

Knowleswood Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132183
Local Authority	Bradford
Inspection number	293975
Inspection dates	7–8 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Susan Walsh

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	310
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr T Cairns
Headteacher	Mr J McGowan
Date of previous school inspection	13 January 2003
School address	Knowles Lane Holmewood Bradford West Yorkshire BD4 9AE
Telephone number	01274 778177
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an above average sized primary school. A very high proportion of families face considerable social and economic difficulties and the proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also above average in many year groups. Many children join and leave the school during the school year. Recently, the school has had to cope with the absence of some key staff but most staff are now back in school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory. Pupils' personal development and well-being are promoted well and reflected in pupils' responsible behaviour and their positive attitudes to learning. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and enable pupils to gain confidence and feel safe. School is enjoyable because as pupils say, 'teachers are kind and helpful and make learning fun'. Pupils know how to keep healthy and safe. They are proud of their school and are keen to contribute to the school community. The school gives a very high priority to caring for vulnerable pupils. However, care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall because some risk assessment procedures are too informal and need tightening up.

Overall, pupils achievement is satisfactory Children start school with skills that are well below those usually seen in children of that age. They make rapid progress in the Nursery and Reception classes because of good teaching and an interesting range of activities. Nevertheless, when pupils join Year 1 their standards are usually below average. In Years 1 to 6, pupils' progress is inconsistent and is better in mathematics than in English. Erratic attendance and pupils joining and leaving the school at different times during the school year slows progress. . By the end of Year 6, standards are below average, particularly in English. Standards in writing are the weakest; many pupils continue to have problems with structuring their writing and difficulties with spelling and punctuation.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. However, pupils do not always achieve as well they could because teachers' expectations are variable and the work set is not always closely matched to pupils' needs. Teachers' marking does not always tell pupils how to improve their work. Teaching assistants and nursery nurses contribute well to pupils' learning. The curriculum is satisfactory and offers a good range of extra-curricular activities which make a strong contribution to pupils' personal development and their enjoyment of school.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has had to deal with extensive staff absence and this has resulted in a heavy load for the headteacher and has slowed developments. The headteacher's leadership is instrumental in making sure that there is an extremely positive and supportive atmosphere in the school and that pupils who may have to face many challenges out of school are able to feel happy and settled in school. Although the school's self-evaluation is satisfactory, monitoring is too informal and does not fully involve all staff with management responsibilities in the checking of pupils' progress and the monitoring of teaching and learning. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection having improved achievement in information and communication technology (ICT). Although pupils' attendance rates are still below average, the school's checking of attendance is now very rigorous. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of the content and structure of pupils' writing, including the accuracy of pupils' spellings and their use of punctuation.
- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that teachers' expectations are consistently high, that work set matches the needs of all pupils and that marking tells pupils how to improve their work.
- Develop the management roles of all staff especially in checking and evaluating teaching and learning so they can make an improved contribution to raising standards.
- Ensure the rigour of the school's health and safety procedures.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted Inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

By Year 6, pupils' standards are slightly below average, although their achievement is satisfactory because of the progress they have made since starting at the school. Children's skills on entry to Nursery are usually well below those usually seen in children of that age. Their social skills are often weak and their speech limited. Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes especially in their personal development and the development of language. Although pupils make satisfactory progress through Years 1 and 2, the standards reached at the end of Year 2 are below average. Very few pupils reach the higher level 3 but this is improving. Standards and achievement in mathematics at the end of Year 6 have improved. Progress in Year 6 is particularly rapid in mathematics because of good teaching. In comparison, achievement in English, although slightly improved, is still slow. The presentation of pupils' work is getting better. Nevertheless, the content of pupils' writing lacks sophistication and they continue to make simple mistakes in their spellings and use of punctuation.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is a significant achievement of the headteacher and the staff team as many children start school with poor social skills. However, by the end of Year 6, most pupils are very sensible and mature. Pupils really enjoy school. They especially like practical lessons including activities that help them learn about number, carrying out experiments in science, producing artwork and using computers. They have good attitudes towards their schoolwork and usually work hard. Behaviour is good both in and out of the classroom. Pupils can be boisterous on the playground but their play is good natured and pupils report very little bullying. Any problems they have are usually sorted out very quickly. Pupils are very proud of their school and make a satisfactory contribution to the school community and the wider community. They like to do little jobs. Unfortunately, the school council is no longer active and this limits pupils' opportunities to make a greater contribution to the school community. Attendance levels continue to be below the national average but the school makes every effort to encourage pupils to attend school regularly. Pupils are aware of health issues such as the need for a balanced diet and they enjoy taking exercise. They know how to keep safe. Preparation for life after school is satisfactory, but pupils' future success is held back by weakness in their writing skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

There is an increasing proportion of lively good teaching where effective strategies make lessons interesting and enjoyable. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is particularly good. However, overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory because the quality is inconsistent. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good. Praise is used well by adults to reward pupils and boost their confidence. Teachers are good at enhancing pupils' personal development. There

are many worthwhile opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively and increasing opportunities for pupils to discuss their work and develop their vocabulary. Behaviour is usually managed very well. However, in some lessons, work is not matched carefully enough to pupils' needs and this can cause pupils to lose motivation. The quality of teachers' marking is variable and does not always tell pupils how to improve their work. When marking does tell pupils how to improve, they do not always act upon the teacher's advice and this slows progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good. The varied range of activities really engages children's interest and contributes to their good progress. In the rest of the school the curriculum is satisfactory. Teachers are beginning to link subjects together to make learning more relevant and enjoyable for the pupils, but this is at an early stage of development. Provision for ICT is much improved since the last inspection. Pupils say, 'this makes learning much more exciting'. However, literacy and numeracy work is not always planned well enough to meet the needs of all pupils and this slows progress. Provision for pupils' personal development contributes well to their understanding of staying safe and keeping healthy. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the good range of visits, visitors and clubs that effectively extend their learning experiences and contribute well to their personal skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school is a very caring community where relationships between adults and pupils are very good. Consequently, pupils feel valued and secure, and know that staff have their best interests at heart. Child protection procedures are robust and vulnerable pupils are very well supported. Good work in the 'Rainbow Room' and by the learning mentor enhances pupils' personal development. The programme of support for pupils moving to secondary school is outstanding and helps to alleviate pupils' worries about moving on. The school works well with external agencies to provide extra help for pupils with learning difficulties when this is required. However, the progress of these pupils is slowed by the lack of specific academic targets that would allow small steps in their learning to be effectively checked. Pupils' progress is regularly tracked, but the information gathered is not always used well enough to set work that meets their individual needs. While safeguarding requirements are met, some procedures for risk assessments are not as rigorous as they should be. Nevertheless, adults strive to ensure pupils understand the need to keep safe and healthy.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has ensured that the many challenges the school has to face have been dealt with appropriately whilst keeping a proper focus on academic standards. He has been pivotal in developing good links between the school, parents, other members of the local community and external agencies. While the school has made some improvements to standards and achievement, progress has been slow. The recent appointment of enthusiastic staff to new management positions offers the potential to improve the quality of leadership and management but it is too early to judge their full impact. Although the headteacher has an accurate view of the school, other staff with management responsibilities are not yet sufficiently involved in

monitoring teaching and learning or using data to check standards and achievement. Governors provide effective support but they have not made sufficient checks on the school's health and safety procedures.

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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
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	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
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	3

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	3
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?	No

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

Thank you for being so friendly and polite when we came to inspect your school recently. We really enjoyed talking to you and listened very carefully to what you had to say. I am writing to tell you what we found out.

Your school is satisfactory and is getting better. We were very impressed by your good behaviour. Well done! You enjoy school. It is clear that you really like all the trips, clubs and having fun on the playground. The younger pupils have a really good time because there are lots of exciting things to do

The people who run your school do a satisfactory job. They are good at making sure you all feel very secure and happy but we have asked your teachers to make sure that the paperwork involved in ensuring your safety is improved. Teaching is satisfactory and you told us that you find your teachers very helpful when you have problems that need sorting out. You are making satisfactory progress but the standard of some of your work is behind that of pupils in some other schools. You are doing well in mathematics and are catching up but you need to work hard with your teachers to improve the quality of your writing. To help you catch up more quickly we have asked your teachers to make sure that your work is not too easy or too hard and to tell you how to improve your work through their marking. It's really important that you help to improve your progress by attending school regularly.

We know that managers are working hard to make your school a better place but we have asked some of the other teachers to develop their management skills so they can help the headteacher even more.

I wish you well for the future.