

Luddenden Dene CofE (VC) Junior Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107541
Local Authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	336906
Inspection dates	15–16 April 2010
Reporting inspector	Julie Price Grimshaw

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	198
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Tony Hillyard
Headteacher	Mr Simon Day
Date of previous school inspection	23 May 2007
School address	Dene View Luddendenfoot Halifax HX2 6PB
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited eight lessons taught by different teachers, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents. They looked at pupils' work, improvement plans, policy documents, national published assessment data and the school's data. Inspectors also analysed 60 parental questionnaires as well as taking into account the views of a selection of pupils and staff.

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

- the reasons for the decline in pupils' achievement in 2009, particularly in mathematics and science,
- the effectiveness of steps taken to improve the quality and consistency of teaching so that all pupils, including the most able, are sufficiently challenged
- the impact of improvements to the Early Years Foundation Stage, as reported in the school's self-evaluation documents.

Information about the school

This school is smaller than the average primary school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities is lower than average, as is the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. The number of pupils on roll has fallen over the past few years. Consequently, since September 2009, pupils from Years 2 to 5 have been taught in three mixed-age classes. There is an out-of-school club that is not managed by the governing body and, therefore, subject to a separate inspection.

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with Section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

The school has failed to address the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection, with the result that there has been a downward trend in pupils' achievement. In 2009, there was a sharp decline in attainment in mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2, and standards in these subjects are significantly below average. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level (Level 5) in English, mathematics and science is also significantly below average. Children enter the school with skills that are broadly typical of their age. While the achievement of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is satisfactory, due to the targeted support provided for them, the very large majority of pupils make insufficient progress during their time at school. The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is inadequate, and has deteriorated since the last inspection; assessment and data are not used well enough to plan the next steps in learning for individual children. Data indicate that, for most individuals and groups of pupils, there has been significant underachievement over the past few years. Current data and pupils' work indicate that attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 remains low and pupils' learning and progress are inadequate.

Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors. They have a good awareness of how to stay healthy and are enthusiastic about helping and supporting each other within the school community. Their social and moral development is good. However, links with other schools, both in this country and abroad, have had limited impact on their understanding of other faiths and cultures; their spiritual and cultural development is, therefore, no better than satisfactory.

Teaching is inadequate overall because much of the work set for pupils is not sufficiently matched to their ability. Consequently, many pupils find the work in lessons too difficult and make little progress, while others say that the work is 'very easy' for them. Moreover, too many pupils do not know what they are expected to learn by the end of a lesson and this seriously inhibits their progress. An inadequate curriculum does not support pupils' progress as there is no systematic mapping of provision across the school that allows teachers to build on pupils' developing skills. Pastoral care is good and pupils feel well supported. Safeguarding policies comply with requirements, but the implementation of these policies lacks rigour and therefore the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures is inadequate.

Leaders and managers do not monitor the school's work with sufficient accuracy and, as a result, the school overestimates its effectiveness in many areas. There is no evidence of improvement since the previous inspection; this, combined with a lack of awareness of the main issues currently affecting the school, means that the school's capacity to improve is inadequate. The school provides inadequate value for money.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all safeguarding procedures are applied rigorously at all times.
- Improve the overall quality of teaching so that pupils' progress accelerates, by:
 - – planning work that is suitably matched to pupils' differing ability levels
 - – ensuring that all pupils are fully aware of what they are expected to learn by the end of a lesson
 - – making the best use of available time and resources so that pupils stay motivated and engaged throughout each lesson
 - – eradicating inadequate teaching.
- Review and adapt the curriculum so that it allows staff to plan for the progressive development of pupils' skills.
- Ensure that leaders, managers and governors monitor all aspects of the school's provision rigorously in order to produce:
 - – accurate self-evaluation
 - – sharply focused improvement planning.
- Accelerate children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, by:
 - – improving the use of assessment information so that children's progress can be accurately tracked
 - – using this information to plan more precisely the next steps in their learning
 - – ensuring that the outdoor area in the Nursery provides a high quality environment for learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Attainment is too low and achievement is inadequate. Attainment has fallen since the last inspection. In 2009 the proportion of Year 6 pupils reaching the expected level in mathematics was well below average, and attainment in science was also low. Data show that the most-able pupils fail to make the progress of which they are capable. This issue was identified as an area for improvement at the previous inspection and has not been resolved.

Many pupils enjoy coming to school and take pride in contributing to the school community, particularly by supporting one another. This was demonstrated clearly by their participation in the play-leaders scheme. Nevertheless, they do not always have the opportunity to contribute their views and ideas about the school. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of diet and exercise in staying healthy and their awareness of how to stay safe is satisfactory. Behaviour is good around the school and most pupils behave well in lessons. However, many easily become distracted when they

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

are not sufficiently engaged in the tasks set; they lose concentration and the pace of learning slows. As a result, behaviour overall is satisfactory rather than good. Pupils say that some lessons are enjoyable, but older pupils dislike the booster classes which they describe as 'lessons just to get us through the tests.'

Pupils develop good team-working skills and have a secure awareness of their future options, however, their skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) are currently underdeveloped. Attendance is broadly average.

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	4
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	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Although some satisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection, the overall quality of teaching is inadequate. This is because lesson planning does not always take account of the different levels of ability within each class, and too often pupils are given work that is either beyond their capabilities or insufficiently challenging. The intended outcomes for each lesson are not always made clear and, as a result, pupils do not understand precisely what they are expected to learn. Too much time is wasted during lessons and the use of resources, particularly ICT, is ineffective. Consequently, pupils do

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

not make sufficient progress. The local authority has recently started to support staff in developing their use of assessment; although some good work has been carried out, it is too early to see the impact of this.

The curriculum is inadequate because it is not planned in a way that ensures pupils' skills are developed systematically as they move through the school. There is no detailed whole-school overview of curriculum content and communication between staff on this aspect is too informal. Although there is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities, overall the curriculum does not meet pupils' needs and does not support their progress.

Pupils appreciate the pastoral care provided by staff, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are given the support they require to enable them to make satisfactory progress overall. However, there is insufficient rigour in the school's implementation of safeguarding procedures; for example, information regarding individual pupils' medical needs is not always formally communicated to the appropriate staff and there is evidence that records of accidents are not always kept fully up-to-date. About one third of parents who completed the questionnaire raised concerns related to safeguarding. The overall quality of care, guidance and support is, therefore, inadequate.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	4
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	4

How effective are leadership and management?

The school's leaders and managers have not been effective in embedding ambition and driving improvement. The monitoring of teaching and learning, identified as an area for improvement during the last inspection, is ineffective. There is no evidence that the school has made progress in increasing the rigour of such monitoring so that weaknesses in provision can be identified and remedied. The school's self-evaluation does not reflect an accurate view of its work and improvement planning lacks focus.

There have been significant changes to the membership of the governing body over the last few years. The governing body is aware of the school's weaknesses and is genuinely committed to bringing about improvement. However, since the last inspection, it has had too little impact in ensuring that the identified issues were tackled. The governing body is not sufficiently involved in monitoring the school's work and in challenging leaders. In addition, although safeguarding policies meet statutory requirements, the procedures are ineffective. Governance is, therefore, inadequate.

The school's policies on equality of opportunity are not applied with sufficient rigour to

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

ensure that outcomes for all groups of pupils are at least satisfactory. Although the school works in partnership with a number of external agencies, this work does not have sufficient impact on pupils' outcomes. The school's promotion of community cohesion is underdeveloped; there is no formal planning or evaluation of this work.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	4
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	4
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	4
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	4
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

From starting points that are broadly in line with typical for their age, children make inadequate progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage. Their attainment on joining Year 1 is generally below average. The physical layout of the Early Years Foundation Stage means that it is difficult for Nursery and Reception staff to work effectively together. Outdoor provision in the Nursery is inadequate. Children's time outdoors is restricted to 30 minutes per day and the outdoor environment does not provide sufficient stimulus to promote learning. Resources in this area are very limited and do not reflect the indoor learning environment. Children play happily together, but observations and assessments of children's learning are inconsistent across the Nursery and Reception classes. As a result, information about the progress made by individual children is not detailed enough and does not support staff in planning the next steps in children's learning. Outcomes indicate that leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are not sufficiently focused on promoting the progress of individual children. Resources, particularly outdoors, are not used effectively. Data are not being systematically analysed in order to identify strengths and areas for development and to plan for ongoing improvement.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	4

Views of parents and carers

Under half of all parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Although many were happy with the school's work, a significant proportion expressed a number of concerns. These related to the quality of leadership and management of the school and the rate at which pupils were making progress. In addition, there were a number of concerns relating to safeguarding. Inspection evidence supports parents' and carers' concerns.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Luddenden Dene CofE (VC) Junior Infant and Nursery 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 60 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 166 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	32	36	60	3	5	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	27	45	25	42	4	7	2	3
The school informs me about my child's progress	7	12	42	70	5	8	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	12	20	37	62	7	12	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	16	27	34	57	5	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	12	20	39	65	6	10	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	28	37	62	2	3	1	2
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)	7	12	30	50	8	13	2	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	11	18	35	58	7	12	2	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	11	18	32	53	4	7	6	10
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	7	12	36	60	7	12	3	5
The school is led and managed effectively	5	8	30	50	15	25	5	8
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	18	30	27	45	8	13	2	3

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



19 April 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Luddenden Dene CofE (VC) Junior Infant and Nursery School, Halifax, HX2 6PB

As you know, I visited your school recently together with two other inspectors so that we could find out how well you are doing. I would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome and for sharing your views with us.

We were pleased to hear that many of you enjoy coming to school. Most of you are kind and supportive towards one another; it was good to hear about the work of the 'play-leaders' and befrienders. One thing that really impressed us was your knowledge of eating healthily and the importance of diet and exercise.

You are aware that the test results at your school have dropped recently, particularly in mathematics. We found that most of you are not making as much progress across the school as you could. In lessons, the work is sometimes too easy for some of you and too hard for others, so we have asked the school to make sure that all of you are given work that matches your ability. We have also asked staff to plan the curriculum so that it helps to build your skills as you move from the Nursery through to Year 6. We know that the staff care for you, but the school needs to make sure that all of its systems for keeping you safe are followed very carefully at all times. The outdoor area for the Nursery children could be improved so that it helps them to make faster progress. Finally, we have asked the school's leaders to keep a really close watch on how well the school is working and how much progress you are making.

We have judged that your school requires 'special measures'. This means that it will get some extra support and be visited regularly by inspectors who will help the staff and check that things are improving. You have an important part to play in improving your school. One way that you can help is by telling your teachers if you think that the work is too easy or too hard for you, so that they can make sure you have everything you need to make really fast progress.

Yours sincerely

Ms Julie Price Grimshaw

Lead inspector

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