

Miriam Lord Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107296
Local Authority	Bradford
Inspection number	336860
Inspection dates	23–24 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Georgiana Sale

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	486
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Alan Forbes-Wake
Headteacher	Mr Bryan Harrison
Date of previous school inspection	24 January 2007
School address	Bavaria Place Manningham Bradford BD8 8RG
Telephone number	01274 496611
Fax number	01274 771874
Email address	office@miriamlord.bradford.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 25 lessons and saw 20 staff teach. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils, and talked with some parents and carers. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including records of pupils' progress, the school improvement plan, assessment information, policies and samples of pupils' work. Information about safeguarding was evaluated. Inspectors also took into account the views of staff and pupils expressed in questionnaires. They received and analysed 121 questionnaires from parents and carers.

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

- the effectiveness of intervention to ensure pupils do not fall behind
- the standards of attainment and the rates of progress of all groups of pupils throughout the school, especially in mathematics
- the attendance rates of all pupils and whether action taken to reduce absence is having any effect.

Information about the school

This school is larger than the average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The vast majority of children are from Asian British backgrounds; only a few are from other minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. Nearly all pupils are learning English as an additional language. At the time of the inspection the headteacher had been in post for less than two terms.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing considerably less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to addressing the legacy of pupils' underachievement, raising pupils' attainment and the low level of attendance.

Although there have been improvements since the last inspection, standards remain very low, and pupils make only satisfactory progress from their starting points, especially in mathematics. Overall, pupils' achievement is inadequate. Nevertheless, there are signs of improving attainment and progress, as systems introduced by the new headteacher are having an impact. The inspectors agree with parents, staff and pupils who say that the headteacher has given strong direction and energy to the school.

While teaching is satisfactory, there are not enough good lessons to reduce the legacy of underachievement quickly enough. Staff expectations of what pupils can achieve are generally too low, but are rising in response to the headteacher's higher expectations for pupils. Weak use of assessment also contributes to some lessons that do not fully challenge all groups of pupils, so progress is satisfactory rather than good. Pupils' attendance is low and this too plays a significant part in the underachievement of some pupils. The school is working closely with parents to raise attendance and there have been some improvements to overall attendance this year. For example, the percentage of persistent absentees has reduced slightly since the start of the year.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress; they receive a good education because the setting is a safe and welcoming place where relationships are warm and friendly. There is good care and support provided for children. The quality of care and guidance is a strong feature of the school. Good relationships with parents and carers and the strong support for all pupils' well-being help pupils to settle into the school. Good support is given to pupils throughout the school, for example, if they have had an extended absence, so they are not disadvantaged. Pupils say they enjoy school; they eat healthily and enjoy out-of-school physical exercise. Pupils are confident and play an active part in the life of the school and their community; for example pupils have chosen playground equipment.

The headteacher and senior leaders are injecting a new sense of purpose into the work of the school. They have made an accurate evaluation of the school's performance, and recognise that the expertise of middle managers needs to develop in order to bring about rapid improvement through rigorous monitoring and action planning. Actions

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taken since the start of the school year are beginning to bear fruit in raising attainment and improving the quality of provision. Although more time is needed for the full impact of these actions, they do demonstrate that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

The governing body has had too little impact on the direction and work of the school. The school has found it hard to recruit governors for a number of years. A small, but dedicated group of governors have managed a heavy workload and ensured that all statutory duties are fulfilled. However, they have not had the capacity to support the school in tackling all the issues from the last inspection. The recent recruitment of new governors is helping to expand and strengthen the governing body and give it a better capacity to fulfill its responsibilities.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the rate of pupils' progress so that attainment is raised, especially in mathematics, by:
 - ensuring that assessment data is used to monitor pupils' progress in lessons and then take quick and effective action where there is underachievement
 - ensuring that all teachers give pupils clear feedback so that they know exactly what to do to move from one level to the next.
- Increase the proportion of good and better teaching by:
 - ensuring that all teachers use pupils' assessment data to match learning opportunities to pupils' learning needs
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Develop the role of the governing body by:
 - using the new committee structure to give a greater focus on the achievement of pupils
 - developing governors' skills to monitor the work of the school, including the quality of teaching and learning.
- Work with parents and the local authority to improve attendance.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**4**

In lessons, pupils behave well and show they are ready to learn. In the best lessons, pupils work with enthusiasm, either alone or in small groups, and respond well to challenge, when it is provided. Where teaching is less effective, pupils lose interest in their work and they become restless.

Pupils start the school with standards that are well below national averages and make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, after that they make only satisfactory progress in lessons because there is a lack of challenge and the teaching is not always well matched to pupils' needs. While a high proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language and are at an early stage of learning English, progress

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is better in English than in mathematics. By the time pupils leave, their standards of attainment are low compared to those achieved nationally and this represents inadequate achievement overall for pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Actions taken by the school this year are beginning to have an impact. School data and inspection evidence show an increase in the proportion of pupils who are making good progress and reducing the legacy of underachievement. Pupils are very open to new experiences and ideas, and take an active part in decision-making in the school. For example, they have decided on rules for their own classrooms and choose how money is spent on rewards. They maturely and responsibly take on their roles as 'Playmates' in the playground and as prefects to help the school run smoothly. They also contribute well to their local community, for example by helping to plant bulbs and spring flowers at their local library. Pupils generally get on well with each other and say they feel safe in the school. Some younger children said they felt less safe on the playground but know that incidents of bullying are quickly and effectively dealt with by a trusted adult. Despite some strengths in their personal development, pupils' low levels of literacy, numeracy and attendance, do not prepare them adequately for the next stage of learning.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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How effective is the provision?

In all lessons observed, there were good relationships between pupils and staff. Tracking systems are used to identify underachievement and this brings about timely intervention for literacy, but this is less well developed for mathematics where progress is slower. However, not enough of the teaching is of the good quality needed to reduce the legacy of underachievement quickly enough for all pupils. This is because, while teachers set targets and regularly assess pupils' work, there is insufficient use of this assessment to plan for the different needs of pupils in the class. As a result, too many lessons are not challenging for the more-able pupils or well enough structured for the lower-attainers. In general, teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving are not high enough to ensure that they all make consistently good progress, although this is beginning to improve. The quality of marking is also starting to get better as a result of new procedures. These are at an early stage of development and are too inconsistent to give all pupils good guidance on how well they are doing and what steps they have to take to move on in that subject. The school is aware of these weaknesses and is increasing consistency through regular monitoring of pupils' books. The curriculum has strengths in the provision of enrichment activities for pupils, which leads to their enjoyment of lessons. Some imaginative opportunities, such as a visit by a local author, have enlivened their work in English and have led to an improvement in standards. There are many sporting partnerships, as well as the use of a local information, communication and technology (ICT) centre which extend the opportunities available to all the pupils. However, there is little difference in the curriculum offered to pupils of different abilities and this exacerbates the lack of challenge and contributes to pupils' low attainment.

The school provides good care and support for all pupils and works well in partnership with other professionals to give timely, targeted support when necessary. The partnership working is strong for all stages of transition, whether it is working with parents and carers when the children first come to school or with the local secondary school when pupils leave at the end of Year 6.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The overall quality of leadership and management is satisfactory and improving. With

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effective support from senior staff, the strong leadership of the headteacher is enabling the school to tackle the legacy of underperformance. The school's evaluation of its effectiveness is accurate, key priorities have been established and effective systems have been introduced to monitor the performance of the school and increase accountability at all levels. Middle leaders are developing a greater understanding of their roles and responsibilities, though they do not all yet play a full part in improving the school. Increasing their knowledge and expertise through professional development is one of the school's priorities.

Improved systems, policies and interventions have not had sufficient time to fully impact on pupils' attainment and progress, or on the quality of teaching and learning. For example, while the school records pupils' progress and attainment in detail, the analysis of the data is relatively new and is not used with sufficient rigour to direct and inform future actions by all staff. There are, however, some areas where the impact is seen. Attendance has improved this year as a result of the school's actions and there are early signs of improving attainment in English and science, though this is not so in mathematics.

Safeguarding procedures are robust and meet all statutory requirements. The school promotes good relationships in all parts of its own community and has taken action to make sure that all groups of pupils are included in the learning community of the school and are making satisfactory progress. Interaction with the local community is strong and effective links with other schools serving very different communities are promoting pupils' understanding of other cultures in England.

The governing body has experienced some difficulty in recruiting members since the last inspection, which has reduced its capacity to fulfil all aspects of its role. Because of this, the governing body has had too little impact on the direction and work of the school.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3

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<p>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</p>	<p>4</p>

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The very low levels with which most children start school in the Nursery are raised significantly by the end of Reception. Despite good achievement and progress, attainment is below average by the start of Year 1. At all times, children are safe and secure; all procedures regarding safeguarding are securely in place.

A lively and stimulating environment has been created for children. Both indoors and outdoors, play and learning go hand in hand with a host of activities that give children every opportunity to explore and to make good progress in all areas of learning. Staff strike a good balance between enabling children to learn through play and extending learning through adult-led tasks. For example, role play activities in their own airport lounge encouraged children's communication and mathematical skills. A sense of purpose and calm pervades the class areas; children get on well and disagreements are rare. They are mostly seen smiling and are full of excitement when experiencing new things. Imagination among the children knows no bounds. Children chatted eagerly about Gizmo the lizard and then drew pictures of him to take home.

Staff know each child very well and sensitively intervene where necessary to support, cajole or encourage. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified as soon as possible so that their needs can be met. Good leadership and good teamwork ensures that staff development is closely linked to improving the quality of learning and well-being of the children.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

<p>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>Taking into account:</p>	
<p>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</p>	<p>2</p>

Views of parents and carers

The very large majority of parents and carers of pupils at the school said that they felt the school kept their child safe, that their child enjoyed school and that they were pleased with the school overall. They thought the teaching was good and that the school catered for their child's needs. Inspectors found teaching to be satisfactory, but agree that the school cares well for pupils' personal and social needs.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Miriam Lord Community Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 121 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 486 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	72	60	48	40	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	65	54	51	42	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	55	45	60	50	3	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	51	42	67	55	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	59	49	61	50	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	51	42	61	50	7	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	58	48	56	46	5	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	38	31	67	55	7	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	31	26	84	69	0	0	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	46	38	71	59	2	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	31	78	64	3	2	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	57	47	63	52	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	63	52	57	47	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
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.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



24 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Miriam Lord Community Primary School, Bradford, BD8 8RG

We really enjoyed visiting your school and I am writing to thank you for two very interesting days. Your thoughts and views helped us to make our judgements about the school.

We judged that:

- most of you work hard and behave well in lessons
- you are polite and well mannered
- you enjoy your lessons and most of the tasks you are asked to do
- you are well cared for by all the adults in the school.

We also found that your school has some important weaknesses and so have given it a notice to improve. This means that inspectors will visit in a few months' time to check its progress in making improvements. We have asked your school to look at how to make things better. The most important things that need to happen are:

- making sure that your school and the governors expect the best from you all and carefully check your learning and progress
- that teachers plan the right work for each of you and help anyone who is falling behind, especially in mathematics
- giving you feedback so that you know exactly what to do to improve your work.

You have a very important part to play in improving your school and improving your chances of achieving well. You can do this by continuing to work hard and attending school every day.

Yours sincerely,

Georgiana Sale

Lead Inspector

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