

Walkley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107094
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	363716
Inspection dates	5–6 October 2011
Reporting inspector	John Young 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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	236
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Linda Greenwood
Headteacher	Miss Jane Sheard
Date of previous school inspection	21–22 July 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 15 lessons, seeing some of the nine classes twice. This included a number of joint observations with senior leaders. Inspectors carried out a scrutiny of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils' writing books. They held meetings with school staff, a local authority representative, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. They also considered a range of other evidence including development plans, safeguarding arrangements and self-evaluation documents. Inspectors analysed the 51 responses to questionnaires returned from parents and carers, 13 from staff and 97 from pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The effectiveness of strategies to increase the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and progress as they move through the school, particularly in English.
- The effectiveness of strategies to improve pupils' rates of attendance and reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent.
- The impact of strategies to improve pupils' attainment, particularly in writing.
- The impact of leaders in driving up standards, tackling weakness and narrowing gaps that existed between the achievements of different groups of pupils.

Information about the school

At this average sized primary school the majority of pupils are White British and live locally. However, much larger numbers of pupils than average originate from minority ethnic heritages and speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is much higher than national averages. The school is receiving increasing numbers of pupils at the very early stages of acquiring English. Many more pupils than usual join and leave the school during the school year. In each of the past three years the numbers on roll at the school have fallen.

The school holds a number of awards including the Activemark and the Financial Management in Schools Standard. The school is part of the Sheffield Children's University. The school provides some extended services such as study support and family learning courses.

The inspection of Walkley Primary School in July 2010 resulted in the school receiving a notice to improve. An interim monitoring visit by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors in March 2011 judged that the school was making satisfactory progress in tackling its main issues and in raising pupils' achievement.

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

3

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 significant improvement because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required because, for significant groups of pupils, attainment and achievement are inadequate over time in English.

Although, the school continues to cause concern inspectors believe current leaders and managers have demonstrated that they have the capacity to make the further necessary improvements. This is because over the past year a number of significant improvements have been secured in important areas which will help to underpin and accelerate change in the remaining weaknesses. These include improvements in the judgements for the effectiveness of care, guidance and support and safeguarding procedures which are now good, and attendance and governance which are now satisfactory. Moreover, the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is now good. Nevertheless, pupils' attainment and achievement have been inadequate over time and are not yet improving fast enough, particularly in English and for groups such as White British girls. Inspectors conclude that the issues were deep-rooted and are taking more time than was afforded the school before this reinspection to securely resolve, despite some headway being made.

The school works in challenging circumstances with high pupil mobility, generally low pupil skills on entry and the added demands of accommodating increasing numbers of pupils at the early stages of acquiring English. Nevertheless, the circumstances the school finds itself in are not wholly attributable to these factors. Senior leaders understand that the pace of recovery needs to accelerate further so that pupils can more rapidly and securely narrow the deficit gaps that remain between their current attainment and achievement and their capabilities.

While overall attainment and achievement are weak, the learning and progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those known to be eligible for free school meals are broadly satisfactory. The quality of teaching and the curriculum are satisfactory overall but improving, with elements of best practice which need disseminating more widely and embedding, respectively. However, more of the teaching needs to be consistently of the highest quality if pupils are to meaningfully reduce the attainment and achievement deficits that exist. The school

also recognise that they need to review the provision for particular groups of pupils such as White British girls. In other aspects the school is operating more effectively. Pupils feel very safe, they adopt healthy lifestyles well and some good partnerships have been established which enhance pupils' learning and well-being. Other aspects of pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory, including their behaviour.

The support of the local authority and a partnership with a local school consortium is helping the school's recovery. Most parents and carers are happy with the school. The concerns of a small minority were investigated by the team and inspectors found little to support these views.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve pupils' achievement so that their attainment rises and the gaps that exist between pupils' attainment and national age-related expectations, particularly in English, close more quickly and securely by:
 - improving pupils' grammar and punctuation and enabling them to practise and reinforce their writing skills across the curriculum more frequently
 - ensuring the academic distance travelled by pupils between Key Stages 1 and 2 matches or exceeds challenging targets based on their starting points and capabilities.
- Build on the improvements already secured to further advance the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and progress by:
 - ensuring all teaching enables pupils to develop their understanding of key concepts, knowledge and skills more securely and quickly
 - ensuring the most effective practice in the school is shared and becomes embedded as the norm
 - sharpening the precision of individual pupils' writing targets and reaffirming the core expectations for high-quality writing.
- Build on the improvements already secured to further increase the impact of leaders and managers in tackling the school's remaining key issues by:
 - reviewing the efficiency of current strategies and refining practice where necessary to accelerate the pace of change
 - strategically and urgently tackling the trend of underperformance among White British girls, particularly during Key Stage 2.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Changes in approaches to teaching, assessment, the curriculum and pupil support are showing signs of improving pupils' achievement and enjoyment of learning. Pupils are confident, generally well motivated and can concentrate for long periods. They can solve problems, evaluate how well they are doing and work independently. This is helping them to fill the gaps in their knowledge, understanding and skills. However, the pace of their improvement is not quick enough and opportunities to

enhance and consolidate their writing skills, in particular, across the curriculum are missed.

Pupils' overall attainment by the end of Year 6 was much lower than national averages in three of the past four years. Their progress between Year 1 and Year 6 was slow and did not match their capabilities in three of the past four years. This represents inadequate achievement. White British Girls have underperformed in three of the past four years. Within this overall picture pupils' performance in mathematics and reading has been generally satisfactory. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also satisfactory. As a result of the improvement measures introduced, currently pupils throughout the school are making at least satisfactory progress but this is insufficient to meaningfully and consistently close the deficit attainment and achievement gaps that have opened because of the slow start pupils made from Year 1 onwards. This profile was confirmed by scrutiny of the latest school data and lesson observations.

Pupils feel very safe and their behaviour is generally satisfactory, although a few pupils complain about over-exuberant behaviour in the playground, which school leaders are monitoring. Pupils' good awareness and adoption of healthy lifestyles is reflected in their participation in physical education, knowledge of healthy cooking and good hygiene. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to school and wider community life, taking pride in their school council, fundraising and recycling responsibilities. Pupils acquire a satisfactory range of skills that will aid them in the future. They develop suitable numeracy, social and enterprise skills and use computers effectively. Pupils' rising attendance is due to the more rigorous and proactive strategies used by school leaders, including highlighting to parents and carers the damage regular absence and extended term-time holidays can have on their children's education. Pupils' satisfactory spiritual, moral, social and cultural developments are promoted through the curriculum. They learn Spanish and go on residential visits which broaden their horizons. Moral and religious themed assemblies, their positive social interactions, music and art work show pupils' capacity for reflection, creativity and understanding.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3

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

The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
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How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is satisfactory and improving. More effective deployment of teaching assistants and targeted training and coaching of staff underpin most pupils' improving learning. Giving pupils the chance to develop and apply their writing skills across the curriculum is helping to improve the quality and volume of pupils' work. However, school leaders accept that teaching needs to be consistently good and that pupils' grammar and punctuation must improve much more. Strengths in teaching include a good climate for learning and conscientious staff who use good subject knowledge, effective modelling of expected outcomes and an improved understanding of the specific learning needs of their pupils to plan and deliver pacy, demanding lessons which pupils enjoy. However, there are missed chances to share and embed best practice, and in some lessons the pace, challenge and match to pupils' needs are lacking. Assessment procedures satisfactorily support learning. Marking and feedback to pupils are generally sound but pupils' individual writing targets are not as specific as they could be.

The curriculum is satisfactory and improving and is adapting to better match the diverse needs of pupils. Together with a focus on English and mathematics pupils explore subjects such as science, geography and information and communication technology through a series of themes such as the history of Sheffield. There are residential experiences, visits and visitors such as the Yorkshire Ambulance Service and the author of Dr Who. Pupils also enthused about the school production of Jack and the Beanstalk. The integration of pupils at the very early stages of acquiring English is helped by a 10-session induction programme based on rapidly extending their basic vocabulary and communication skills, enabling them to more readily access the curriculum with support from bilingual staff.

The good care, guidance and support pupils receive are reflected in the good relationships staff foster with them, their parents and carers, and the effective links with a host of external support agencies and services. Improving academic guidance and high-quality pastoral care are supporting the well-being of pupils, including those potentially most vulnerable. School leaders were able to show striking examples of how it has helped some pupils overcome significant barriers to their education. Well-organised procedures as pupils join, move through, and leave the school help them to feel secure and valued. The learning mentor and teaching assistants play key roles in supporting the learning of individuals and groups of children.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders have embedded ambition and are securing improvements. This is exemplified by aspects of the provision, outcomes, and leadership and management judgements that have crossed grade boundaries since the previous inspection. Self-evaluation is largely accurate and is used to shape action planning. Staff are held to account for the quality of their work but are also coached and mentored, which is leading to greater consistency of planning, assessment and delivery in teaching. There is a cohesive approach to improving the school which staff embrace. School leaders work to boost academic outcomes has been purposeful but has not delivered the significant and rapid improvement required. Leaders recognise that they need to strategically review and redouble their efforts, particularly in tackling the underperformance of White British girls. Members of the governing body fulfil their statutory duties satisfactorily. Further training, better deployment of their skills and more focused scrutiny mean that governors are shrewder in influencing school improvement. School leaders engagement with parents and carers is satisfactory. It includes contact, support and consultation via parent forums, newsletters, celebration events and guidance to support their children's learning. The school has some good partnerships which enhance pupils' learning and well-being. These include links with the Sheffield Children's University to develop pupils' key skills, joint working with a triad of local schools to share best practice and various local authority support services.

School leaders satisfactorily promotes equality, challenges discrimination and develops community cohesion through the curriculum, assemblies and a range of personalised strategies such as bilingual teaching assistants supporting pupils at the early stages of acquiring English. Pupils are encouraged to share details of their often contrasting backgrounds and experiences as a way of promoting awareness and understanding, and to support their integration. Safeguarding procedures are good and reflect best practice guidelines in relation to risk assessment, child protection and the safer recruitment of staff. Value for money is inadequate because, although financial management is sound and resources are generally well deployed, this has not ensured that outcomes for individuals and groups are at least satisfactory.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
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	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage provides good value for money. Children join Reception with skills that are usually below typical expectations for children of the same age. They make good progress in almost all areas of learning so that by the time they leave the Early Years Foundation Stage their skills and dispositions are in line with age-related expectations. Children who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are especially well supported in extending their vocabulary. This represents good achievement. Children enjoy good relationships with each other, feel safe and their personal development is good.

Staff build nurturing relationships with children based upon a good understanding of their needs and provide a high degree of care which helps children settle quickly. Children enjoy their learning and thrive, supported by a rich curriculum and good teaching. There is a balance between direct teaching, guided learning and child-initiated activities. Children confidently interact with the well-planned indoor and outdoor areas which are stimulating and encourage them to be creative and independent. They read, write and spell, sing, talk and draw, share, think, decipher and concentrate with increasing competence and gusto. All requirements, including those for children's welfare, are met.

Effective leadership underpins the good provision and children's good achievement. A team approach ensures the unit runs efficiently. Children's progress is rigorously assessed, closely monitored and systematically and strategically developed.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Views of parents and carers

The large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were positive about the school and the work it does on behalf of their children. They are extremely happy with their children's experiences at school and believe teaching is good and that the school is led and managed effectively. A small minority of parents and carers do not feel that the school keeps them informed about their child's progress, or that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors investigated these concerns and found no evidence to support them.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Walkley 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 241 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	34	67	15	29	1	2	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	32	63	15	29	2	4	2	4
The school informs me about my child's progress	16	31	29	57	3	6	2	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	27	53	19	37	4	8	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	27	53	20	39	0	0	2	4
The school helps me to support my child's learning	22	43	21	41	6	12	2	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	25	49	19	37	3	6	2	4
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)	24	47	21	41	0	0	2	4
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	51	19	37	1	2	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	43	21	41	2	4	4	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	35	24	47	3	6	2	4
The school is led and managed effectively	25	49	18	35	4	8	2	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	33	65	14	27	1	2	2	4

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 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	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and 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.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



7 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Walkley Primary School, Sheffield, S6 2RZ

Thank you for being helpful to the inspectors when we visited recently. We learned a lot from observing your lessons and talking with you. We also read with interest the views that you, the staff, your parents and carers expressed in the questionnaires.

After studying the evidence, it is clear that many of you are still not making the progress you are capable of, in English in particular. Because of this we have given your school another notice to improve. This means that we believe your headteacher and staff can make the required improvements but that other inspectors will come back check up on what has been done. We know that this news will disappoint you because you told us how much you enjoy school and feel that you are learning well. Your progress has improved over the past year but your attainment remains low because you are still catching up from a slow start in Years 1 and 2. The gap is closing for some of you but needs to close much more quickly, and for all of you!

Some aspects of your school have improved. Your attendance has risen. The school's efforts to keep you safe and to care, guide and support you are also now good. The school help you build self-confidence and adopt healthy lifestyles effectively. You should be proud of the positions of responsibility you hold, the charity work you undertake and the occasions you represent your school in competitions. You usually get along well and when there are issues they are sorted out, often with a handshake. You have a growing awareness of each other's cultures. The teaching you receive and the curriculum are satisfactory with several good aspects which are helping you to learn more effectively. Children in the Early Year's Foundation Stage unit make good progress. Leaders and governors are moving things in the right direction but an even bigger effort is required so that you all achieve as highly as possible of in all your subjects.

In order for your school to be even more effective we have asked the school to:

- improve your attainment and achievement more quickly
- increase the impact of teaching so that your learning and progress quicken
- ensure that leaders and managers urgently resolve the school's weaknesses.

You can all play your part by continuing to work hard and attending school regularly.

Yours sincerely

John Young Her Majesty's Inspector

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