

Cononley Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121387
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	292098
Inspection dates	14–15 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Marie Cordey

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 on roll	119
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Anthony Radley
Headteacher	Mrs G Lofthouse
Date of previous school inspection	30 April 2001
School address	Meadow Lane Cononley Keighley West Yorkshire BD20 8NA
Telephone number	01535 633040
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small village school set in large, landscaped grounds near Keighley. The vast majority of the pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. A small number of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The school has gained the Activemark for sport award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Cononley is a good school with outstanding features. The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are outstanding. Children delight in school and settle in quickly. Achievement and standards are good. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain high standards, particularly in mathematics and science. Although standards in English are above average, they are not as high as mathematics and science because pupils' writing skills are not well developed. The high standards in Key Stage 2 maintain the high performance made by pupils by the end of Year 2.

The school is led with vision and dedication by the headteacher. Inclusion is at the heart of the school's mission and is a common factor amongst all staff and governors. Pupils are regarded as individuals and treated accordingly. It is a measure of their self-esteem and confidence that they relate so well to others. The majority of parents support the school wholeheartedly, but a small number feel that they do not have enough opportunity to contribute to school improvement. The school is aware of this and is working to involve these parents.

Teaching and learning make a good contribution to the high standards of the pupils. Teaching is excellent in the Foundation Stage. It is good in Key Stage 1 and in Years 3 and 4 where pupils are thoroughly involved and excited by their learning. It is less marked for pupils in Years 5 and 6 who are not as well challenged or involved in their learning. Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. They make great gains in confidence and poise becoming responsible members of their community. They are a credit to themselves, their parents and the school.

The curriculum is outstanding and pupils enjoy and take pride in their achievement. Extra activities from chess and drama to country dancing are participated in with gusto. A wide range of learning experiences is open to the pupils. Good partnerships with outside agencies contribute to the high levels of support and care that the pupils receive. Pupils know who to talk to if they feel troubled.

There has been good improvement since the last inspection and the school provides good value for money. The maintenance of high standards and improvements already evident in English show good capacity to improve still further. The school knows itself quite well, although it judges care, guidance and support, and leadership and management generously and the curriculum too harshly.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement in English, particularly in writing.
- Ensure that pupils in Years 5 and 6 receive the challenge they need in order to further improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The majority of pupils reach challenging targets and make good progress in relation to their starting points. Children join the school with average levels of attainment while their social skills are less well developed. They make outstanding progress in the Foundation Stage because of excellent teaching and high quality care for their social development. Consequently, they join Year 1 with above average attainment and good social skills. In Years 1 to 6, pupils' progress is good overall. The greatest gains in learning are made in Key Stage 1 and overall by pupils

who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and looked after children. Standards in Year 6 are high and pupils maintain their performance in mathematics and science. Pupils' progress in English is slower and they do not always make the gains in writing that are desired. The school is now using different strategies to teach spelling, punctuation and grammar, and writing is beginning to improve.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils are confident, forthright and articulate. There are significant strengths in the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The debating society run by one of the parents prompted some pupils to argue whether we should travel on aeroplanes. Pupils' notions of fairness and justice are rewarded when Harriet Potter vanquishes the evil piper in a specially written school play. An atmosphere of care and respect for pupils as individuals makes them blossom. They thrive on the attention paid to them and, in turn, look after and appreciate others. 'As we give where we live', was joyously sung in assembly to raise money for Comic Relief. Attendance is very good and pupils enjoy being at school. They are very well behaved and show positive attitudes to learning. The school council takes elected members from across the school including the Foundation Stage. They are making a difference to the school by improving facilities and sharing in job interviews. Pupils are outstandingly well prepared citizens. Older people in the local community value the harvest parcels and the school activities they can take part in.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. In the best lessons, pupils are excited by learning and work is matched closely to their needs. High expectations result in confident, well informed pupils. Increasingly, teachers are planning work that is dedicated to improving all pupils' writing, but this is targeted particularly at pupils in Years 5 and 6. Satisfactory teaching and learning takes place when older pupils are not quite as challenged to improve as in the better lessons. Outstanding teaching in the Foundation Stage means that the children make excellent progress. Children are valued and great things are expected from them. At the same time, they are nurtured and encouraged. Meticulous planning for their learning produces a dynamic and inspirational environment.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

An outstanding curriculum supports pupils to make good progress in their academic performance and outstanding progress in their personal development. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and looked after children make outstanding gains in their learning and social development. This is because inclusion is the bedrock of the school and pupils are identified and supported thoughtfully and rigorously. Despite the size of the school, pupils are keen on and very involved in sport. They value competitiveness as well as taking part and have won notable cups and awards especially in swimming and by the girls' football team. Provision for information and communication technology has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils both enjoy and benefit from using the interactive whiteboards. Additional activities, residential

trips and a wide range of visitors enrich the pupils' learning and experience. A particular favourite is the organic garden run by parents and involving all the pupils. Music is taken seriously and over half the pupils learn to play a musical instrument.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support is good. There is a high level of commitment by staff to promote the achievement and well-being of the pupils. Spacious and well tended grounds are much appreciated and well used by the pupils. They are in a secure environment where they are well looked after and supervised. Pupils use the resources well, particularly the willow maze and the adventure playground. Arrangements for child protection meet government guidelines and risk assessments are in place to safeguard pupils. A small number of parents feel that they are not as involved as they would like. The school is determined to be as open and transparent as possible in an effort to alter these perceptions. Vulnerable pupils are very well supported and they make excellent progress. Pupils, overall, are aware of how they are doing in their work and what they need to do in order to improve. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are less confident of exactly what they need to do to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership of the school is focused on promoting the personal development and well-being of the pupils and in raising their standards still further. The headteacher has continued to raise standards and achievement and this track record has been central to planning strategies to raise the performance of pupils' writing. Inclusion is a cornerstone of the school and it is highly effective in removing barriers to learning and promoting achievement. The inspirational headteacher is supported by an excellent governing body. Although there is no deputy headteacher at the moment, managers have succeeded in creating a team who can help to run the school well. The school understands its strengths and weaknesses and shares this with staff and parents. In some cases, they judge themselves too generously and in others too modestly. Overall, parents are strongly supportive of the school and it has a good reputation in the community.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
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	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

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

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?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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?	No

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me when I came to visit. I think that your school is good and it has outstanding features. Your standards of work are high and you make good progress. You make an excellent start to your school life because of the high quality of the teaching and care you receive in the Reception Class. This is continued in Class 2. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make slower but satisfactory progress and keep up the standards reached in Key Stage 1. The school wants to raise standards even more by the time you leave school. As a result, your work in writing is beginning to improve. Your headteacher provides inspiration for you and the staff and governors so that you all work very well together.

Your personal development is outstanding. You are cared for and looked after so that you can be happy and blossom. Your attendance is very good and you love being at school. You all make an outstanding contribution to the local and global community. One of you wrote that your fundraising for Red Nose day is 'to help a child in need stop crying'.

You have already made a difference to the school through your work with the school council. You enjoy sports and music and have won many competitions. You take part in the many different opportunities on offer. You could help your headteacher and teachers make more of a difference by being very involved in your lessons further up the school and working harder to make your writing even better.