

Oulton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107842
Local Authority	Leeds
Inspection number	356248
Inspection dates	22–23 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Kathleen McArthur

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	297
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Ron Walker
Headteacher	Mrs Maria Townsend
Date of previous school inspection	5 February 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 19 lessons, saw 13 teachers and held meetings with groups of pupils and staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and a local authority representative. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documentation, including pupils' books, lesson planning, safeguarding arrangements, national and school data and plans for future development. Questionnaires returned by pupils, staff and the 57 returned from parents and carers were scrutinised.

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

- Whether improvements in attainment and progress are being sustained and accelerated.
- The extent to which actions taken are raising the overall quality of teaching.
- What the quality of assessment is and whether pupils' are involved enough in assessing and improving their own learning.
- Whether leaders at all levels are equipped and skilled to implement the vision for sustained improvement.

Information about the school

The school is larger in size than most primary schools. Most pupils are of White British Heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high. The proportion identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The school holds national awards, including the Sports Activemark and Inclusion Charter mark.

There has been considerable staffing disruption since the last inspection, including significant changes in senior leadership. A major refurbishment and extensive new build to accommodate all pupils in one building is scheduled to commence in 2011.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Oulton Primary School provides a satisfactory education. Care, guidance and support, however, are outstanding and ensure that every pupil feels very safe and secure. Parents and carers' views are positive because their children enjoy school and are safe there. Good leadership and management have led the school out of a difficult period of disruption during which pupils made limited progress and standards were not high enough.

Achievement is now satisfactory and attainment is broadly average. Pupils' progress through the school as a whole is satisfactory, but the legacy of staffing disruption remains and the progress of different groups is still too variable. Children make a happy start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, not enough emphasis on promoting their communication and language skills in this key stage and in Key Stage 1 impacts on pupils' ability to organise and enrich their writing. Actions to accelerate progress and raise attainment, including strengthening the staff team and providing a more interesting curriculum, are resulting in better outcomes. The school is aware that more needs to be done to improve progress further and ensure that pupils' achievement is good. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities.

Pupils' good behaviour and relationships make a positive contribution to their learning. Pupils say lessons are 'fun' and 'interesting'. Teaching is satisfactory with an increasing proportion that is good, but inconsistencies remain. The curriculum is also satisfactory, with good features such as the 'Enhanced Curriculum' in Key Stage 2. This is helping to boost pupils' involvement in learning and is building on their interests through a good variety of enrichment activities. Assessment systems provide an accurate picture of progress. However, pupils' involvement is limited so they do not always know how well they are doing or how to improve their work. Pupils are keen to contribute to the community, as seen in the posters displayed by those seeking election as school councillors. Good arrangements for equal opportunities mean all pupils are fully included in all activities.

Accurate self-evaluation and the challenging targets set demonstrate a clear determination and commitment on the part of all staff and senior leaders to improve the school further. Morale is high. The good management and monitoring systems are resulting in standards rising and progress beginning to accelerate. Although actions are relatively recent, the positive impact they are already having indicates good capacity for further improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment and accelerate progress, by:
 - increasing staff knowledge and understanding of how to develop speech and language in order to boost writing skills, particularly in the Early Years
- Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.
- Involving pupils more in assessing their own learning, especially at Key Stage 2, by
 - ensuring that the marking policy is implemented consistently to inform pupils how to improve their work.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching, by:
 - ensuring that all teaching matches the best practice found in the school
 - raising staff expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - increasing the pace of learning in lessons.
- Up to 40% schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

There are good relationships throughout the school. Pupils cooperate well with staff and with each other. They enjoy their lessons, especially literacy and numeracy, because, 'We learn something new every day'. Most pupils present their work carefully and neatly. All groups of pupils make satisfactory progress from well-below-average starting points. Actions to accelerate progress and raise standards are beginning to have an impact, especially in Key Stage 1. The rise in attainment has been slower in Key Stage 2, although in the last academic year progress improved considerably for pupils in Year 6 and they exceeded their targets. However, progress is still too variable across classes. Older pupils articulate their ideas confidently but the speech and language skills of younger pupils are often well below expectations for their age. This slows the development of writing by hindering pupils' ability to organise their writing and use a wide range of vocabulary.

Pupils are polite, friendly, welcoming and helpful towards each other and visitors. They have a good knowledge of health matters and the importance of regular exercise, speaking, for example, about eating '5 a day' fruit and vegetables. Many participate in the 'Golden Mile' organised by the site supervisor, and they enjoy being challenged to beat their own best times. They have a strong moral sense of right and wrong, and describe the well established 'STEPS' behaviour code as fair. Behaviour is good, although some pupils feel it could be even better. Pupils respect and trust staff, and say they sort out any problems so that bullying is not an issue. Pupils' representatives meet with the governing body, and a group shared pupils' ideas with the planners of the new building. Broadly average attendance and academic skills plus good personal skills are a satisfactory basis for the future. However, they have little experience of other cultures and ways of life to prepare them for life in a multi-cultural society.

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Pupils enjoy their lessons; a typical comment being, 'Not too hard, but challenge us'. Good behaviour and positive relationships support learning. Although the quality of teaching is inconsistent and satisfactory overall, there is no inadequate teaching. In the significant number of good lessons, pupils make accelerated progress. These lessons feature well-planned, purposeful activities, good behaviour management and make effective use of a range of resources, including information and communication technology. Where teaching is satisfactory, teachers talk for too long and do not expect enough of their pupils who have limited opportunities to contribute and reinforce their learning. The pace of learning is not as rapid in these lessons. Well-deployed, skilled classroom assistants make a valuable contribution to learning, especially for pupils with additional needs. Careful analysis of assessment information is used by teachers to set learning targets and tasks matched to pupils' different needs and abilities. However, pupils are not sufficiently involved in assessing their work. There is a helpful new marking policy, but it is not yet fully implemented, so the quality of marking varies across classes and does not always help pupils improve their work or know how to reach

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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their targets.

The curriculum is satisfactory, with some good features that are helping to boost progress but which are not, as yet, leading to good achievement. Suitable adaptations promote the learning of specific groups, such as the use of activities and resources designed to engage boys with reading. Basic skills are applied appropriately in other subjects, such as in creating weight charts and report writing in science. The 'Enhanced Curriculum' adds excitement, enrichment and enjoyment and gives pupils opportunities to make decisions about their learning. Pupils speak excitedly about residential visits, enjoy activities through the local sports partnership and really appreciate the range of extra-curricular clubs.

Excellent care, support and guidance given to all pupils ensure they feel very safe and secure, and boost their self-esteem and attitudes to learning. Pupils show high levels of confidence in staff because they feel known and valued as individuals. Provision for vulnerable pupils and their families is a particular strength of the school, including very effective collaboration with external professional agencies. Very sensitive arrangements meet particular needs, for example, creating a very small class for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable and challenging. Concerted efforts by staff, including the learning mentors, have successfully raised attendance to average, but some families still do not recognise the importance of regular attendance. Very well established systems ensure that pupils transfer smoothly to the next stages of their education.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Following the period of disruption, senior leaders have securely embedded a vision for improvement through rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning and performance management. These have ensured that the quality of teaching is now satisfactory and improving and is beginning to result in better outcomes for pupils. Middle leadership is satisfactory, although some leaders are still learning about their roles and have yet to make a full impact. The governing body has supported school leaders well, making difficult decisions in order to strengthen the staff team. Governors are actively involved in the life of the school, and have taken a leading role in planning the new building. Good relationships with parents and carers benefit pupils' sense of security and their learning. The school reaches out to all groups of parents and carers to help them to

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support learning at home and consulted them about the introduction of the 'Enhanced Curriculum'. A good range of partnerships provide additional support and experiences for pupils and outstanding partnerships with professional agencies enhance provision for those who are vulnerable. Active involvement in the local school cluster enhances the experiences and support available to pupils, such as wide-ranging sporting activities, additional provision for mathematics and French, and family support workers. Good arrangements to promote equal opportunities ensure that there is no discrimination, that all pupils can participate in all activities and the progress of different groups is checked. Safeguarding procedures meet all current requirements and safeguarding is well embedded in the personal and social education curriculum. The school takes account of parents' views and responds promptly to any concerns. Pupils say 'teachers are always around', and that the gates and fences make them feel safe. Community cohesion is promoted satisfactorily. The school knows the social and economic context in which it works and has links with schools in London through the Stephen Lawrence award, but acknowledges that there is more to be done to extend pupils' understanding of cultural and religious diversity.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Most children enter with skills well below those typical for their age, especially their personal, social and language skills. They make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning, and good progress in their social development and knowledge of letters and sounds. Despite the progress they make, children are still well below the expected levels when they enter Year 1.

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Good links with parents and carers ensure that children feel safe, secure and settle quickly. Relationships are strong and behaviour is good. Although only in school for a short period, nursery children happily access different activities. Reception children make increasingly independent choices as they investigate and explore the broad range of activities, both indoors and outside. These are suitably mixed between those led by adults and those chosen by the children, but some independent activities lack a clear purpose. Children enjoy learning letters and sounds, eagerly practising the first letters in the names of farmyard animals, for example. However, staff do not take or create sufficient opportunities to develop children's speaking skills and increase their vocabulary.

The staff team is strongly committed to improving all aspects of provision. Leadership is satisfactory. Although newly in post, the leader is beginning to adapt provision to ensure that learning builds progressively in small steps. Staff development, in particular work in partnership with the local authority, is helping raise the quality of teaching in order to speed up children's progress but this is not yet fully effective.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

About 20% of parents and carers returned questionnaires. Responses were very positive. Particularly positive views were expressed about the extent to which children are kept safe, the promotion of healthy lifestyles, their children's enjoyment of school and the extent to which they are prepared for their future. A few felt they did not receive enough information about progress or how to help their child at home. Inspectors found that the school works to promote this in a variety of ways, such as holding open evenings, reporting on pupils' progress and being willing to discuss progress with parents and carers at other times. The school also sends out information sheets, holds curriculum evenings to guide parents and carers on helping children at home. Learning logs and reading records are used to promote two-way communication.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Oulton 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 57 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 297 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	30	53	25	44	2	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	34	60	23	40	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	16	28	35	61	5	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	26	37	65	2	4	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	19	33	34	60	3	5	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	33	29	51	5	9	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	25	44	29	51	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	37	32	56	2	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	39	31	54	2	4	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	35	29	51	2	4	3	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	30	32	56	2	4	3	5
The school is led and managed effectively	19	33	32	56	2	4	3	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	22	39	30	53	4	7	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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.



24 September 2010

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Oulton Primary School, Leeds, LS26 8NT

I would like to thank you for welcoming the team when we inspected your school. Everyone was friendly, helpful and polite and keen to talk to us. Those of you who run the 'Golden Mile' enjoy keeping fit and healthy. I enjoyed seeing Year 6 turning their classroom into an Egyptian tomb, complete with a mummy! You carry out the school motto, 'Thinking for ourselves and caring for others', enjoy school and feel safe there, and your parents and carers agree.

This is what we found.

- Oulton is a satisfactory school.
- Children get a happy start in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Leaders, staff and governors provide excellent care for all of you.
- Teaching is satisfactory, and you told us you enjoy the exciting activities in the 'Enhanced Curriculum'.
- You behave well, help others, and are good 'Ambassadors' for the school.

To help to improve your school we have asked the leaders to:

- make sure you are taught consistently well
- develop your speaking and language skills to help your writing
- ensure that you make faster progress in learning by showing you how to check and improve your work and making sure you know how well you are doing.

We know you will do your best to help. We hope you enjoy the new school building and we send our very best wishes.

Yours sincerely

Kathleen McArthur

Lead Inspector

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