

Ackton Pastures Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108241
Local Authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	337042
Inspection dates	28–29 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Derek Pattinson

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	285
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr D Bloomer
Headteacher	Mr Ralph Jaggard
Date of previous school inspection	2 July 2007
School address	College Grove Whitwood Castleford WF10 5NS
Telephone number	01977 723030
Fax number	01977 723030
Email address	headteacher@acktonpastures.wakefield.sch.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

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

© Crown copyright 2009

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited thirteen lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including the school development plan, the School Improvement Partner's latest Annual Report to Governors, the most recent national and school data on attainment and progress, the latest attendance figures and a sample of pupils' books from Years 2, 4 and 6 in English, mathematics and science. Documentation on safeguarding was also scrutinised. In addition, 51 parental questionnaires were analysed, along with questionnaires returned by staff and a representative sample of pupils.

- how well all pupils are doing, taking into account the significant decline in Key Stage 2 test results and well below average standards in both key stages
- how effective teaching is, particularly for pupils in Key Stage 2
- whether pastoral care is as strong as the school believes and how much involvement pupils have in their own learning
- how lively and exciting is the school's curriculum
- how effective leaders and managers are in addressing weaknesses in pupils' performance and driving forward needed improvements.

Information about the school

Ackton Pastures is an average sized community primary school situated in the south of Castleford. Most pupils are White British and live in the immediate area. Almost one third of all pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is slowly rising, but is still well below average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is very small. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above what is typical.

The Acorn Children's Centre is on the same site as the school and managed by the school's governing body but it was not included as part of this inspection.

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

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.

Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, settling in quickly and making good progress because of the good teaching they receive. In the rest of the school, pupils' overall achievement is inadequate. Attainment is low and has been since 2005. Standards declined sharply in Key Stage 2 between 2005 and 2008, especially in English. Provisional results in 2009 and evidence from the inspection show a slight improvement in the standards pupils reach. This is largely as a result of the substantial involvement and support of the local authority. However, this improvement is not secure and standards are not rising quickly enough. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, have made too little progress by the end of Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science. This is because leaders and managers have failed to take the necessary action quickly enough to avert the decline in the rates of pupils' progress. Recent changes and deployment of teachers, alongside local authority support, are helping to strengthen the quality of teaching. However, teaching is not yet good enough or consistent enough to ensure there is sufficient pace and challenge for pupils in all lessons. Consequently, the changes introduced are not having an impact on pupils' progress and attainment quickly enough. The use of assessment information to help improve pupils' progress is inadequate and pupils do not always know what they need to do next to reach the next step in their learning. Whilst teaching shows some satisfactory and even good qualities, in view of shortcomings in the use of assessment and a recent history of pupils' poor progress, teaching is inadequate overall. Most pupils say they feel safe and that any bullying is usually dealt with effectively. They know what to do to keep healthy. They make satisfactory contributions to school life through fundraising activities and the work of the school council. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. However, attendance levels are still too low, despite recent improvements.

The curriculum now adequately meets pupils' needs, but this is because of very recent improvements. However, it is not as interesting or exciting as it should be. The school works well in partnership with others, with a nearby special school and sports college for example, and also with parents. This is helping the school to be effective in working with its community. Partnerships make a sound contribution to pupils' learning and most parents are supportive of the school. The relationship pupils have with their teachers is

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

usually good. A climate of positive reinforcement helps raise pupils' self-esteem. There is a caring school ethos, promoted by the headteacher. Some support for pupils, such as for the more vulnerable, is good. However, pupils' care, guidance and support are inadequate overall because the procedures for safeguarding pupils do not meet statutory requirements.

Leaders and managers, including the governing body, are only recently coming to terms with the significant weaknesses that exist. Priorities for development are the right ones but are not being pursued rigorously enough. Self-evaluation is embryonic and over optimistic, and not based on secure evidence. This prevents a clear view being formed of what needs to be done. The monitoring of the school's work, and particularly of teaching, is not yet rigorous, regular or sharply focused enough on pupils' learning to be of maximum benefit. As a result, leaders of English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) do not carry out their roles effectively, although work is in progress to improve matters. The chair of governors visits the school often and is keen to move things forward, but governors are not holding the school to account for the outcomes achieved, and are not proactive enough in leading much needed improvement. Most issues identified at the previous inspection, especially those which relate to raising standards and improving assessment arrangements, have not been met. The many weaknesses in leadership and management result in too many pupils not getting the education to which they are entitled. The school does not have the capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the governing body fulfils its statutory duties in ensuring that all safeguarding requirements are met.
- Increase the rate of pupils' progress and raise standards in English, mathematics and science in both key stages by:
 - strengthening the quality and consistency of all teaching to ensure pace, rigour and challenge for pupils in all lessons
 - developing assessment procedures and practice through better use of information about pupils' performance to drive and secure improvement
 - ensuring pupils always know what they must do to improve.
- Improve assessment procedures and practices by:
 - using information about pupils' performance to drive and secure improvement
 - ensuring pupils always know what they must do to improve.
- Develop leadership, management and governance by:
 - ensuring that monitoring by subject leaders is rigorous, regular and focuses sharply on pupils' learning, and that findings are translated into actions to bring about rapid improvement
 - establishing rigorous evaluation procedures in all areas of the school's work to help leaders develop a clear view of where improvements are most needed so

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

that these can be rigorously pursued

- ensuring that the governing body holds the school to account through challenge, support and setting a clear direction for its work.

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

Achievement is inadequate. This is largely because teaching is not good enough, assessment practices and procedures are inadequate and not used consistently to extend learning, the monitoring of pupils' work is not regular or rigorous, and there has been a lack of drive to help secure improvement. Attainment is low and has been for a number of years with only very recent signs of recovery. Standards declined sharply between 2005 and 2008 for Year 6 pupils, especially in English. While standards in 2009 show improvement, mostly by girls, the proportion of pupils making the expected progress is still too low and well below the 2008 national averages. Work in pupils' books for the last school year provides evidence of inadequate progress. For example, pupils, including older ones, sometimes completed colouring tasks, which did not challenge them. However, pupils' progress as observed in lessons during the inspection is now starting to improve for all, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, largely as a direct result of intervention and support from the local authority. Most pupils enjoy school. However, they do not always enjoy their learning because some tasks are mundane and do not require them to think deeply. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning or to understand the progress they are making. Pupils are often supported by caring teaching assistants, although the quality of this support is variable. As a result, some supported pupils make better progress than others.

Pupils are enthusiastic learners when motivated. However, pupils' problem solving, team building and leadership skills are underdeveloped and there is little evidence of the development of enterprise skills. Pupils are aware of the benefits of regular exercise and healthy eating. They generally feel safe around the school and say they have adults to turn to when bullying occurs. Pupils assume some responsibilities within school and the school council has been involved in making improvements, such as in changing the times of the school day. Pupils raise money for charities and take part in an annual local arts festival. Attendance is low. Overall pupils' behaviour is satisfactory. Low levels of restlessness occur when pupils are inactive for too long. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Opportunities for pupils to develop spiritually, through moments of reflection for example, are few.

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.

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

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	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Recent improvements as a result of restructuring and external support have led to the quality of teaching showing some signs of improvement. Secure relationships, good questioning and regular praise and encouragement are features of most lessons. Some teaching assistants are used well to support pupils, although this is not always the case. Teachers sometimes over direct their pupils and talk for too long leading to passive learning. The pace is sometimes too slow, restricting the time pupils have to work on their own, which limits progress. Assessment procedures and the use of assessment to plan sufficiently challenging lessons and boost pupils' progress are not effective enough. Whilst teaching in the lessons seen during the inspection were satisfactory and sometimes good, the endemic shortcomings in assessment and in the speed with which pupils' progress is being improved mean that the overall quality of teaching is inadequate.

The curriculum now has a clear structure to help pupils develop knowledge, skills and understanding. Planning is improving, with local authority support, to meet pupils' needs more effectively and ensure that important skills, such as in literacy, numeracy and ICT, develop through all subjects. However, these changes are at a very early stage and their impact has yet to bear fruit. Opportunities to fire pupils' imaginations through exciting first-hand experiences that instil a love of learning are starting to develop. Personal and social education is given sound emphasis, and this contributes to pupils' satisfactory spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. After-school clubs, such as cricket and football, help pupils adopt healthy lifestyle and broaden their horizons. Links with other organisations, such as with the local high school with specialist sports status, help enrich

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

their experiences.

Most pupils say that if they have concerns or are troubled there is someone they can turn to and be reassured. Pastoral care is sensitive and many parents believe rightly that the school is welcoming. Rewards, such as 'worker of the week', help build self-esteem and are appreciated by pupils. There are sound arrangements to support vulnerable pupils. However, care, guidance and support overall are inadequate because safeguarding requirements are not all met.

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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	4

How effective are leadership and management?

The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management have declined since the last inspection and are inadequate. Leaders have, until quite recently, failed to tackle the sharp decline in standards in Key Stage 2 and low standards in Key Stage 1. Furthermore, rigorous and accurate self-evaluation is not embedded in the school's culture. As a result, leaders do not have an accurate view of the school's performance so as to make informed decisions about what actions to take. Intensive support from the local authority has helped the school to establish priorities in order to help raise attainment, improve teaching and the curriculum. Strategic planning is developing but is not strong enough. Although leaders are keen to improve and good team spirit is evident, the leadership of English, mathematics, science and ICT is inadequate. This is because monitoring, including that of teaching and learning, is not regular enough, or sharply enough focused on pupils' learning to be of maximum benefit to contribute to school improvement. As a result, pupils do not all have sufficient and appropriately focused opportunities to fulfil their potential.

Safeguarding arrangements do not meet requirements because the single central record of adults who come into regular contact with children is incomplete. Most pupils get on well with each other and the school is effective in valuing and promoting its own school and local community. However, work in relation to a more national and global context is less well developed. The school has links with other institutions and these have proved beneficial. For example, links with the Children's Centre are good, facilitating a smooth transition into school. Resources, such as support staff, are not used to best effect to achieve value for money. The governing body is not effective because it does not hold the school to account for what it achieves.

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

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	3
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage enables children to make a good start to their education and to become happy and receptive learners. Children's skills are well below expected levels when they enter the nursery. Nevertheless, they make good progress in all the areas of learning as they move through this stage. Children follow instructions well and settle quickly into established routines. There is a good balance between activities led by adults and those chosen by children themselves. Adults ask lots of questions to help children learn. Activities are carefully chosen so that they often capture children's interest and imagination. Assessment is increasingly well used to help plan appropriate activities. However, a small number of activities are not focused well enough to enable children to make the best possible progress. The outdoor environment is not used to best effect to help children learn. Children are keen to take responsibility and interact well with each other, such as when a child reminded 'grandma' in the role play area that 'she needed the brush to clear up'. Regular communication ensures that transition into the Early Years Foundation Stage and between nursery and reception classes is seamless. Parents appreciate the sensitive care provided for their children. Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage might have been judged as good were it not for the fact that the school fails to meet fully the requirements for safeguarding children. This serious omission renders provision, and also overall effectiveness, inadequate. Similarly, leadership and management, whilst having some positive features, are also inadequate. The new leader of this stage is beginning to increase the consistency and rigour in the ways provision and outcomes in both classes are kept

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

under review.

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	2
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

Most parents are positive about the way their children are educated and nurtured at school. Over 85% of parents who replied to the questionnaire responded positively to all questions. Most feel that their child enjoys school most of the time and that a healthy lifestyle is well promoted. While agreeing with some of the parents' and carers' views, inspectors found many aspects of the school's work are weaker than the parents judge them to be.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ackton Pastures 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 51 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 285 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	63	15	29	4	8	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	35	69	14	27	2	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	18	35	30	59	2	4	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	41	25	49	3	6	2	4
The teaching is good at this school	30	59	17	33	1	2	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	22	43	23	45	3	6	2	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	23	45	25	49	2	4	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)	21	41	24	47	1	2	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	55	20	39	2	4	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	33	30	59	2	4	2	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	27	32	63	3	6	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	18	35	30	59	1	2	2	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	51	20	39	2	4	1	2

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.



30 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ackton Pastures Primary School, Castleford, WF10 5NS

Thank you for being so friendly and talking to the inspectors when we visited your school recently to find out how well you are learning. We enjoyed being in your school, visiting lessons, talking to your teachers and listening to what you had to say. I would like to share with you what we found out about your school.

- You are friendly and polite to your teachers, other adults and each other.
- You know how important it is to stay healthy and take exercise.
- Most of you feel safe in school.
- Most children in the nursery and reception classes make good progress because there are lots of interesting activities to help them learn.

Your teachers and other adults who work with you want your school to be the best it can be. However, because you have not been doing as well as you could in lessons and tests, we judge that the school needs some extra help so that you can all get back on track. We call this 'special measures' and it means that your school will be visited often by inspectors to check that things are improving. We are asking the school to do the following things to make sure that you get the best out of your time there:

- help you make much better progress and reach higher standards in English, mathematics and science
- make sure all paperwork checks are carried out and recorded to ensure that you are totally safe and well cared for
- improve teaching so that more of it is good or better
- check often to make sure your work is not too easy or too difficult
- make sure that the school's leaders, managers and governors do all they can to raise standards and achievement further
- make sure you all know your targets and what you must do next to improve.

You can all help by working hard, doing your best and coming to school regularly.

Yours sincerely

Mr Derek Pattinson

Lead Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.