

Meltham CofE (C) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107718
Local Authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	324633
Inspection dates	1–2 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Gill Hepworth

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	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	393
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 Dawn Hosker
Headteacher	Mr Alex Beaumont
Date of previous school inspection	27 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Holmfirth Road Meltham Holmfirth West Yorkshire HD9 4DA
Telephone number	01484 222610
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Age group	5–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Meltham is a larger than average school near to Holmfirth. The majority of the pupils are White British, with few from minority ethnic backgrounds, and none of these are at an early stage of learning English. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) comprises two Reception classes and no Nursery provision. A well below average number of pupils is eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The headteacher has been in post for two terms. The school holds the Activemark award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Meltham provides a good education with a number of outstanding features. The recently appointed headteacher is well supported by the deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher. Good leadership has helped create a strong team spirit among staff. The quality of relationships within the school means that pupils greatly enjoy school, feel they are valued and, consequently, want to do well. The school community is a very happy and friendly place. Strong priority is given to ensuring pupils' outstanding personal development makes them well placed to improve their academic achievement even further. The majority of parents are very positive about the school and really appreciate the way older pupils look after younger ones.

Children have an excellent start to their school life in the Reception classes. Very good induction procedures ensure they settle quickly and develop positive attitudes towards learning. These positive attitudes continue throughout the school and pupils try very hard to do their best. Pupils want to be in school, as seen in their above average attendance. Behaviour is excellent and pupils very willingly work together to share ideas. They enjoy helping each other and are proud of how the school Buddies and Be-frienders help to make school a happy and safe place. A key contributory factor to pupils' enjoyment is the curriculum, which is enriched by many visits, visitors and an extensive range of extra-curricular activities. There is excellent provision for music and pupils have many opportunities to perform in the local and national community. The community links at home and abroad make a good impact on pupils' understanding of global communities. The strong emphasis on leading a healthy lifestyle enables pupils to have an exceptionally good understanding of the need to eat sensibly and take regular exercise. The overall quality of care, guidance and support is good. Staff take very good care of the pupils and there are robust systems to ensure they are safeguarded well.

Pupils achieve well, because teaching is good. Teachers question pupils skilfully and there is a good emphasis on discussion and the sharing of ideas. By the time pupils leave in Year 6, they have made good progress and standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. Teachers are good at ensuring pupils are clear about what they are expected to learn in each lesson. However, pupils are not always sure about what they have to do next in order to make even better progress in their work. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are included well in all activities because of the very good support they receive from teaching assistants.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher is strongly focused on school improvement and provides a clear sense of direction in raising standards. The school knows itself well and has created excellent partnerships within the community that have a beneficial effect on pupils' personal development. Assessment data is used to monitor and track pupils' progress but is not used consistently across the school to ensure all pupils have targets in order for them to make even better progress. Governors and staff are supportive in identifying priorities and monitoring actions to address any weaknesses. Pupils' continued improvement and excellent personal development demonstrate that the school has good capacity to improve further and that it provides good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is outstanding. Children enter Reception with skills that are broadly in line with national expectations for their age. Although still early in the academic year, children are very happily settled and confident, with a very good understanding of school routines. They socialise well together at fruit-time and share toys and equipment amicably as they play. Many children can concentrate well for long periods as they engage in activities. Parents speak positively of the warm and friendly atmosphere and the high quality care and support given by staff. Teaching is outstanding and children learn rapidly. There is a very good balance between adult-led activities and child-initiated play. The children work in a caring, safe and stimulating learning environment both in and out of the classroom. Although varying from year to year, standards are above national expectations by the time children enter Year 1. This represents excellent progress in one year because children make particularly good progress in their personal development, writing and mathematical development. These aspects are invariably below expected levels on entry. Leadership and management are most effective and ensure that teachers work well together, identifying learning needs and planning sensibly to build on the children's prior experience.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use assessment data consistently across the school to ensure meaningful and challenging targets are set.
- Ensure that pupils have knowledge of what steps they need to take in order to improve their work and achieve their targets.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 so that by the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment like this is maintained and improved on between Year 3 and Year 6. Standards at the end of Year 6 are consistently above average in English, mathematics and science. Moreover, there is a rising trend in mathematics where standards were well above average in 2006 and 2007. There is also an improving trend in other subjects. For example, results in science were only average in 2007, but the school made sure that pupils were more confident at hypothesis and experimentation, so in 2008, provisional results show that standards were well above nationally expected levels. Similarly, in English and mathematics, in 2008, pupils achieved and in many cases exceeded the school's ambitious targets for them. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and make similar progress to others in their year groups. Although pupils make good progress, they have limited understanding of how much they need to achieve year-on-year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils have excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They very much enjoy their time in school. When they enter school they are immersed in a community that really does have children at the heart of learning. Attendance is higher than average and pupils participate with great enthusiasm in activities both in and out of lessons. They settle very quickly into

school life. Pupils are very aware of how to stay healthy, especially through eating well and being physically active. Behaviour is excellent. Pupils are sensible and work well collaboratively, treating each other and adults with care and respect. The school's contribution to the community is exceptional, whether it is through fundraising for charities at home or abroad or the work of the school council. Pupils take on many roles of responsibility, for example, monitors for the environment and lunchtime receptionists. This gives them good opportunities to gain the knowledge and skills related to workplace situations

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils are enthusiastic learners. They are motivated and eagerly undertake challenging tasks. Teachers are skilled at developing pupils' thinking skills through effective questioning. Often, teachers ask 'why' and 'how' to encourage pupils to think more clearly and articulate their ideas more precisely. For example, in an outstanding lesson in Year 6 the teacher used drama to help pupils to explore and describe their reactions to moral and social issues. Assessment of pupils' work and levels of achievement is good. Lessons are planned well in the light of what teachers know about pupils' learning. Teachers mark work regularly and pupils are well informed about areas for improvement. However, pupils have only a limited understanding about what next steps they need to take in their learning. This prevents teaching from being better than good at the moment. Teaching assistants provide very good support for pupils identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. All teachers have high expectations of behaviour and good relationships help create a positive learning environment.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and meets the needs and interests of pupils. It is broad and balanced and there is a good focus on literacy and numeracy. Local facilities are used to enhance the National Curriculum, especially in music and sport. The artwork is of a high quality. Extra computers have been purchased in order to make greater use of information and communication technology (ICT) across all areas of the curriculum. This has not as yet been extended to all year groups, which limits the impact of the curriculum for ICT. There are many practical learning opportunities, providing good opportunities for pupils to develop and apply basic skills. Cross-curricular links are developing well, making learning more meaningful for pupils. The very wide range of school clubs adds significantly to pupils' enjoyment. The school provides opportunities to enhance pupils' learning by making use of its attractive grounds and the many areas of interest in the local community. In addition, pupils have the opportunity to learn French.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The good quality of the school's care, guidance and support is firmly reflected in its very positive caring environment and the good attitudes and excellent behaviour of pupils. All staff have a high concern for the safety and welfare of their pupils. Every child is made to feel they matter. Most parents express confidence in the school. 'My child has settled well and enjoys school,' are typical comments. Systems for ensuring health and safety, including the government's

requirements for safeguarding are in place. Pupils with specific needs usually receive good quality support. Staff do all they can to ensure a smooth transition when pupils move to and from the school. Pupils say they feel safe and if troubled, have confidence in the help from all in the school community. Academic guidance is helpful in some respects. For example, teachers' marking is useful on a daily and weekly basis. The school has recently introduced procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress. However, it is too soon for tracking to be used for setting longer-term targets. Therefore, at the moment, pupils do not know what they have to achieve by the end of each year in English, mathematics and science. This reduces opportunities for them to make better progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has clarity of vision, high expectations and a good ability to drive the school forward. Staff and governors support the aims of the school and provide a vital contribution to the development of the school. Integral to their vision, is the belief that pupils learn best in a happy and safe environment. Teachers' expertise is valued and shared, good practice recognised and areas for development identified and worked towards. The impact is seen in pupils' excellent personal development and their good progress. Leaders are continually striving to make the school even better. This has enabled systems to be put in place to raise standards. These are not yet sufficiently 'fine-tuned' to easily provide summary data to help the leadership team get an accurate view of academic progress in English, mathematics and science. Excellent links are made with the local and wider communities. This makes a good contribution to pupils' understanding of different lifestyles. Governors are very supportive of the school. They also challenge and hold it to account for the standards pupils attain.

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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	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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

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?	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**

Inspection of Meltham CofE (C) Primary School, Holmfirth, HD9 4DA

On behalf of the inspection team I would like to thank you for the warm welcome you gave us. We enjoyed talking to you about your work, speaking to the staff and joining you in lessons.

Meltham is a good school and this is what I particularly liked.

- Those of you who are in the Reception classes get off to an excellent start because the adults plan lots of fun things for you to do.
- You feel safe in school and adults take good care of you.
- Your classrooms are very busy places, where it is good to see you all working hard and trying to do your best. It is clear you enjoy school.
- Your behaviour is excellent, and you should be very proud of the way you try to help each other and people less fortunate than you.
- You have an interesting curriculum, which is made more exciting by the many visits, visitors and extra clubs that you attend. Some of your artwork is very good and I was impressed with how well many of you play musical instruments.
- You have very good knowledge of healthy eating and taking lots of exercise to keep yourself fit.
- You make good progress and, by Year 6, you reach standards that are higher than those usually found in primary schools. This is because your teachers make lessons interesting.
- Your headteacher and staff work together well and know what is needed to make your school even better.

Here are two things I have asked your headteacher and teachers to do.

- Your school needs better systems for checking that you all make enough progress every year.
- Your teachers need to make sure you know what you have to do next in order to reach your targets.

You can help too by making sure you know your targets and doing your very best to achieve them.