

Midgley School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107517
Local Authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	324583
Inspection date	31 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Jane Hughes

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	104
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 Steven Lilley
Headteacher	Mrs Janet Connolly
Date of previous school inspection	5 July 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Lane Ends Midgley Halifax West Yorkshire HX2 6TX
Telephone number	01422 882356
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school, the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage and investigated the following issues: how well pupils achieve and the standards they reach; the consistency of provision across the school; the effectiveness of assessment procedures and how well the school uses this information; successes of leadership, the strengths of pupils' personal development, curriculum enrichment, external links and the impact of parents on school life.

Evidence was collected from lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work, assessment data, school documents and parents' questionnaires. In addition, there were discussions with the headteacher, governors, staff, the school improvement partner, pupils and parents. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors 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 small school draws pupils from a relatively advantaged rural area. Few pupils are eligible for free school meals. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly smaller than average. The school has achieved the following nationally recognised awards: Activemark, Healthy Schools, Dyslexia Friendly Schools. The school is registered to provide out-of-school care for pupils aged 3 to 11 years. Currently, 46 pupils from the school attend this provision during the week. The out-of-school care was also included as part of the inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Midgley is a good school with several outstanding features to its work. Pupils' outstanding personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported by a high quality curriculum with interesting approaches to learning. Together, these ensure that by the time pupils leave the school, they are active learners and confident young citizens, keen to play their part in local, national and international communities. First-class pastoral care and personal support for all pupils help them to feel secure and to enjoy school. Pupils have many opportunities through the personal, social and health education programme to become increasingly mature, both socially and emotionally. These qualities stand them in very good stead for their future well-being. At its heart is the school's desire to create a welcoming, family environment for all pupils where they feel at ease and flourish. Parents confirm that the leadership succeeds in this through their appreciative comments about 'the friendly, open atmosphere' and 'the very warm and friendly culture that exists among all age groups in the school'.

Pupils make good progress as a result of good, and in some cases, outstanding teaching. From typically expected starting points, they attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Standards dipped in Year 2 last year because of several unavoidable changes to the teaching staff in that class. Pupils' current work and the school's own data indicate that standards remain above average and that more pupils are on track this year to attain the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics in both Key Stage 1 and 2. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do as well as others because of the close attention and support they receive from skilled teaching assistants, and the effectiveness of support programmes. The school also establishes first-class partnerships with outside support agencies. Gifted and talented pupils link up with pupils from other schools to work together on projects and to access additional curriculum opportunities specifically tailored to their needs.

Teachers track pupils' progress carefully and compile accurate records. However, the analysis of these data is not yet sharp enough to ensure pupils make outstanding rather than good progress. The leadership is aware of this and is beginning to address it as part of the school's improvement agenda. Teachers know individual pupils well and plan work carefully to interest them and this helps them to persevere in their learning. Teaching assistants support pupils' learning effectively. The school encourages good learning habits among the high proportion of boys through the introduction of more practical activities and a greater use of information and communication technology within the curriculum. For instance, pupils in the Year 1/2 class thoroughly enjoyed planning and constructing a parachute and basket to help protect an egg when it was launched from the top of the climbing frame in the school grounds.

Pupils' attitudes and response are of the highest quality. They are very positive about their time at Midgley which they describe as 'fun' and 'challenging, but in a good way', as 'teachers find fun ways to teach'. Their behaviour is excellent. The school uses innovative methods to help pupils explore feelings from another point of view, through, for example, the photographic records of 'school from the point of view of a chick' in Year 3/4. Pupils from an ethnically diverse school not far away have visited pupils here, with great success, and a return visit is planned. Similarly, there are strong links with a local special school. Pupils embrace the shared values of the whole school community. Crucially, they are developing a very good sense of the wider world beyond Midgley as they learn to speak French, support a village in Sri Lanka, and organise fundraising events for local, national and international charities. Children delight in

joining in local community events. Their understanding of how to stay fit and healthy is outstanding. They thoroughly enjoy the daily fitness sessions and also help to plant, nurture and pick fruit and vegetables in the school garden and show off their work during the annual village 'open gardens' event. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the community. A variety of school pets encourages pupils to take responsibility for other living creatures. In the same sensitive way, older pupils look after younger ones while in school. Pupils become financially literate through fundraising and their involvement in Enterprise projects. Pupils also take turns to broadcast on Radio Midgley and have a growing appreciation of the importance of reliability. All this prepares them very well for their future lives. Pupils' attendance is well above average, reflecting their enjoyment of school and their parents' support of the school's work. Parents recognise that 'pupils are polite, quietly confident and great ambassadors for the school'.

The headteacher provides strong direction for the school and is ably supported by a skilful senior management team. The school staff work well together and share responsibilities fairly. There is strong recognition from staff that as pupils live and learn in a highly mono-ethnic community, they need to discover more about diversity in British society. The school works hard and successfully develops this awareness, by paying attention to fostering community cohesion, equality of opportunity and the elimination of discrimination. Leaders and effective administrators ensure that all statutory requirements are fully met with regard to the vetting of adults who work with pupils and to child protection. Governors are fully involved in the daily life of the school, help to shape priorities and have a clear overview of its strengths. The school's success in addressing issues raised at the time of the last inspection, and in tackling the reasons behind the drop in standards last year, demonstrate its good capacity for further improvement. The leadership is ever mindful of the ongoing concerns a vocal minority of parents express about the quality of communication between home and school. Inspectors looked closely at these concerns but judge that the school goes to considerable lengths to keep parents well informed about children's progress and what is happening in school and well beyond what might reasonably be expected in some areas. The school has changed its practice in several areas as a result of parental opinion.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enjoy an outstanding start to their education. They achieve exceptionally well in all areas of learning due to the high-quality provision for Reception children. This excellent start provides children with a very firm foundation on which to build their future learning and success, particularly in terms of their personal, social and emotional development. Children join the setting with the skills typically expected for their age. By the time they join Year 1 almost all reach a good level of development in all six areas of learning and most reach levels beyond this. Knowledgeable staff ensure that the setting provides all the required elements for children this age. The stimulating learning environment enables children to blossom and entices them to engage eagerly in the multitude of exciting activities, both inside and outdoors. Children choose which activities they wish to undertake at the start of the session and happily explore, investigate and learn throughout the day. They also decide when to learn inside or outdoors. Adults provide skilful support and show particular expertise when asking children questions that challenge their understanding and support their learning. Staff are quick to identify children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and to offer just the right levels of support. Excellent links with outside agencies ensure that this

expert input continues for as long as necessary. The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed outstandingly well. Parents are particularly appreciative of the time staff devote to helping their children to make a smooth transition into the Reception class from a wide variety of early years settings. They typically comment, 'My child is loving every minute here.' There is a keen regard to all the required welfare elements. The setting is secure, clean, safe and orderly and staff develop first-class attitudes and behaviour among the children and meet their individual needs extremely well.

Children's welfare is equally well promoted by staff in the out-of-school club. There is rightly a key focus on children enjoying their time here and winding down after a busy day in school. Children enjoy dressing up, writing and drawing as well as socialising. They sit together companionably and eat a healthy 'tea' of baked potato, salads and bread. Safety, health and well-being issues are well addressed. Children feel secure in the school's familiar environment and have a key worker who takes care of their needs. The highly skilled Early Years Foundation Stage leader oversees the setting and ensures that the provision meets the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Embryonic learning journals and more regular observations along with well-established verbal feedback to Reception staff ensure strong links with the school staff and good communication about individual children's needs. Activities are carefully linked to the six areas of learning. Practitioners are currently working towards further qualifications.

What the school should do to improve further

- Sharpen the use of information from assessments to provide even greater challenge to pupils in Years 1 to 6.

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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?	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?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
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?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

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	1
The behaviour of learners	1
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?	1
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?	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 the warm welcome you gave my colleague and me when we inspected your school. We enjoyed meeting you and listening to what you think about your school. We were sorry to miss those of you in Years 5 and 6 and hope you all had a wonderful few days on your visit to Whitby. It was kind of you to leave the recording you made and it was very helpful to hear your views, so many thanks for that.

We judge that your school is a good school with outstanding aspects. These outstanding elements include everything the school provides for children in Reception, everyone's personal development and how well you all understand about how to stay healthy, safe, successful and positive citizens. Above all, you all enjoy school very much! The raised beds in the garden look wonderful and it was good to meet your pets! We were also pleased with the way your teachers involve your parents in your learning. There are really good links with other schools, colleges and specialists that contribute to the excellent curriculum and some memorable experiences at primary school. You achieve well and reach above average standards because your teachers prepare interesting lessons that make you want to learn.

Part of our job is to see what your school could do better. We have asked your teachers to help all of you in Years 1 to 6 to make faster progress. They are going to use the information they collect when they set you tests or mark your work to offer you greater challenges. This will mean that you will have to work harder but we know you can do it! You can help by reading what your teachers write when they mark your work and then following their tips in your next pieces of work.

Carry on having fun together and enjoying school.