needs well and has improved substantially since the last inspection. This has helped to raise standards, particularly in reading and mathematics, although the programme for writing is not yet fully effective. In some year groups, good links between different subjects give the curriculum relevance and cohesion. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 are enjoying studying history, geography, design and technology, and science through the topic 'the wonders of chocolate'. However, this is not the case in all age groups and some opportunities to make learning more meaningful are missed. Themed events such as a multicultural week add much to pupils' enjoyment of school, as well as their understanding of the customs and traditions of other groups. A well-structured programme for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education supports pupils' good personal development well. Work and opportunities for pupils who are gifted or talented and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are carefully identified and planned. Frequent visits and visitors to the school, including residential experiences, enhance the curriculum and broaden pupils' horizons. Popular extra-curricular activities extend the opportunities open to pupils and promote their enjoyment of learning beyond the classroom. However, the short lunchtime limits the number of clubs on offer.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils and parents report the school provides a safe and secure environment. Well-formulated systems for managing potential risks ensure pupils' well-being. There is a strong commitment by all adults to all aspects of pupils' health, safety and welfare. Safeguarding and recruitment procedures meet requirements and are reviewed and updated regularly, as are those for child protection. The school works well to promote inclusion and racial equality. Procedures to identify and support pupils at risk of underachievement and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are good. The range of intervention strategies introduced to accelerate progress in reading, for example, is having a considerable impact on pupils' achievement. Academic guidance is good and continues to improve as the school moves forward. Pupils understand their targets and detailed marking gives them good guidance. Pupils say they particularly enjoy the nutritious meals and 'Restaurant Delicious', though a number of parents expressed concern that lunchtimes are too short for pupils to eat their meal. A high quality cleaning programme, alongside attractive displays to support learning, makes the school warm and welcoming.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The drive, determination and aspirations of the headteacher have galvanised staff and governors alike in their resolve to be the best. All adults are pulling together as a team to provide the best they can, resolute that pupils will achieve at the highest level. Excellent appointments have been made to the senior leadership team, bringing expertise in mathematics, professional development and inclusive practice. In addition, excellent training has developed teachers' skills to lead and manage subjects. Professional training has also had a tremendous impact on classroom practice.

Governors have made great strides over the past few terms. They now have all the necessary information and are rising to the challenge of their role of holding the school to account. Individual members have provided valuable support for the headteacher during difficult times, and are relishing their new role of linking with subject leaders. A good start has been made to auditing and planning for community cohesion, but leaders acknowledge more needs to be done. Self-evaluation by governors and leaders is accurate. The half termly tracking of individual pupils' progress is meticulous. Leaders use it extremely effectively to bridge gaps in learning and to set aspirational targets. This is evident in the accelerated progress in all age groups.



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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?	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?	2
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?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

**Achievement and standards**

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

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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	1
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	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?	2

## 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?	3
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**

As you are aware, a little while ago two colleagues and I spent a short time looking at your school. We had a very enjoyable time, especially watching all your multicultural week activities, and thought the dancing was most impressive. Thank you for taking the time to talk to us about your work, the colourful displays, and for giving us your views of school. It is clear from our discussions and the questionnaire replies we received from your parents that you thoroughly enjoy school and think that you are safe and well cared for.

We believe that your school is greatly improved and is now providing you with a good education. Your rate of progress has come on spectacularly since the last inspection, so standards are getting back to where they should be. As well as working hard, you have a very positive attitude to everything the school offers: you enjoy lessons, clubs (especially ICT and samba), and visits out of school. You tell us your residential trips were 'ace', despite the snow! All this is happening because your headteacher and staff have turned the school around in a very short time.

These are areas that would make your school even more successful.

- You now make good progress in most subjects but you need to make better progress in writing.
- Teachers are doing a super job and have made tremendous improvement; now we would like teaching in all lessons to be at least good.
- Your teachers need to be clear about what you will learn in group tasks to speed up your learning even more.

I know you will do all you can to help your teachers and wish you every success in your future.