



Old Bank Junior Infant and Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107687
LEA Kirklees
Inspection number 277808
Inspection dates 10 July 2006 to 11 July 2006
Reporting inspector Mr James Kidd CfBT Lead Inspector

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Taylor Hall Lane
School category	Community		Mirfield
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		West Yorkshire WF14 0HW
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01924 326605
Number on roll	108	Fax number	01924 326619
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs K Taylor
Date of previous inspection	19 June 2000	Headteacher	Miss C Walker

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small school and many pupils come from an area of social disadvantage. Most pupils are of White British heritage but there is a small number of pupils from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is three times the national average. On entry to school, many pupils have skills which are well below those usually found. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) is well above average and there are seven pupils with statements of special educational need. The rate of mobility is high and significant numbers of pupils leave and join the school during each year. Old Bank holds the Investors in People award.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Old Bank is an improving school that provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. The inspector agrees with most of the judgements in the school's self-evaluation form and believes that, in view of the good progress that has been made since the last inspection, the school has good capacity to improve further.

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and children progress well in their social and communication skills. Attainment is well below average in all key stages but pupils' overall progress is satisfactory. Pupils' skills in writing and mathematics, including the understanding of mathematical language, are causes for concern but standards in reading are rising. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. However, teachers' questioning skills are underdeveloped and pupils are not always required to think more deeply about the topics they are studying. Personal development is good and pupils behave well. The curriculum is good and pupils benefit from a wide range of enrichment activities. On occasions, however, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise their speaking and listening skills in order to extend their vocabulary. Care, support and guidance are outstanding. Teachers and teaching assistants do their utmost to raise the self-esteem of their pupils and provide a safe and welcoming environment for them.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher leads by example and members of the governing body are well-informed, critical friends of the management team. The school evaluates its performance well and is trying hard to involve parents more in their children's learning. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning and of teachers' questioning skills in order that pupils develop their confidence and ability to think more deeply about their work.
- Provide more opportunities for speaking and listening so that pupils may enrich their vocabulary and improve their writing.
- Raise standards in mathematics and develop pupils' understanding of mathematical language.
- Build on the success of current strategies to encourage more parents to become actively involved in the education of their children.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are well below average but, from a low starting point on entry to the school, achievement is satisfactory overall. Progress in the Nursery and Reception Class is good but children still attain below expected standards in their social development and communication skills when they enter Year 1. Standards in both Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2 have remained well below average in English, mathematics and science

since 2003. However, as a result of the timely introduction of strategies to improve reading, standards are rising in this area. The school met its challenging Year 6 targets for mathematics and science this year but performance in English, particularly in writing, continues to be a concern. The rate of improvement in standards is hampered by the much higher than average proportion of pupils who enter or leave the school at other than normal times. Inspection evidence shows that in the current Year 5 there are more pupils operating at higher levels than usually seen in the school. Comprehensive individual support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) ensures that they make the same progress as others.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good and strategies to promote a healthy lifestyle are outstanding. Pupils are committed to eating healthily and taking regular exercise as evidenced by their keen attendance at the breakfast club, healthy cooking sessions and the 'Jabadao' play project. Pupils have good attitudes to learning, behave well and show consideration for each other. They are proud of their school and of their teachers who, they say, 'always help us when we find things difficult'. Members of the school council have a high profile and, in their words, 'want to make the school better for all the pupils'. Playground Befrienders have weekly duties and promote enjoyment and community spirit, ensuring that all pupils feel valued and safe. The good gains which pupils are making in reading and in developing their skills in information and communication technology (ICT) form a secure platform for their future economic well-being. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and they have a keen awareness of their own and others' cultures and religions. Attendance remains below average but has improved markedly in the last twelve months as a result of a wide range of effective strategies to promote it.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with examples of good practice. Pupils with LDD receive comprehensive support from teaching assistants and staff treat their pupils with dignity and respect. In the most effective lessons, expectations are high and teachers set tasks that successfully meet the needs of all pupils. In an impressive circle time session, for example, pupils in Years 4 and 5 were fully engaged and made perceptive comments about what our world would be like without change. However, on occasions, teachers' questions do not require pupils to think more deeply about the subject matter. In these lessons, pupils do not have enough opportunities to rehearse their ideas with their friends before they begin to write.

The quality of teaching in the Nursery and Reception year is good. Teachers encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning and place emphasis on improving children's language skills and on their personal, social and emotional development.

Assessment is good and tracking systems to identify good progress or where pupils are experiencing difficulty are well developed. Marking is regular but varies in quality. The best practice offers pupils detailed comment on how they may improve their work but this is not consistent in all years.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good, meets statutory requirements and provides well for all pupils. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good and there are many opportunities for children to learn through play. In all areas there is strong emphasis on pupils' social and emotional development and also on improving their skills in English and mathematics. In some lessons, however, the curriculum does not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to speak and listen to each other in order to extend their vocabulary. Provision for ICT has improved since the last inspection. There is a comprehensive programme of personal, social and health education, which includes lessons about citizenship and health and safety. Pupils benefit from specialist provision in sport, developmental movement play, music and modern languages. Male visitors are often greeted on the corridor by 'Bonjour Monsieur, ça va?' There is wide range of enrichment activities and there are close curricular links with the local high schools.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, support and guidance are outstanding. The school values each individual and provides a safe, welcoming and stimulating environment in which pupils can flourish. Staff treat all pupils with sensitivity, patience and understanding. Parents speak highly of the school, one commenting, 'Everything I could wish for as a parent, the school provides for my daughter.' Pupils experiencing difficulty benefit from one-to-one support from the talented team of teaching assistants and also from governors who volunteer to help. There are very effective tracking systems to check pupils' progress in all areas of school life. In addition, the school offers extensive practical advice on how parents and carers can assist pupils with their learning and welfare.

Vulnerable pupils are identified quickly and nurtured very well. There are excellent links with outside agencies to provide further for their needs. Risk assessments and child protection procedures are in place and the school does its utmost to ensure the safety of its pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good throughout the school and leaders forge excellent links with outside agencies for the benefit of the pupils. The school evaluates its performance accurately and has improved well since the last inspection. Capacity to improve further is, therefore, good.

The quiet yet inspirational leadership of the headteacher, who is ably supported by a dedicated team of staff, continues to be the major factor in shaping the vision and direction of Old Bank. She has a high profile presence around school and has successfully developed the individual skills of staff to create a cohesive and industrious team. For example, the impressive work of the special educational needs coordinator, the learning mentor and the behaviour support teacher has a very positive impact on the outstanding care and guidance the school offers its pupils. Complacency is not tolerated and, despite impressive improvements in pupils' behaviour, attitudes and attendance, staff are aware that more needs to be done to develop teachers' questioning skills and to improve standards in writing and mathematics.

School self-evaluation is accurate, honest and generated through discussion with all stakeholders. The establishment of a community room, for example, is the result of the recognition that the school needs to try to involve parents more in their children's learning as this can only be a positive step in raising attainment and progress.

Governance has improved well since the last inspection and governors now monitor progress with rigour. Their collective skills and knowledge of the school, including the difficult circumstances within which it operates, make them well informed critical partners in its development. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for being so friendly and polite when I visited your school recently. You gave me such a warm welcome and I enjoyed my time with you and your teachers. I would now like to tell you what I think about your school.

What I like most

- Old Bank is an improving school and I know you are very proud of it!
- I am pleased that you behave well and that you have many opportunities to take part in clubs and activities at lunchtime and after school.
- I am delighted that your teachers and teaching assistants take such excellent care of you and that they teach you about healthy eating and about how to live a healthy lifestyle.
- I think the school council does a good job in making Old Bank a nicer place to attend and the Befrienders do a lot to make you happy.
- I think that your headteacher and all the other staff know how to make your school even better.

What I have asked your school to do now

- I would like you and your teachers to work very hard together to practise your skills in speaking and listening so that you can improve your vocabulary, your writing and your work in mathematics.
- I think it would be good if your teachers asked you more questions in class to make you think much harder about your work.
- It would be marvellous if more of your parents and carers got involved in school activities so that they could help you more with your work at home.

I had a lovely time at Old Bank and really enjoyed watching you learn. I wish you well for the future.