

Field Lane Junior Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107637
Local Authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	324608
Inspection dates	9–10 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Brenda McIntosh

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	207
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage	0
Appropriate authority	Chair of governors
Chair	Mr Nisar Mayet
Headteacher	Ms Janet Lunn
Date of previous school inspection	12 December 2005
School address	Albion Street Batley West Yorkshire WF17 5AH
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching in 14 lessons, looked at pupils' work and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including policies, the improvement plan and analysis of school records on pupils' progress and attainment. The inspectors also analysed 63 questionnaires returned by parents.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- intervention strategies and the impact they have in enabling all groups of pupils to achieve as well as they should
- the tracking of pupils' progress and its impact in helping pupils reach above average levels at the end of Key Stage 2, particularly in English
- the impact of curriculum developments on pupils' enthusiasm for learning
- parental involvement in helping to raise pupils' attainment and improve attendance
- the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage in developing speaking and listening skills and enabling children to become active learners.

Information about the school

The school is broadly average in size and numbers on roll are stable. It serves an area of high levels of unemployment and is situated close to the town centre of Batley. Almost all pupils are of Asian Indian or Pakistani heritage and speak English as a second language. Many of the families do not speak any English at home. Very few pupils are of White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The Early Years Foundation Stage is accommodated in the Children's Centre where Nursery and Reception children are taught alongside each other in a single unit. The school works with the Children's Centre to provide extended services for pupils and parents.

Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

1

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Field Lane is an outstanding school. An extremely caring, nurturing environment and excellent relationships give all pupils the confidence to thrive both personally and academically. Pupils develop exemplary attitudes and behaviour which contribute significantly to the outstanding strides they make in their learning.

Standards have risen in each key stage since the last inspection. Pupils make outstanding progress from the low levels of attainment on entry to the Nursery so that the vast majority reach average standards by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. A good proportion of pupils reach above average standards for their age in science and mathematics, but too few do so in English. This is largely because pupils' range of vocabulary is not extensive enough to help them write more imaginatively and develop their explanations of the meanings of different texts. The school is aware that pupils' handwriting could be better. Staff are acutely aware of pupils' individual needs and they provide additional support to develop confidence and self-esteem as well as additional programmes for those who, for whatever reason, are having difficulties with their learning. One example of this is the successful reading recovery initiative. There are very effective programmes in place to give parents the knowledge and understanding of how best to support their children's learning at home and this has a positive effect on their progress. Children get an excellent start to their learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage where there is a strong focus on developing their language skills.

A particularly rich curriculum and good teaching promotes pupils' keen interest in learning. They describe, in vivid detail, their experiences of visits out of school and how these support their work in lessons. The school works effectively with its partnerships to raise pupils' aspirations and broaden their horizons. Links with a local university, for example, give pupils an insight into higher education and high standards to aim for. Pupils develop a very good understanding of cultural diversity and show respect for each other's beliefs. Bullying and racism are very rare and pupils say they feel safe and happy in school. Pupils eagerly take on responsibilities through the school council and ECO club and make mature and informed decisions about improving the environment both in the school grounds and the local community.

Leaders and managers have taken effective action since the last inspection that has improved many areas of the school's work. For example, the curriculum and pupils'

standards. Self-evaluation is accurate and pinpoints areas for improvement. Systems to track pupils' progress are rigorous, and the school sets challenging targets to raise standards and these are often exceeded. Arrangements for professional development are effective in improving the quality of teaching and the school encourages staff to further develop their careers through national development courses. Middle leaders are taking advantage of specific courses designed to strengthen their effectiveness further. The governing body supports the school very well and cites good examples of how it has helped to move the school forward. However, its involvement in monitoring the impact of the school's policies and action plans is more limited. Given the school's success in improving outcomes and the well established management systems, the school has a good capacity to sustain further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' attainment in English and increase the proportion of pupils who reach an above average standard for their age by the end of Year 6 by:
 - extending pupils' range of vocabulary
 - spreading the best practice in assessing the above average levels in writing in Key Stage 2
 - improving handwriting skills.
- Support the governing body in playing a stronger role in monitoring the school's work so that it is more influential in helping the school move forward.

How good is the overall outcome for individuals and groups of pupils?

1

Pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make outstanding progress and achieve well because great attention is paid to the needs of individuals. In lessons pupils show a keen interest in their learning and a real determination to succeed and get the most out of their activities. They are rarely off task whether they are working independently or in small groups and persevere when faced with a challenge. Pupils thoroughly enjoy all that the school offers them from practical investigations in science and solving problems in mathematics to the wide range of extra-curricular activities at lunchtime and after school.

Standards have improved significantly since the last inspection when they were well below average at both key stages. Standards are now average overall by the end of Key Stage 2, and moving towards above average in mathematics and science. The school works very hard and uses a range of intervention strategies to ensure all pupils attain at least average levels for their age in the core subjects. This prepares them well for the next stage of their education. Pupils use technical language in science and mathematics which helps them achieve above average standards, but their more limited expressive vocabulary in English holds them back from doing so. In 2008, the Year 2 pupils' attainment was average in reading, writing and mathematics, and the highest for a number of years. The number of pupils reaching above average attainment was similar to the national for their age and a significant

improvement on previous years. Most pupils speak English as an additional language and benefit greatly from effective bilingual support which reassures and assists pupils in their learning in their home language when required.

Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is excellent. This reflects the school's outward looking nature and creative use of a range of partnerships to extend pupils' life experiences. By Year 6, pupils display admirable levels of maturity and have developed an acute awareness of right and wrong. Attendance is average, and has improved since the last inspection. Pupils have an excellent understanding of what constitutes a healthy diet and take part in regular physical activities. Extended learning programmes raise parents' awareness of what a healthy lunchbox consists of and provide opportunities for them to work alongside their children preparing and cooking healthy food.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	1
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	2
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	1
How well do pupils behave?	1
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	1
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	1
Pupils' attendance	3
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	1

The quality of the school's work

Teaching is good overall with some that is outstanding. Lessons are calm and purposeful, planned well, and with clear learning objectives. Teachers make very good use of resources, particularly the interactive whiteboards, to enliven both teaching and learning. Year 6 pupils, for example, used a website to take a virtual tour of York to find out different facts about the city. Teaching challenges pupils' thinking through good question-and-answer sessions but there are some missed opportunities to extend pupils' range of vocabulary further, particularly in Key Stage 2. Relationships in lessons are excellent and staff use praise effectively to increase pupils' self-confidence. Pupils are therefore very well motivated, work hard and complete their tasks willingly. Staff help pupils to understand what they need to do next to improve, through marking and through discussion. A variety of teaching methods and tasks match pupils' needs very well. For example, the organisation of the Year 6 class into small groups for some lessons ensures that work is precisely

¹ Grades for attainment are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; 4 is low

tailored to pupils' ability and accelerates their progress. A notable feature in these sessions is the close involvement of pupils in checking their own learning. Pupils say they are not afraid to make mistakes and have the confidence to tell the teacher if they need more practise on a particular subject. Classrooms are pleasant learning environments with helpful aids for literacy and numeracy. Around the school there are vibrant displays of pupils' work reflecting a varied multicultural community. The school monitors pupils' progress closely and this enables staff to quickly spot those who are at risk of not meeting their targets and take appropriate action. There is some very good practice and expertise in assessing the above average levels of writing in Key Stage 2, but it is not shared among staff to best effect.

The curriculum has a very strong creative approach and underpins pupils' learning and development very effectively. At the same time, it fosters the basic skills of literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology extremely well. It has recently been redesigned and "SMART" time sessions introduced which allow pupils the opportunity to make decisions about their learning and work with pupils from a different year group. Activities capture pupils' interests and the atmosphere in these sessions is buzzing with enthusiasm.

The support and care for pupils, particularly the most vulnerable, is outstanding. This means that no pupil is disadvantaged. Adult interventions are successful in supporting pupils when they face difficulties, whether these arise in school or out of school. The school has worked closely with parents and its partners to improve pupils' attendance. An increasing number of parents now plan extended visits carefully to coincide with school holidays. On return to school staff keep a close eye on pupils and support them back into their learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

High quality teaching and purposeful learning	2
Effective assessment	2
An appropriate curriculum which meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, provision through partnership with other organisations	1
Support, guidance and care	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a secure overall view of how well the school is doing. Monitoring of teaching and analysis of performance is detailed and accurate. Action taken is effective. There is a noticeable atmosphere of teamwork at all levels with a shared involvement in, and commitment to, giving pupils exactly what they need to improve. The school is inclusive and works hard to ensure all groups of pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed. The well-founded self-evaluation makes use of governors' and staff views as well as contributions from pupils and parents and links closely to the school improvement plan. The partnership with parents is good, and they are effective in helping their children at home. The school seeks their views and acts upon them but their influence in making key decisions about their own children's learning is more limited. Relevant safeguarding

and risk assessment procedures are in place and meet current requirements. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion. Its work ranges from school to international levels. For example, the school is involved in a 'twinning project' with another school which gives pupils and their parents opportunity to work alongside others from different social, ethnic and religious backgrounds. Pupils learn about global issues and have raised funds for the families affected by the war in Gaza. Pupils are made aware of the plight of others during national and international disasters. For example, the recent fires in Australia. The governing body has ensured a good balance in staffing both in terms of gender and ethnicity and increased the bilingual support to improve communications between home and school and overcome language barriers. The management of resources and deployment of staff ensures pupils make excellent progress and that the school provides outstanding value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

Communicating ambition and driving improvement	2
Promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination	2
Ensuring that safeguarding procedures are effective	2
Ensuring that the governing body provides effective challenge and support so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities are met	3
Promoting the school's relationship with parents and carers, including their involvement in decision-making about matters relating to learning and well-being	2
Developing partnerships with other providers, organisations and services	1
Ensuring the school contributes to community cohesion	2
Deploying resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with a low range of skills. Most do not speak English. Staff develop very good relationships with parents and carers, enhanced by home visits before children start school. As a result, children settle well and make an excellent start to their learning. Children make excellent progress because they are provided with a wide range of stimulating, challenging activities that are planned effectively to meet individual needs. For most of the time children direct their own learning with some specific small group work, for example the teaching of letters and sounds. Children soon gain in confidence and independence and begin to react positively with others. High emphasis is placed on language development. As soon as they enter the class at the start of the day children are encouraged to talk, respond and listen to others. Children receive very effective and supportive bilingual help. By the end of the Reception children are working securely within the goals set for them nationally. Their language and communication skills and readiness to learn have advanced significantly. Welfare requirements are met and children are extremely well cared for. During the inspection, effective risk assessments meant that children were safe in the snow. Leadership and management are good. The leader, who is relatively new to the role, has ensured

that all systems are fully in place but these are not yet embedded. Assessment procedures are developing very well.

How good are the outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
What is the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
How effectively is the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
Overall effectiveness: how well does the setting/school meet the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2

Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents are happy with the school. They believe the school keeps their children safe and helps them to be healthy. Inspection findings agree with parents' views, particularly in respect of the progress children make and how the school meets children's individual needs. In addition, many parents wrote or commented about how well their children are doing and about the school's welcoming atmosphere and friendly, approachable staff.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2007-8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2007-8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Achievement:	an overall measure of the pupils' success in their academic learning. The term combines attainment and progress. Pupils might make good progress, for example, but if their attainment remains low, inspectors may judge that their achievement is only satisfactory.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.



11 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Field Lane Junior Infant and Nursery School, Batley,
WF17 5AH

On behalf of the other inspector and myself, thank you for welcoming us so warmly when we visited to inspect your school recently. We very much enjoyed meeting and talking to so many of you. We judge Field Lane to be an outstanding school. You all make excellent progress, including the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, because of the good teaching and all the additional help you have with your learning. In the classrooms and around school your behaviour is exemplary. We could see how much you enjoy and appreciate all the school offers you. You have lots of interesting things to do. The school cares for and supports you extremely well.

You do better in mathematics and science, but your English is not quite as good as the other subjects. We have asked the headteacher and the other teachers to help you reach even higher standards in English by the time you leave in Year 6 by:

- helping you to learn and use a wider range of words when you are writing and explaining things
- making sure that everyone is skilled in assessing your writing and helping you reach the above average standards
- improving your handwriting.

We have also asked that the governing body plays a greater role in monitoring the school's work so they can have a bigger say in helping it to move forward.

I hope that you continue to enjoy Field Lane and that your enthusiasm for learning stays with you. You can help by encouraging your parents to help you improve your attendance even further, so that you do not miss out on your learning.

With very best wishes to you all

Brenda McIntosh
Lead inspector

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