

# Whitkirk Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107942
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leeds
<b>Inspection number</b>	324678
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gordon Potter

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	281
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 Ron Monaghan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Steve Clark
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 October 2005
<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>	Templegate Walk Whitkirk Leeds West Yorkshire LS15 0EU
<b>Telephone number</b>	0113 260 6203
<b>Fax number</b>	0113 264 6346

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is an average sized primary school. Pupils come from a broad range of social and economic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups is average. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need is average. Pupils enter the Reception classes in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in the autumn term. There is a pre-school on site, which is run by a private provider and did not form part of this inspection.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Whitkirk Primary School is a good and improving school where pupils make increasingly good progress because, as one parent said, 'It has a very happy learning environment.' The school is proud of its inclusive nature and accordingly gives its pupils outstanding care and support so they are happy and feel safe and secure in school. It is at the heart of its community. The Silver Friends group is an outstanding example of cooperation between senior citizens and pupils and there are strong links with a nearby multicultural school. Parents especially appreciate the wide range of opportunities available to their children and the way teachers try to make learning fun.

Effective action has been taken to ensure that the process of setting targets is becoming more effective in enabling pupils to make good and rapidly improving progress. Teaching and learning are good because teachers offer fun lessons which engage pupils in a range of interesting, independent and group work activities. They make it clear to pupils what they are to learn. In a small number of lessons the pace is not brisk enough, work is not matched carefully enough to the needs of the most able and teachers do not allow enough time for pupils to practise new learning. As a result progress on these occasions is less pronounced. The curriculum is good because it is based on pupils' interests and is enhanced by an impressive range of activities and visits which promote learning and community cohesion. Increasingly, links are made between subjects, enabling pupils to practise and apply skills such as writing.

Year 6 pupils who took national tests in 2007 entered the EYFS with levels that were below what is typical for their age. They left with standards which were broadly average, representing good progress. Evidence from the inspection and from the school's own detailed tracking data indicates that while standards have not yet risen significantly, pupils' achievement remains good overall although pupils make more rapid progress in Key Stage 2.

Outstanding care and support from a caring staff promote pupils' good personal development. Behaviour and attitudes are good because of the high profile given to the 'Whitkirk Way', a clear set of behaviour rules, which pupils know and follow. 'Teachers are friendly and you can have a laugh with them, but you know you have to work hard.' is a typical pupil comment that helps to explain why pupils like school. They readily take on responsibilities, such as being school council members or playground helpers. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and stay fit, as the school strongly promotes these qualities. Pupils develop effective life skills as they move through the school because of the varied and good quality experiences they receive.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has established a leadership team which shares his clear vision of school improvement. Initiatives to improve behaviour management, teaching and learning and the quality of pupils' writing have had an impact on improving pupils' progress in their work. There is strong teamwork and the headteacher encourages all teachers and the team of teaching assistants to develop their leadership roles. There is a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The highly effective action already taken shows that the school has a good capacity to improve.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children enter the EYFS with skills which are below what is typical for their age. They make good progress so that they start Year 1 with skills which are broadly in line with expectations. Their social development is good. They are confident and behave well, listening carefully and settle quickly to work. They are safe and secure and show a developing knowledge and understanding of other faiths and cultures. They are encouraged to make healthy choices about what they eat and enjoy the many opportunities for exercise. Teaching is good with a strong emphasis on phonics and mathematical development. Children enjoy being actively involved in their learning and there are many opportunities for them to explore and investigate together, both indoors and outdoors. Occasionally, it is not clear how activities help children to learn and in these instances their progress is less pronounced. A wide range of diverse needs are well catered for because support is good and adults get to know all children well before they start in the Reception classes. Children are prepared well for entry into Year 1 through a programme of visits and regular working with older children. The provision is well led. The EYFS leader has a clear picture of how children learn and monitors their progress very carefully. She ensures that children in both Reception classes have the same learning opportunities, although opportunities are missed for all children to work together. Parents are welcomed as partners in children's learning. They are very supportive of the way their children are cared for and encouraged to shine.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards, especially in Key Stage 1.
- Ensure that the quality of all teaching and learning across school, including in the EYFS, matches the school's best practice.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good. The broadly average standards reached by the end of Year 6 represent good progress. Over the past three years standards have been below average at the end of Year 2. This represents satisfactory progress when pupils' starting points are considered but indicates that pupils' progress has been less rapid in Key Stage 1 than in other phases of their education, where progress is good. Data together with work seen during the inspection indicates that many pupils currently in Year 1 are now working at above average standards and that pupils' attainment is rising. Results in the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2007 were broadly average but were adversely affected by above average levels of pupil mobility. Those pupils who complete Key Stage 2 make good progress. Inspection evidence indicates a slight rise in standards in 2008, although they remain broadly average. Evidence seen during the inspection, including the scrutiny of work and lesson observations indicates that pupils are now making good progress across the school, although standards could still be higher. All groups of learners, including pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make equally good progress.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Behaviour and attitudes are good and help to explain the good and respectful relationships which exist at all levels and why pupils enjoy school. Attendance is satisfactory, although the school works very hard to promote it, such as through individual awards and the weekly class award of Sam Squarepants, a small soft toy. Pupils' views are heard and acted upon through a committed and active school council, which makes improvements which benefit pupils, such as the introduction of football nets. Play-leaders organise play equipment at break-times and help run games to help ensure that playground time is largely trouble free. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Bullying is rare, but should it occur it is dealt with swiftly and effectively. Pupils feel safe and usually move around school in a calm and orderly manner. Pupils know about healthy lifestyles through initiatives such as the 'fabulous fruit factory' and have gained awards, such as the Activemark. Numerous links with the local and wider community, including with schools in Uganda and a multicultural city school, help to ensure that community cohesion is high profile.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Secure relationships, effective management of pupils and very high levels of care successfully underpin the mostly good teaching and learning. Pupils find most lessons interesting, challenging and fun. Teaching is especially successful when time is used to good effect, teachers give pupils much encouragement and tasks are demanding to help them enjoy learning. In these instances, pupils are well motivated, find their learning experiences challenging and make good progress. Teaching assistants usually contribute well to the quality of pupils' learning, especially those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Teachers are enthusiastic and knowledgeable and often use information and communication technology (ICT) well to generate interest and involvement. In a small number of lessons, learning slows because, for example, work is not hard enough for all pupils. Teachers usually make clear at the start of lessons what pupils have to learn. As a result, pupils know what is expected of them. However, teachers do not always involve them in checking what has been learnt to help them more effectively build on what they know and understand.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is broad, balanced and meets statutory requirements. There is a strong and necessary focus on the development of pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT. The introduction of strategies to develop pupils' writing and to incorporate more writing activities across all subjects is having an impact on raising standards in writing. The curriculum is carefully planned across a two year cycle to allow for mixed age classes. Pupils enjoy the curriculum because it has an impressive range of enrichment activities, such as visits to art galleries and residential activities centres, an emphasis on learning by experience and a focus which reflects their own interests. A strong programme of personal, social and health education, linked to themed weeks which develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of how to stay healthy, supports their good personal development. There is an impressive programme of extra-curricular activities including sporting, academic and arts based clubs which many pupils enjoy. The school

has recently begun to help pupils to see the links between subjects, but this has not yet had time to have an impact on standards.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

A wealth of pastoral support arrangements helps account for the outstanding level of care and personal support. These structures are significant factors in pupils' enjoyment of school, their sense of well-being and the good progress most make. Parents overwhelmingly agree that pupils are well cared for and safe and feel both supported and welcomed. Strong partnerships have been forged with a wide range of external agencies to help ensure pupils are very well supported. The work of the learning mentor is high profile in ensuring high quality pastoral care. Current safeguarding requirements are met. Child protection procedures are securely in place and arrangements for health and safety are robust. Pupils say they always have someone to talk to when they have a concern. The award of the Inclusion Charter Mark provides evidence of a school where all are equally valued and achievement and effort is always celebrated. Academic guidance is good. Teachers know pupils very well and pupils' progress is increasingly carefully tracked to help ensure that they make successful steps in their learning. Pupils increasingly have targets to help them learn and these are valued by pupils.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The purposeful and focused leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by the assistant headteacher, provides a clear vision for school improvement. The school knows itself well and appropriate priorities have been identified and acted upon, especially in the areas of behaviour management, teaching and learning and the development of pupils' writing. These have led to an improvement in pupils' achievement although they have not yet fully impacted on standards. The headteacher has developed the management roles of managers at all levels and they thrive on the responsibility. There is a clear focus on using data to plan work and to help pupils to make progress. Increasingly challenging targets are being set and these are beginning to have an impact on achievement. The governing body works closely and supportively with the school through close relationships with individual classes and a demanding focus on school improvement so that governance is good. All appropriate legislation is incorporated into school practice, particularly in the areas of community cohesion and equality of opportunity, both of which are informed by the school's belief in social inclusion.

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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?	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 <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	2
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?	1

## 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?	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**

On behalf of the team, thank you so much for making us welcome when we inspected your school. Whitkirk Primary School is a good and improving school. The staff care for you outstandingly well. They help you to enjoy your learning because they want to make your lessons fun and arrange many exciting visits for you. They encourage you to know what you need to learn in each lesson.

We were pleased to see that you work hard and do your best. You come to school on time and care for one another in the playground. We think that your behaviour is good and you look after one another well. We found that you are very polite and helpful and we enjoyed talking to you about your school. You told us that you enjoyed coming to school because you enjoyed your lessons and because you liked your teachers. You said you appreciated the activities the school provides for you, like the visits to outdoor centres and sporting activities. Your parents and carers like the school very much, especially the way your teachers care for you and help you to enjoy your learning.

We have asked your teachers to do two things to make your school even better.

- Help you to do better in your tests when you are in Year 2 and Year 6.
- Make sure that all your lessons are as good as the best lessons you have.

You can help by always doing your best. Thank you for all your help and I wish you every success in all you do in the future.