



Whitkirk Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107942
LEA Leeds
Inspection number 277870
Inspection dates 12 October 2005 to 13 October 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs June Sharpe CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Templegate Walk
School category	Community		Whitkirk
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Leeds, West Yorkshire LS15
			0EU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0113 260 6203
Number on roll	288	Fax number	0113 264 6346
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Ron Monaghan
Date of previous inspection	29 November 1999	Headteacher	Mr P Coverdale

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This average sized school is situated on the outskirts of the city of Leeds. The majority of the children live in Halton, and others are from surrounding urban districts. Almost all the children are white British; a few children are from minority ethnic heritages and speak English as an additional language. The number of children claiming free schools meals, or with learning difficulties or disabilities is about average. Attainment on entry to school, although variable, is below that which is typical for 4 year olds. The school has several awards for children's achievements in the health and physical aspects of their work. Since the previous inspection, because of a falling roll, governors have reduced the school's yearly intake of children and the number of teachers. They have also reallocated the management responsibilities of teachers to take account of staff changes.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This good school provides good value for money. Overall, it is led and managed well. The very good leadership of the headteacher has ensured good improvement since the previous inspection. The school has a good capacity to improve. Inspectors agree with the school's view of its effectiveness. Children achieve well in the safe, happy, friendly and interesting setting. They thrive because of the high standard of care they receive, along with an outstanding partnership between everyone involved in their education. Children's personal development is good, whilst their understanding of the need for a safe and healthy lifestyle is excellent. Good teaching and good quality support from adults ensure children achieve well. Children of reception age also achieve well, as a result of good quality provision. By Year 6, there is no significant difference in the attainment of girls and that of boys. However, the attainment of some boys in Years 3 and 4 is not as high as it should be for their ages. Throughout school, children's writing, and particularly boys' writing, is not as good as their reading. The school's written plans to raise standards in writing, especially for boys, are insufficiently robust. Children in Years 1 to 6 know little about how they need to improve if they are to achieve the National Curriculum learning goals set for them.

What the school should do to improve further

Raise standards in writing across the school, and the standard of work of lower attaining boys in years 3 and 4 in English and mathematics by:

- Checking progress regularly to ensure that children are on track to reach the targets that teachers have set for them
- Involving children fully in their own learning so that they know how well they are doing and what they need to do next to improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The school accurately evaluates children's achievement as good. Girls and boys of all ages and ethnic heritages make good progress, and standards are above average in Year 6. Children's good progress is evident in the 2005 Year 6 national tests, which continue the improving trend of recent years, especially in English. Children currently in Year 6 are on track to demonstrate good progress. Although the 2005 Year 2 standards dipped from average in 2004, the children had a lower starting point than usual for the school, especially the boys. Some Year 3 boys and a few boys in Year 4 are behind where they should be for their ages, especially in writing. The school has done a lot to try to raise attainment in writing generally, and to give boys the extra boost they need in English and mathematics. Plans to raise standards, however, do not make it clear that regular checks on progress will be made to demonstrate that children are on track to reach the challenging targets that teachers have set for them. Reception age children and children with learning difficulties or disabilities make good progress, because provision is well managed. Standards in mathematics, information

and communication technology (ICT) and science have improved well since the previous inspection, when they were too low.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The school's view of personal development and well-being as good, is justified. Children are friendly, happy, and enthusiastic members of a thriving school community. They enjoy school, and are keen to take on responsibilities and to get involved in the many exciting activities open to them. Children's attendance is good - an improvement since the previous inspection. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is a result of the emphasis placed upon children's personal development as an integral part of the everyday life of the school. While children's behaviour and their attitudes to learning are good, a few children, mainly boys, find it hard to listen attentively and politely. The school's thoughtful action to deal with this is starting to pay dividends, but has not fully resolved the problem. Children's understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy is outstanding. This is because of the school's determined efforts, for example, in achieving the highest level of a Healthy Schools award. Such is children's confidence and their understanding of health and safety, that they asked adults not to park their cars on the pavements used by children walking to school. Children make a very positive contribution to their school and the wider community by taking part in the school council, along with other excellent initiatives, such as 'Silver Friends' who are elderly citizens in the community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school is right to say that teaching has improved since the previous inspection, and that it is now good. Whilst hardworking and enthusiastic teachers generally teach basic skills in English and mathematics well, this could be stronger in writing and for lower attaining boys in Years 3 and 4. Teachers of younger children give a good grounding in early reading skills. Very good involvement of parents and a thoughtful choice of books give children a flying start. All teachers are competent users of the new technological equipment in classrooms. This assists children's learning, by helping to focus attention and encourage more attentive listening. Teachers and well qualified classroom assistants work together closely to meet children's needs, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities. Since the previous inspection, teachers have improved their assessment of children's attainment satisfactorily. Although they set National Curriculum targets for children, children know little about them, or what they have to do to reach their goals. Teachers do not always ensure that lessons focus tightly on ensuring pupils reach their targets. The positive relationships between adults and children encourage learning without fear of making mistakes. Expectations of children to listen politely, however, are inconsistent between teachers, and this sometimes hinders the school's plans to raise attainment.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school is correct that the curriculum has improved since the previous inspection, and is now good. It meets requirements, so that all children have every opportunity to succeed. Provision for ICT has improved, and there are good plans to continue to extend children's opportunities to use ICT as part of their learning in other subjects. The curriculum is enriched very well by visits, visitors, French in Years 3 and 4, and by the very good range of extra-curricular activities, which many children attend. Music has a high profile in the school's calendar. All children have the chance to learn to play a musical instrument, to work with musicians and to perform for others. Provision for children's personal, social, health and citizenship education is outstanding. The school, justifiably, holds the Active Mark Gold, a national award for involvement in physical activities. Children are very keen to get involved in activities outside the normal school day and in the community. Very good links with a local secondary school help children to see their education as a continuous process.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Children's welfare is safeguarded and embedded firmly in the school's ethos. Children's individual needs are catered for in a very safe and supportive environment. The very clean, well-maintained building, and its furnishings and equipment, demonstrate the extent of the school's care for its children. The learning mentor plays an outstanding part in children's pastoral care, and the school manages the budget and timetables so that children can have as much high quality adult support as possible. The co-ordinator for learning difficulties and disabilities, for example, has allocated time to work with specific children, their parents and support agencies. An outstanding partnership with parents contributes towards children's sense of security and enjoyment of school. Although teachers know children very well, they do not check their progress sufficiently often to ensure they are on track to meet their targets. This is why the overall support and guidance for children are good rather than outstanding, which was the school's judgement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school's view that good leadership, management and governance lead to high standards is correct. The headteacher's very good leadership is the main reason for the school's many successes. He has steered everyone successfully through a challenging period of staff redundancies and major changes. During this time, he has ensured that the school has kept up with the rapid national pace of change, and has introduced a lot of new initiatives that benefit the children and staff. The headteacher's main strength is his ability to motivate staff to take on responsibilities and work together as a strong team to secure necessary changes. The headteacher is supported by two assistant headteachers and together they work very hard towards ensuring a

fully inclusive school that parents have confidence in. Governance has improved since the previous inspection. Governors are now much more involved in the work of the school. They are not afraid to hold it to account. They manage the budget very well to ensure that the school does not run into unforeseen difficulties. The school's written plans for its development in the future include the right priorities. They do not, however, make it sufficiently clear how everyone will know how much progress is being made, if there has been enough improvement, and whether spending leads to best value in terms of standards in the school.

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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?	2	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?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	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	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	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	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	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?	2	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	3	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	2	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

N/A

We would like to thank you for making us feel welcome in your school and for being so friendly and helpful.

We think that Whitkirk Primary is a good school because:

- All the adults care about you and want you to be safe and happy
- You enjoy coming to school and have a lot of interesting and exciting things to do
- Mr Coverdale, the teachers and all the other adults work very hard together to help you to learn
- You know a lot about how to look after yourselves and stay healthy.

We have asked Mr Coverdale and the school governors to make your school even better by:

- Continuing to help you to improve your writing
- Making sure that girls and boys always do equally well in English and mathematics
- Telling you more about what you have to do to improve your work.
- We also think that some children need to listen more politely to adults in lessons.

We hope that you will carry on working hard and making your school such a happy place to be.