

Lapage Primary School and Nursery

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107211
Local Authority	Bradford
Inspection number	287743
Inspection dates	26–27 February 2007
Reporting inspector	Les Schubeler

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 on roll	
School	666
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Saraj Mohammed
Headteacher	Mrs Vickie Mellor
Date of previous school inspection	4 June 2001
School address	Barkerend Road Bradford West Yorkshire BD3 8QX
Telephone number	01274 770170
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large school in an area of significant inner city social and economic disadvantage. The school population is drawn almost entirely from ethnic groups whose origins lie in Pakistan and Bangladesh. Most speak English as an additional language. There has been much turbulence in staffing since the last inspection. The current headteacher has been in post for two years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI 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 in relation to achievement and standards in English, mathematics and science.

Since the last inspection, the rate of pupils' progress has been uneven and slow. Children enter the Foundation Stage with very low levels of language, mathematical and social skills and many of them have little understanding of English. Standards are exceptionally low at Year 2 and Year 6 and have been for five years. The school's results in the national tests in 2006 showed small improvements at Key Stage 1 although standards remained low overall. At the end of Key Stage 2, achievement was very weak and standards exceptionally low. The achievement of pupils is inadequate in English, mathematics and science. This matches the school's own judgement.

The headteacher's strong leadership provides a clear direction for the school. It is the driving force in bringing about many changes that are laying the foundations for future improvement. The headteacher shares with the able and developing leadership team a resolute commitment to raise standards. Effective evaluation has led to the identification of areas for development. During the last two years rigorous monitoring and evaluation by the school's leaders have identified inadequacies in the quality of teaching as the chief cause of pupils' poor achievement. Firm action has been taken to remedy the problem. Although improvements are being seen, particularly in literacy, pupils do not yet make the progress that they should. Well managed strategies to address weaknesses are ensuring that a common sense of purpose across all staff is developing. Not enough time has yet elapsed to show sustained improvement, so value for money is unsatisfactory. However, emerging signs of success indicate a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and some of it is good. However, although there is an improving picture, not enough attention is always paid to how well pupils learn. Consequently, the progress of some pupils is hindered. A satisfactory basic curriculum throughout the school places a strong emphasis on the acquisition of skills in literacy. The school is committed to extending the experiences of all pupils beyond their immediate surroundings. Events such as arts weeks and visits to the theatre enhance pupils' learning and enjoyment.

Pupils are well cared for and pastoral support is good. Effective support for vulnerable pupils ensures that they are successfully integrated into school life. Health and safety systems are good. Academic guidance is at an early stage of development. Pupils have targets in literacy and numeracy, but these are not used consistently to advance their learning.

Most pupils behave well and enjoy their school experiences. They develop self-esteem and confidence because their efforts and achievements are valued, praised and rewarded. They understand the importance of keeping safe and having a healthy lifestyle. The school council makes a developing contribution to the school's work. It was instrumental in improving facilities

in the playground, giving pupils more opportunities for active play. The school has worked hard with parents to promote the importance of attendance and punctuality. As a result, attendance rates have improved and are satisfactory.

Parents are increasingly involved in their children's learning and they place a high value on the work of the school. They appreciate the benefits that are accruing as a result of the changes made by the school's leaders. Their views are typified by the comment: 'I can definitely see an improvement.'

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and improve achievement in English, mathematics and science across the school.
- Raise the overall quality of teaching and learning to good or better.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Interruptions to learning caused by many staff changes have contributed to the pupils' underachievement and left a lot of ground to make up by Year 6. This adversely affects pupils' economic well-being. On leaving Reception, many children do not achieve the levels expected for their ages. At the end of Year 2 and Year 6 standards are exceptionally low. Groups of pupils and individuals at all levels of attainment do not reach their full potential. Pupils do not build consistently well on their basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics. Improvements in teaching skills, as well as the introduction of effective arrangements for assessment and very thorough tracking of pupils' progress, are now enabling pupils to make faster progress than before in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 6. Leaders in the school recognise that the gradual improvements now being seen in literacy are not being matched in mathematics. This is because an emphasis on raising standards in the language development of all pupils from the Foundation Stage onwards has resulted in insufficient focus being placed on developing the standards in mathematics.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Most pupils have positive attitudes to school. They enjoy learning, developing new skills and taking part in all that the school provides. The school is working hard to improve pupils' independence and initiative, but these qualities are underdeveloped. Thus, pupils' learning is not as effective as it should be. Pupils feel secure in the knowledge that any rare cases of bullying are dealt with effectively. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils understand right from wrong and most relate well to one another and to the adults around them. Their involvement with the wider community is in its infancy, although links are starting to develop, such as through the support of charities. Pupils take advantage of opportunities to learn about the world of work by visiting Bradford Royal Infirmary and by having a careers day which raises the aspirations of parents and pupils alike.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Much purposeful work has been undertaken in recent years by the leadership of the school to eradicate unsatisfactory teaching. A detailed programme of monitoring takes place and accurate judgements are made in identifying strengths as well as any weaknesses that need to be addressed. However, too little account is taken of the impact of the teaching on pupils' learning. Clear, corporate planning, perceptive questioning and well resourced lessons characterise those lessons that are good. In a small number of lessons, a lack of appropriate challenge in the tasks set and unsatisfactory management of pupils' behaviour lead to teaching time being lost and pupils' learning being slow. Marking usually acknowledges pupils' efforts and achievements, but does not always indicate what they must do next to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Although the curriculum is broad and balanced in terms of the subjects offered, it does not ensure that pupils develop their knowledge and skills consistently in English, mathematics and science. Not enough emphasis is placed on how pupils learn. Recently appointed faculty leaders have begun to trial small projects that make links between subjects so that pupils have increasing opportunities to practise their growing basic skills. Pupils speak highly about what the school offers. Music and physical education are taught by specialist staff and the good quality of this teaching significantly enhances pupils' learning and enjoyment. Pupils learn about staying safe and keeping healthy. They benefit from a good personal, social and health education programme that includes visits from the Life Caravan, which helps pupils to consider choices and act responsibly with regard to issues such as drugs. Pupils experience a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities that contribute soundly to their personal development and skills in information and communication technology (ICT), art and design, karate and Urdu.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

All staff have a high concern for the welfare of their pupils. As a result, pupils say that they feel safe and have someone to turn to. This is because the school has effective arrangements for safeguarding pupils. Staff do all they can to ensure a smooth transition when pupils move to and from school. Good information is provided for parents, most of whom express confidence in the school. However, academic guidance is at an early stage. Its impact on pupils' progress and their understanding of their level of performance is limited.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

A developing senior leadership team with complementary strengths gives good support to the school's dynamic headteacher. The team has worked well together to establish good staff morale after a difficult period and to effect emerging improvements in pupils' achievement. Staff are positive in their determination to speed up the process of change and welcome the good support that is provided by external consultants. Governors are supportive and informed.

There are good links with local secondary schools which give valuable support in ICT with pupils in Year 5 and provide Saturday schools for gifted and talented pupils. The school has given parents careful guidance and training in how to help their children's learning. Classes are organised for parents in a range of subjects and are much appreciated. Effective strategies such as the detailed system for tracking pupils' progress are ensuring that there is now a clearer focus on how well pupils achieve. All measures are not yet fully embedded in everyday practice. However, the school's leaders have achieved much by setting up the necessary structures and procedures to put the school on its way to recovery.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
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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?	4
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4

The quality of provision

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

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave to the four inspectors who visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and finding out your views about the school and would like to thank you for being so courteous and friendly. We spent a lot of time finding out how well you learn in your lessons, looking at your work and talking to your headteacher and school staff. As a result of this, we can see that you do not do as well as you could and so have asked your headteacher to concentrate on raising standards.

We think your teachers and teaching assistants care for you and look after you well, keeping you safe and healthy. We know, too, that you are proud of your school and that you get on well with one another and all the adults who work with you. We think that you are beginning to make improvements, especially in English, but you could still do better in all subjects. Your teachers have introduced new ways of checking your progress that will help you to know better how to improve. We think that if you concentrate on trying to reach the targets that your teachers set for you and listen carefully to the advice they give you on how to make progress, then the standard of your work will get better.

Inspectors will visit again to see how the school is getting on with its work. You have an important part to play by working hard and behaving well so that you can all make good progress in your learning.