

Whitkirk Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107942
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	377674
Inspection dates	25–26 January 2012
Lead inspector	Brenda McIntosh

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	332
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ron Monaghan
Headteacher	Steve Clark
Date of previous school inspection	12 November 2008
School address	Templegate Walk Leeds LS15 0EU
Telephone number	0113 260 6203
Fax number	0113 264 6346
Email address	headteacher@whitkirk.leeds.sch.uk



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.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 assesses 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 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

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

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



© Crown copyright 2012

Introduction

Inspection team

Brenda McIntosh
Lesley Clark
Tony Price

Additional inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 20 lessons taught by 14 teachers. This included sessions developing pupils' understanding of the links between letters and sounds. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation provided by the school which included pupils' work, records of pupils' attainment and progress, the school improvement plan and monitoring reports. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They scrutinised the 77 questionnaires returned by parents and carers as well as those completed by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

The school is slightly larger than the average-sized primary school. It is in a transition phase to two form entry following an increase in the school's admissions limit. The current Reception and Year 1 cohorts are 60, whereas all other year groups are based on intakes of 45. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average. The school meets the current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. The deputy headteacher started at the school in September 2011 along with three other new teachers.

The school works in partnership with the East Leeds SILC (Specialist Inclusive Learning Centre) and provides a base for the provision for pupils with complex medical needs. Currently, nine pupils who are on roll at the SILC attend on a daily basis and are included in as many mainstream classes as appropriate. The East Leeds SILC is subject to separate inspection arrangements.

The school has achieved a range of awards, including: The Stephen Lawrence Education Standard, Activemark, Investors in Pupils and The Inclusion Chartermark. The school is part of the Templenewsam Learning Partnership Trust, a collaborative partnership with local cluster schools.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work, behave well and are keen to learn new things. They enjoy coming to school and feel safe. Pupils collaborate well with each other and take full advantage of all the activities the school offers them. Typical comments from parents such as 'The school has a friendly environment', 'Children are well cared for', 'Staff are always approachable and available', sum up their positive views about the school.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 is average and improving and represents good progress from pupils' starting points. The strategies to improve the teaching of writing across the school are effective in ensuring pupils do well in developing their writing skills. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is below average overall because not enough pupils reach the higher levels, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Teaching which is mainly of good quality underpins pupils' good achievement. Teachers use a wide range of resources to help pupils understand what they are expected to learn. The curriculum is planned effectively and ensures pupils enjoy their learning. Teachers provide varied, interesting learning experiences and ample opportunities for pupils to use and practise their literacy and numeracy skills across different subjects. Occasionally in lessons, teachers do not bring a sharper focus soon enough to accelerate the learning of the more able pupils.
- Action to strengthen the teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) is beginning to raise attainment in reading by the end of Key Stage 1 but the teaching across the different groups is not always sufficiently focused to accelerate progress, particularly for the more able pupils.
- Leadership and management are good. Leaders have ensured that the school has built well on the strengths identified at the last inspection. They are very

clear about the areas for improvement and make effective use of partnerships with other schools to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in reading and mathematics at Key Stage 1, particularly for the more able, by:
 - bringing a sharper focus to the teaching of letters and sounds
 - giving pupils more opportunities to speak and practise new sounds
 - reviewing the assessment at the end of Reception to make sure pupils' learning in Year 1 builds precisely on what they already know and understand.

- Improve the quality of teaching to ensure it is at least consistently good or better by:
 - bringing a sharper focus sooner in lessons for the more able pupils so as to move their learning on more quickly
 - making sure all pupils understand their targets and use them to improve their work
 - ensuring pupils have sufficient time to work independently on their tasks
 - ensuring behaviour management is sharp and rigorously applied in all classes and pupils are fully engaged.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils are usually very attentive in lessons and engage enthusiastically in the varied range of interesting activities. They particularly like the practical activities which provide exciting concepts for learning and investigation. For example, pupils in Year 2 were fully engrossed in their topic about China which provided a whole range of activities from finding out interesting facts about the Chinese culture to building models of the Great Wall of China. Pupils enjoy working with a partner to discuss their work in order to gain a better understanding and solve problems. Across the school, from Reception to Year 6, progress is strongest in writing. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs also make good progress because of well-focused interventions and support both in and outside lessons. Their individual plans are effective and progress is regularly monitored towards their targets.

Children enter Reception with skills that are below those typical for their age, particularly in reading, writing and calculation. Pupils make good progress from their starting points to reach average attainment by the end of Year 6. Across Key Stage 2 pupils make significant gains in English and most notably so in writing. By the end of Year 6 attainment in reading is average and improving securely. Pupils enjoy reading

and do so for pleasure. They read accurately, fluently and with good understanding. The more able pupils skim read very efficiently and quickly extract the main points of the text. Attainment and progress in mathematics are improving as a result of the recent actions to improve teaching and learning in this subject. Across the school the curriculum is devised well for pupils to practise their numeracy skills; for example, Rangoli patterns were used effectively to support the learning of symmetry and reflection. The majority of parents responding to the questionnaire feel their children are making good progress.

Although attainment is below average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2, there is clear evidence from school data and pupils' work that it is moving closer to the national average because pupils are making better progress than previously in Years 1 and 2, particularly in writing. However, not enough pupils reach the higher levels in reading and mathematics. In the Reception classes children make good progress in developing their early reading and writing skills. They learn to concentrate for increasing periods of time, accessing resources independently and learning through discovery and exploration.

Quality of teaching

Good teaching is a feature of most lessons. Teaching is typically characterised by interesting activities and positive relationships. Teachers have good subject knowledge and make very good use of interactive whiteboards as a visual aid to illustrate learning. Good use is made of visualisers to display pupils' work and give quick and effective feedback on how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Lessons are usually planned to cater for the different abilities within the class and promote independent learning. However, within this overall good picture teachers sometimes miss opportunities to adapt their teaching soon enough to accelerate the learning of the more able pupils. Occasionally, teachers keep the pupils too long on the carpet, which limits the time to work independently on practical tasks. Overall, the quality of teachers' marking guides pupils' learning but not all pupils understand their targets fully and how they can be used to improve their work. Most parents and carers who completed the questionnaire felt that their children are taught well and make good progress.

Actions to improve pupils' writing skills show positive outcomes across the school. The strategies in place are giving pupils a firm foundation to develop good writing skills. Pupils show good enthusiasm for writing and are very well motivated by the exciting topics and opportunities they get to write in different subjects. Pupils in Year 6 proved themselves to be very capable of using personification when writing poems about the feelings of the Titanic victims and were moved by the experience. Learning logs are used as an effective link between home and school and reflect pupils' enthusiasm and keenness to learn. Pupils are inventive in the use of materials to present information in striking and memorable ways.

The school is taking steps to improve the teaching of reading, particularly at Key Stage 1. Although there are some positive signs that staff training and new resources are helping to improve the teaching of letters and sounds, overall there are times when it lacks focus. Pupils make good progress in the smaller groups where their learning needs are very well met. Where the group is too big the teaching is less

focused and pupils have too few opportunities to speak and practise the new sounds and, consequently, progress is slower. In the Reception classes teachers plan a good range of activities inside and outside. Resources are used effectively to promote independent learning and enable children to become self-sufficient and confident. The curriculum in Year 1 is adapted to meet the needs of those children who have not achieved the goals expected of them in the Reception Year. Staff are in the early stages of reviewing assessment systems so that children's learning at the start of Year 1 builds securely on what they know and understand at the end of Reception in order to ensure pupils attain as well as they can by the end of Year 2.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour is good and at times exemplary. The school is an inclusive place in which to learn and play. All groups of pupils, including those pupils on the roll of the SILC, are fully integrated into school life. In response to the concerns of a few parents, inspectors gave particular focus to behaviour in lessons. They found that behaviour is good in lessons and contributes effectively to pupils' learning. On the whole, pupils' behaviour is well managed and most teaching ensures pupils are well motivated so that learning moves on effectively. However, in some classes, very occasionally, the behaviour management is not rigorous enough and the teaching does not capture pupils' full attention. As a result, pupils' interest slips rather than them misbehaving and the pace of learning loses a little momentum. Pupils say that behaviour in lessons is good and disruptions to learning are rare. They show a good level of respect for their teachers and each other and respond positively to the school's high expectations of behaviour. The 'Whitkirk Way', which very much promotes an ethos of conforming and determination, provides a firm foundation for pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As a result of timely intervention and support for pupils with specific behavioural, social or emotional problems, they improve their self-esteem and confidence and become more effective learners.

The school is an orderly, caring and safe environment. Pupils are very courteous and polite to visitors. They are confident to talk about their experiences of school and enjoyed sharing their views with inspectors. Around school and at play pupils are considerate and show genuine acts of kindness to each other. Older pupils spontaneously give a helping hand to the younger ones whenever they can. Pupils show a good knowledge of how to stay safe. They say that bullying is rare and are confident that, if any incidents occur, staff would sort them out quickly and effectively. They have a good awareness of who they can turn to if they have any concerns. Pupils have a good understanding of different risks that they may come across and how to deal with these, for example using the Internet safely. The school records any incidents of misbehaviour carefully and these confirm that day-to-day behaviour is typically of the good quality seen during the inspection. Attendance is average and improving and pupils are seldom late for school.

Leadership and management

The headteacher provides clear guidance on school improvement and on improving the quality of teaching. He receives effective support from the deputy headteacher and other leaders. Although some leaders are relatively new to their role, they are

already assuming responsibility for, and influencing improvements to, the aspects on which they lead. Expectations have been raised both in terms of teacher performance and the levels which pupils are expected to achieve to reach their potential. Good use is made of the Partnership Trust to improve the quality of teaching through access to training and sharing of good practice. Accurate self-evaluation identifies the right issues for development, with clear plans for action; these are already bearing fruit, particularly in the teaching of mathematics where more doing, applying and problem solving is raising pupils' achievement. The school has a good capacity to improve further. The school is tracking pupils more robustly and using the information effectively to raise achievement. Timely and well-targeted interventions are effective in closing the gaps between attainment at the school and the national average. This is evident at the end of Year 2 where attainment is moving closer to average. As a result, the school's commitment to equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination is effective. The curriculum is carefully thought out to motivate and engage pupils in their learning. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effectively interwoven throughout the curriculum and all aspects of school life.

The governing body plays a proactive part in driving improvements and holding the school to account. They have a good awareness of what pupils' behaviour and teaching is typically like because they are regular visitors in school and each member has active links with a particular class. The governing body is effective in ensuring it fulfils its duties to safeguard pupils. The school is taking steps to develop the website in order to improve communication between home and school.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



27 January 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Whitkirk Primary School, Leeds, LS15 0EU

Thank you for being so polite, welcoming and friendly when the inspectors visited your school recently. We enjoyed our time at Whitkirk, particularly the time spent talking to you about your school, learning and behaviour. Your views are very important and we have taken them into account when making our judgements.

The purpose of our visit is to find out how well you do in your work and what can be improved. Yours is a good school. We were pleased by your good behaviour and attitudes to work which help you to make good progress in your learning to reach average standards by the end of Year 6. You told us that bullying is rare, that you feel safe and that it is a friendly school. Teaching is mainly good and you told us that your teachers make your learning fun because there are a lot of practical activities. You make particularly good progress in writing because you have many opportunities to practise your writing in different subjects. Pupils' standards at the end of Year 2 could be higher in reading and mathematics. We have asked your teachers to help you with this by making sure you always have enough time to practise saying your new sounds to help you with your reading, and those who learn quickly are helped to reach higher levels. We have also asked the school to make sure all your lessons are at least good to help you make even better progress. We would like the teachers to make sure all work is challenging and that you understand your targets and how you can use them to improve your work.

The school is well led by the headteacher and the governing body and all staff do a good job in looking after you.

All of you can help by continuing to work hard, behaving well and doing your best to help the school improve further.

Yours sincerely

Brenda McIntosh
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 **0300 123 4234**, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.