

Featherbank Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107817
Local Authority	Leeds
Inspection number	336955
Inspection dates	21–22 April 2010
Reporting inspector	Liam Trippier HMI

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	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	177
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr J Siddall
Headteacher	Mrs K Rhodes
Date of previous school inspection	3 July 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons and observed six teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and a local authority representative. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including pupils' work, school policies and the school's self-evaluation. Sixteen questionnaires from staff and 80 questionnaires from parents and carers were received and their content was considered.

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

- the school's view that most personal development outcomes for pupils and care, guidance and support are outstanding
- the effectiveness of teaching and the impact of the school's curriculum on learning and progress for all groups of pupils
- the effectiveness of strategies to improve standards in boys' writing
- the effectiveness of all leaders and managers in monitoring and developing the quality of teaching.

Information about the school

This school is smaller than average. The majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds and almost all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than average. Early Years Foundation Stage education is provided in two Reception classes. The school has been awarded the Activemark, Artsmark Silver, International School Award, Healthy Schools status and holds the financial management in schools standard. There is a breakfast and after-school club on the school site run by 4 Children. This provision was not inspected during this inspection event. The school has experienced significant changes to staff in the last year and the number of pupils on its roll has increased.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is an outstanding school. In the school's safe, happy and stimulating environment pupils make consistently good progress to reach high standards and develop outstanding personal attributes. Parents and carers appreciate the outstanding work the school does for their children and a typical view is, Featherbank is a lovely school, which has provided my child with an excellent start in education.'

Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Children start school with skills and knowledge at levels that are above those found typically for four-year-olds. Pupils are taught well in all classes and some make outstanding progress from their starting points. In the 2009 national assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 pupils reached standards that were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Inspection evidence from lesson observations, pupils' workbooks and the school's own assessment information confirms this is still the case and better teaching has improved standards in boys' writing.

The high-quality, theme-based curriculum makes strong links between subjects. This provision contributes well to the high standards reached by all pupils. Teaching is of consistently good quality and there are some outstanding features, such as the consideration teachers give to ensuring that all pupils are active, learn well and make at least good progress. There are occasions when teachers rely too heavily on published worksheets to structure pupils' work and opportunities are missed for pupils to organise their own learning.

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. Strong and effective leadership has improved the provision. Outcomes for children in the Reception classes are outstanding. Children are safe and develop very well in all areas of their learning. The outside provision is good but lacks play equipment to provide physical challenge and is susceptible to the effects of bad weather.

Pupils feel very safe in school and know that there is always someone to turn to if they have a problem. Their attendance is consistently high and punctuality has improved in the last year as the school has effective strategies to ensure that pupils are on time every day. Pupils' behaviour is excellent and they demonstrate positive attitudes because the care, guidance and support they receive are outstanding.

Leaders' and managers' actions since the last inspection have maintained and developed the already outstanding provision. The school's self-evaluation based on a wide range of monitoring activities is generally accurate. Sometimes it is too modest because leaders feel that there is always more they can do for the pupils. Consequently, the school's capacity for sustained improvement is outstanding.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Provide further opportunities to accelerate pupils' progress by:
 - developing the outdoor provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage
 - developing pupils' self-organisation skills so they become increasingly independent learners.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils' learning and progress observed in their workbooks and in lessons are good. They are highly motivated and challenged by the activities planned. They respond very well to teachers' oral feedback in lessons and are eager to do well. Pupils practise their skills well and respond enthusiastically to the brisk pace of work and highly imaginative use of resources. For example, in a mathematics lesson the teacher used a puppet to engage all the pupils in the class quickly and effectively to count in multiples of two, three, four and five correctly and identify the puppet's deliberate mistakes. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed this work.

Standards reached by pupils are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. There are no significant differences in the rates of progress between groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles and eat healthily in school. They are busy and well behaved at playtimes and understand the need to be active. The 'Walk on Wednesday' project, where pupils are encouraged to walk to school for at least one day each week, is highly effective. Pupils who travel to school by car are provided with more opportunities to be active at playtime.

Pupils take on positions of responsibility with pride. For example, the school council is highly regarded by other pupils and members conduct regular inspections of the school site to ensure that it is safe. Pupils also make an outstanding contribution to the wider community by raising money for several local charities and by recycling paper. Recently, money raised from a food sale was used to provide water pumps to a village in Africa.

Pupils apply their basic skills well in all areas of school life. They show high levels of respect for each other and their teachers. They have a particularly clear understanding of right and wrong and resolve conflicts intelligently. Pupils who misbehave are effectively held to account by their peers in structured mediation sessions under close supervision of staff. Pupils demonstrate excellent spiritual development in assemblies and through their appreciation of art, other cultures and religions. They show outstanding awareness of social and moral issues through their positive attitudes and consistently excellent behaviour.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is good with some outstanding features. Teachers plan lessons using good-quality assessment information on pupils' performance. They ensure that pupils have highly effective opportunities to talk to each other to exchange or consider ideas taught. Teaching assistants support and challenge pupils effectively, especially when leading work in small groups. Techniques to improve pupils' learning are developing well and teachers have recently introduced pupils' self-assessment of learning at the end of each lesson.

The outstanding curriculum is broad, balanced and flexible to provide memorable experiences for all pupils. For example, in Penguin Week, which was organised during a period of very cold weather, all pupils were motivated to apply their good mathematics skills to an interesting and relevant theme. International links are made through the curriculum and the Gingerbread Man theme and International Food Day provide pupils with high-quality opportunities to experience different nationalities and cultures. The curriculum is adapted well to meet the needs of all pupils. Additional themes to interest boys have been effectively introduced to improve their writing skills. Links between subjects are strong and pupils are able to apply their information and communication technology skills well in other subjects. Extra-curricular clubs are well attended by all groups and a wide range of visitors enhance pupils' experiences.

The provision for the care, guidance and support of pupils is outstanding. All pupils are known as individuals and the school works hard with a range of services to support pupils well. Provision in the school is well targeted and the highly effective nurture groups have made significant contributions to improvements in the confidence and

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self-esteem of pupils identified as being potentially vulnerable. Pupils have high levels of confidence in the staff and know they will always help them. There are excellent systems in place for the transition of children into the Reception class, within the school and to the next key stage. Attendance and punctuality are rigorously and effectively monitored.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders work hard and very effectively to maintain pupils' high attainment and outstanding personal development. They set very high standards for themselves and other staff and strive to improve the provision continually through an extensive range of monitoring activities, which informs future plans effectively.

The governing body is led well and governors are involved in planning the strategic direction of the school, providing appropriate support and challenge. New governors are becoming increasingly involved in their roles as their confidence develops. The school promotes equality of opportunity exceptionally well. All statutory policies are in place. Effective and swift action is taken to address any gaps in performance of different groups of pupils identified through the school's rigorous tracking system. The community cohesion policy and action plan are fully in place. The school has established some good links with pupils in different areas and from other countries. Inspectors observed pupils from all backgrounds getting along well with each other. Pupils understand the importance of respect for each other's differences. Safeguarding procedures are good and risk assessments carefully considered.

The school communicates well with parents and carers about pupils' welfare and academic development. There are many planned opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school and they can meet with their children's class teachers on a daily basis. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school's work and effectively help their children at home through homework activities and practising basic skills. The school's website is up-to-date and provides high-quality and relevant information to parents and carers. Partnerships with a variety of educational and welfare facilities make an excellent contribution to pupils' well-being and academic development. The school provides outstanding value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good and sometimes outstanding progress in the Reception classes to reach standards that are well above those found typically for five-year-olds. They work for sustained periods on interesting activities led by adults or directed by themselves. They demonstrate enthusiasm and enjoyment of their learning and practise basic skills well in a variety of play activities. For example, after planting sunflower seeds children were able to say what a plant needs to grow. They were motivated to write labels for their plants and look after their own seeds. Children know the importance of washing their hands after handling the soil. Relationships are strong and children feel safe and behave exceptionally well.

All members of staff assess children's skills, knowledge and understanding skilfully. This information is used effectively to inform high-quality plans for future learning experiences. Staff ensure that the transition into school is smooth, and detailed information is available for parents and carers. The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage has worked very hard and effectively to improve the provision, particularly improving the skills of all staff to assess pupils' learning accurately. She recognises that the promotion of children's writing skills is good but can improve further with greater consistency between the classes.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

A very large majority of parents and carers who made their views known to inspectors in the pre-inspection questionnaires are happy with their children's experience at this school. Any concerns expressed in the questionnaires were taken into consideration during the inspection and some of these are included in the report. A very small minority of parents and carers feel that the school is not led and managed effectively and that the school does not take account of their suggestions and concerns. Inspectors did not find evidence to support this view, which may have been affected by recent consultation on plans for school reorganisation in the local area.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Featherbank Infant 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 81 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 177 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	58	72	23	28	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	61	75	20	25	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	42	52	38	47	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	48	59	31	38	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	60	74	20	25	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	56	69	24	30	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	41	51	37	46	1	1	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)	43	53	30	37	4	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	45	56	30	37	5	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	47	58	28	35	3	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	41	36	44	6	7	3	4
The school is led and managed effectively	51	63	25	31	1	1	3	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	61	75	17	21	3	4	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

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.



23 April 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Featherbank Infant School, Leeds, LS18 4QP

Thank you for making the inspectors so welcome when we visited your school recently. We very much appreciated your help. The report is now complete and I would like to tell you what it contains.

Here are some of the things we found.

- Featherbank is an outstanding school.
- The staff take excellent care of you.
- You make good progress in your lessons and reach high standards.
- You enjoy the different topics taught and the activities you do in school.
- You feel safe and happy in school.
- You behave exceptionally well.

I have asked the staff to make sure you always make the best possible progress in your lessons and to improve the outside play area for the children in Reception.

Yours sincerely

Liam Trippier

Her Majesty's Inspector

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