

Middleton Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 107953 |
| Local Authority | Leeds |
| Inspection number | 324681 |
| Inspection dates | 15–16 October 2008 |
| Reporting inspector | Brenda Clarke |

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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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 340 |
| 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 L Lawton |
| Headteacher | Mrs Samantha Williams |
| Date of previous school inspection | 26 September 2005 |
| Date of previous funded early education inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Date of previous childcare inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | Middleton Park Avenue Leeds West Yorkshire LS10 4HU |
| Telephone number | 0113 271 7969 |
| Fax number | 0113 272 0076 |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors

Description of the school

Most pupils attending this large urban school are White British. About 12% of pupils speak English as an additional language and the number is rising. The school is situated in an area of significant social disadvantage. The school site is shared with a speech and language unit; the Satellite Centre for South Leeds primary pupils at risk of exclusion; the South Leeds Primary Learning Centre for support of vulnerable pupils; and a children's centre from which most children transfer into the two Reception classes. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average as is the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. There is a large breakfast club funded by sponsors and run by volunteers. The headteacher and deputy headteacher were appointed in September 2007. The school has gained Healthy Eating Status, Inclusion Mark, and the Stephen Lawrence Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Middleton Primary School is a satisfactory school with good features. Recently appointed leadership has ensured that staff and governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. A good start has been made in using this information to improve provision. Standards of care provided for pupils are outstanding, enabling all to feel secure and happy. The majority of parents are pleased with the quality of education provided. They comment positively about recent changes made by the leadership team and the good care their children receive.

Standards at the end of Year 6 have improved during the last academic year. This is because well thought out target-setting procedures are in place and pupils' attainment and progress are regularly checked against challenging targets. Recently introduced initiatives are ensuring an exciting curriculum with more practical activities in lessons is being delivered. Pupils enjoy these new approaches and have made up ground in English particularly and to a lesser extent in mathematics and science. Standards by the end of Year 6 have risen but are still below national averages. Pupils enter Year 1 with poor skills in early writing and speaking. They make satisfactory progress although currently standards remain well below those expected nationally by the end of Year 2. Standards across the school are rising but they are still not as high as they could be however, because new initiatives have had insufficient time to impact fully on pupils' progress. Pupils' achievement overall, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language, is satisfactory overall.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory but varies too much from class to class which impact on the overall progress pupils make. Although teachers have good subject knowledge and organise lessons effectively they do not consistently use their assessments to provide work closely matched to pupils' needs. This limits pupils' progress. Pupils sometimes sit for long periods of time. When teachers spend too long talking the opportunities for pupils to consolidate and practise new skills are diminished. Consequently, the pace of learning slows and progress is satisfactory rather than good.

A particular strength of provision is pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils enjoy school and take up is high in clubs such as gardening and 'funky choir.' Behaviour is good and vulnerable pupils respond well to the safe haven provided by the learning mentors. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles and many speak enthusiastically about the healthy lunchtime choices. Pupils are keen to learn, develop respect for themselves and others and are polite and friendly. Through initiatives such as the school council and school nutrition action group (SNAG) pupils contribute to the decision-making process. The curriculum for personal and social development is particularly effective in helping pupils to learn about dangers such as the misuse of drugs. There are very beneficial links with other agencies that share the school site; for example, the specialist resource provision for pupils with speech and language difficulties has a significant impact on pupils' improving oracy.

The recently appointed headteacher has set a clear direction for the school and, together with the leadership team has rigorously ensured a shared understanding of areas for development. Monitoring of teaching and learning is now firmly established and used rigorously to raise standards. Not all subject managers, however, are effective and initiatives are in place to develop their expertise in monitoring and evaluating their subjects and taking positive action. The drive of the headteacher and senior leaders, improvements to the curriculum, assessment and the

improving picture of pupils' standards and achievement provide the school with a good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception classes) is satisfactory as are leadership and management. Effective links with the children's centre provide children with a smooth transition into school. Consequently, they settle quickly and happily. On entry to Reception, standards are very low, particularly in speaking, personal and social development and coordination skills. Children achieve satisfactorily overall. However, on entry to Year 1 many aspects of children's learning, particularly early writing and calculations, remain well below expectations for their age. Children's progress is more rapid when working in small focused groups but slows down when staff are less proactive in assessing where children need support. Some planned activities that children choose lack clear learning intentions, reducing the scope of learning and opportunities. As a result, opportunities to reinforce children's poor speaking skills are sometimes missed. Relationships are strong and staff ensure high levels of care. Behaviour is well managed so that children respond by being polite and friendly. Links with parents are good. Effective systems to assess children's learning are beginning to be used to plan activities that more closely match children's interests.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good across the school.
- Develop the expertise of all leaders to improve the consistency of monitoring and evaluation for all groups of pupils.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils begin Year 1 with standards well below those expected. They make satisfactory progress but standards remain well below average at the end of Year 2, particularly in writing. Progress from Years 1 to 6 is variable because of variations in teaching and learning. However, standards are beginning to rise across the school as the new curriculum and teaching and learning initiatives embed. The unvalidated 2008 national tests at Year 6 provisionally show that pupils' standards have risen from well below to below national averages. Pupils' progress also accelerates in Year 6 because of effective setting arrangements for all children. More pupils are attaining higher levels in national tests than previously.

Science is the weakest subject but standards here are improving because of a whole-school drive to plan for and develop pupils' investigation skills. Improvement in reading is apparent due to the school's recent emphasis on teaching the sounds letters and groups of letters make. Effective monitoring and evaluation is enabling senior leaders to identify differences in attainment and achievement between different groups of children, to provide effective interventions and set challenging targets. This is having a positive impact on pupils' learning.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The inclusive, caring nature of the school is a strength and impacts positively on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This results in pupils enjoying school and increasingly considering others' needs. Relationships are very good so that pupils are happy and enjoy working together. Pupils are proud of their efforts to improve the community through recycling and gardening. They know the importance of healthy lifestyles and diet. Behaviour is good because rules are well known and effective. Pupils make a good contribution to their own community through the school council, as prefects and befrienders. Pupils build satisfactory skills to help them prepare for later life and their enjoyment of residential visits boosts their confidence in social situations. Attendance is satisfactory. Most pupils attend regularly. However, there are a small number of persistent absentees.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and improving due to effective staff training and a more creative approach to introductory activities in lessons. All teachers manage behaviour well so that lessons are orderly and pupils listen carefully. Teachers ensure that pupils understand the purpose of lessons. The productive support given by teaching assistants ensures that pupils receive extra help when needed. In the best lessons teachers have good subject knowledge and lessons progress at a rigorous pace. Work is carefully planned to address the differing needs of pupils. Satisfactory lessons are characterised by a slower pace, too much talking by the teacher and activities that are not always well matched to all pupils' needs. Teachers' regularly mark pupils' work but do not consistently indicate what pupils need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school's focus on a creative curriculum is stimulating pupils' interest. Topics are kick started with interesting visits and visitors and practical activities that grab pupils' attention and desire to learn. Staff are increasingly enthused and motivated to give pupils a purpose to their academic progress and consequently standards are beginning to rise. Using a raft of intervention strategies the school is providing increasingly effective opportunities for pupils with learning difficulties to progress in their basic skills. The programme for personal, social and health education and citizenship is a pivotal feature of the curriculum, giving pupils the skills to take responsibility for their learning. Excellent displays around the school celebrate pupils' successes and demonstrate the breadth of provision.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Standards of care for all pupils, including those who have English as an additional language and those who are vulnerable, are outstanding. Health and safety and safe guarding procedure are comprehensive ensuring that pupils are safe in school. The school effectively tackles bullying and anti-racism. Learning mentors successfully address the needs of vulnerable pupils. Strong links with a raft of specialist agencies also give vulnerable pupils and parents the support they

need. A very successful breakfast club is much appreciated by parents and children, giving many a nutritious start to the day. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Pupils are not always clear about how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher's rigorous analysis of the school's provision has enabled her to quickly highlight strengths and weaknesses and to set a clear direction for improvement. Supported by an enthusiastic deputy headteacher she has developed a shared ethos and team spirit. The school's self-evaluation of itself is accurate and has informed a comprehensive programme to bring about change. Staff have been well supported to make necessary changes and work as a cohesive team. Many initiatives are relatively new and have not had long to impact fully but improvements in the quality of teaching and learning are tangible examples of an improving picture. Some coordinators are new to their roles and lack expertise in management skills such as monitoring and evaluation. This is because the priority to raise standards in English and mathematics has meant that other subject development has not yet been addressed. The school sets challenging targets for every class in English, mathematics and science and most have been met or exceeded. The school is very involved in community initiatives but acknowledges that pupils require a wider perspective of multi-ethnic diversity. Inclusion is a strength of provision ensuring equal opportunities for every child. Governance is satisfactory overall.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

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| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 3 |
| 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

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|---|---|
| How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS? | 3 |
| How well do children in the EYFS achieve? | 3 |
| How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS? | 3 |
| How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop? | 3 |
| How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted? | 2 |
| How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed? | 3 |

Achievement and standards

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|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve? | 3 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 3 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 3 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress | 3 |

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

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|---|---|
| How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 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 | 3 |

The quality of provision

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|--|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs? | 3 |
| 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

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| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 3 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 3 |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 3 |
| 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 | 3 |
| 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**

Inspection of Middleton Primary School, Leeds, LS10 4HU

On behalf of the team, I would like to say a big thank you for being so well behaved, friendly and polite when we inspected your school recently.

We found that your school is giving you a satisfactory education. Changes being made by the headteacher and your teachers are starting to improve it further. You told us that your school takes good care of you and that you feel safe and happy. We agree. Most of you enjoy school and like the many visits you make to exciting places. You know about being healthy and enjoy your Wake and Shake sessions. School is helping you to respect yourself and your friends and to walk away from things that might get you into trouble. Your lessons are helping you to make steady progress. However, you do make most progress when lessons are interesting and your activities carefully match your next steps in learning.

We think your headteacher has identified the right things to make your school a better place for you and we have asked the school to do three things to improve your learning:

- Help to improve your work in English, mathematics and science.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is always good.
- Make sure that your teachers who are subject leaders carefully examine their subjects and make changes that will help you to make better progress.

We appreciated talking to you about your work and watching you learn. We hope that you will help your headteacher and other staff to continue to improve your school. We wish you well in the future.