

Victoria Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107269
Local Authority	Bradford
Inspection number	309359
Inspection dates	28–29 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Gill Hepworth

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	253
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Elaine Appelbee
Headteacher	Ms Kay Lindley
Date of previous school inspection	14 June 2004
School address	Cartmel Road Keighley West Yorkshire BD21 2RD
Telephone number	01535 210110
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger than average school is situated in an area of economic disadvantage. Nearly all pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Virtually all are learning English as an additional language; many are at an early stage. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average.

The school has been granted the Healthy Schools Award, Activemark, International Schools Award and Investors in People status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Victoria Primary provides pupils with a satisfactory standard of education. It is a friendly school that is working hard with pupils, parents and the local community to improve the quality of care and of learning for all. The headteacher, with the support of the pastoral and community manager, makes very good links with the local and wider community. As a result, the school is involved in a range of exciting and ambitious projects that promote the school and forge links with outside agencies and other establishments here and abroad. For example, the school has a curricular link with a similar school in the Punjab and a cultural link with a school in Spain. These links strongly promote pupils' personal development. Comments from parents show that they are appreciative and supportive of all the school does. Effective partnerships with parents result in the majority attending consultation evenings and children settling quickly when they start Nursery.

Standards in Year 6 are still below average but not as low as they were in English and science in the end of year tests in 2007. Achievement is satisfactory, largely due to the upswing in progress this year. However, pupils' weaker speech and language skills limit their achievements in reading and writing. Pupils' standards and achievement in mathematics and science, which previously were distinct weaknesses, have improved well. This is particularly evident in the progress pupils have made in mathematics. In English their progress is slower.

The school has appropriate arrangements to safeguard pupils and effective partnerships with outside agencies that promote their well-being. Because there are strong relationships throughout the school, pupils are happy, feel safe and have positive attitudes to learning. Pupils like school and say that it is a good place to work and play. Pupils have positive attitudes towards staying healthy. The 'Huff and Puff' activities at lunchtimes are in great demand. Behaviour is good because teachers have high expectations of how pupils should conduct themselves. The result is that pupils are ready to learn. The popular 'Job Squad' enables pupils to apply for prestigious positions of responsibility through a formal application and interview process and are rewarded with 'wages' of tokens. This does much to instill a sense of commitment and responsibility that prepares the pupils appropriately for the future.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall although there is much that is good. Common strengths lie in the good relationships between staff and pupils, the contribution of the teaching assistants, the skilful use of interactive whiteboards and the efficient way in which lessons are planned. In less successful lessons, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to share their ideas and thoughts to help to improve their speech and use of language. The satisfactory curriculum is full of additional opportunities for pupils to excel in subjects beyond English, mathematics and science. For example, effective use is made of local resources and visits to places of interest such as Abbey House Museum to enhance pupils' learning and support the school's drive to improve standards. Residential visits to Buckden House and Belgium and France give pupils opportunities to develop independence and to gain social and cultural experiences beyond the confines of their immediate surroundings. Sound leadership from the headteacher, senior leadership team and the governing body has laid the foundations on which to build future improvements. There has not been enough time for this to be converted into sustained success but the capacity for this to happen is satisfactory. The school has been a little over-optimistic in its self-evaluation but generally has good understanding of its strengths and of those areas it needs to improve. However, although the school evaluates the success of its actions, this process is not yet rigorous enough to raise standards further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children's levels of skills and understanding when they start school are well below those expected for their age especially in language and communication. Most have particularly poor language skills in English. Children soon learn classroom routines and eagerly get involved with the activities on offer. They gain confidence and are proud of their achievements. All staff work to promote children's language skills, providing opportunities for them to talk about their experiences. However, currently, staff model the appropriate language insufficiently in the role play areas to enable children to practice new words and sentence structures while playing. As a result of overall effective teaching and good levels of care, children make good progress especially in their personal development. This provides a solid foundation for learning higher up the school. The Foundation Stage leader provides good direction and all staff play their part. Recent changes to assessment procedures ensure that adults gain more information about the progress children make from entry to the Foundation Stage thus enabling them to better match activities to individuals' needs.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in speaking, reading and writing by the end of Year 6 so that all pupils' achievement in English is at least good.
- Ensure that leaders at all levels use and evaluate the outcomes of their actions more rigorously in order to raise standards.

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

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils enter Year 1 with speech and language skills that are well below those expected for their age. This slows their progress in other areas of their learning. Achievement is satisfactory overall although faster in mathematics. Standards in Year 2 are well below average in reading and writing. In Year 6 standards are below average overall and although standards are improving in English they still remain low. Pupils do however make satisfactory progress relative to their low starting points. Standards in mathematics are broadly average in Year 2 and Year 6. This is partly as a result of the setting arrangements throughout school. Progress in English is not as fast because pupils do not have adequate speech and language skills. The arrangements recently in place to improve achievement and standards in science have resulted in pupils making better progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and make similar progress to others in their year groups. The school has set challenging targets for Year 6 in 2009 and pupils in Year 5 are currently making satisfactory progress towards these.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is a strength of the school, resulting in good behaviour and positive relationships. Attendance is above the local and national average. The good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development helps create a caring and respectful community. A number of measures are in place to help pupils to become reflective and mature

young people, provide them with valuable life skills and prepare them appropriately for the next stage of their education. There are excellent opportunities for pupils to develop responsibility by undertaking jobs around the school. The school council is well established and has great influence. It gives pupils a genuine voice in helping to run the school and the opportunity to work closely with the parents' council. The school has excellent links with the community. It provides courses for parents indeed the schools' work with parents has been recognised nationally. The school places importance on promoting healthy lifestyles and, as a result, pupils eat sensibly and take regular exercise. Their mature attitudes as regards eating and exercise played a big part in the award of a National Healthy School.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

In most lessons teachers manage pupils very well indeed and ensure that behaviour is good. This is invariably achieved in a low key and informal manner but it is nevertheless very effective and helps to keep pupils keenly focused on their work. Where teaching is best staff use questions well to ensure that pupils understand ideas clearly and to challenge pupils of all abilities. In all classes teachers are mindful of the need to incorporate opportunities to extend pupils' linguistic skills. For example, there are several whole-school strategies in place to promote speaking, such as 'talk partners'. However, not all teachers maximise these opportunities equally well. Classroom layout and displays are often stimulating and attractive but not all provide a broad enough range of prompts to aid pupils with their writing and to better promote their language skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Based on the International Primary Curriculum, the curriculum has recently been reviewed. Despite its recent implementation there are encouraging signs that it is contributing to pupils' improving achievement. At the moment, provision for literacy, numeracy and science is satisfactory. However, grouping pupils according to their ability in mathematics is having a positive impact on the progress pupils are now making. The same good improvements are not yet evident in pupils' writing or their reading skills. The personal, social and health education programme contributes well to pupils' personal development and well-being. Good links with neighbouring primary schools and the feeder high school ensure that when pupils transfer they settle quickly into the routines of their new environment. The school provides a good range of extended services, including a variety of clubs held at weekends and during the holidays.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school takes good care of pupils and provides a safe environment for all who work there. This is evident in the good relationships throughout school. Pupils report that they feel safe and secure because rules are well known and followed. Security has a high priority. Adults give pupils strong advice about keeping fit, healthy and safe. Protection procedures for children, adult vetting and risk assessments are in place. Parents are pleased with the help that their children receive. The school has secure systems to track pupils' academic progress to help identify where further support may be needed and to set targets. The provision for pupils with

learning difficulties and/or disabilities is managed well by the coordinator. A number of bilingual staff provide good support for the many pupils who speak English as an additional language.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

There is a strong sense of common purpose in the school and considerable effort is being put into raising standards. The headteacher's strong leadership, well supported by the senior management team, is helping the school to improve. The excellent partnerships and the good extended schools service ensure effective provision for the most vulnerable pupils. Even though some improvement in pupils' achievement is evident, evaluation by senior leaders of their impact on improving learning lacks some urgency. The school has been successful in laying the foundations on which to build future improvements. For example, staff analyse data and track pupils' progress to enable them to implement intervention strategies, but it is too early for these to have raised standards significantly. Governors understand what needs to be done and are beginning to use the information from test data and checks on progress to evaluate pupils' achievements. This is putting them in a better position to challenge the school's performance. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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	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?	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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Inspection of Victoria Primary School, Keighley, BD21 2RD

Thank you for welcoming us so warmly on our recent visit. We very much enjoyed meeting you all. Your school is giving you a satisfactory education. I would like to share with you what the other inspectors and I found out.

These are the things we particularly liked.

- You are happy at school and enjoy lots of the activities and your interesting lessons.
- All the staff and your headteacher care for you well and encourage you to do your best. You feel safe in school and feel that there is always someone there to help you if you need it.
- You try hard to be healthy and safe. It is good to see you being so active at break times and eating so well.
- You look after each other well and enjoy helping in your school community, for example, through the school council and in the 'Job Squad'.
- You behave well and are friendly and welcoming to visitors.

I have asked the staff and governors to work together on two things.

- To help you do better in your speaking, reading and writing.
- For those adults who are in charge of the school to make sure that they check on whether the things that they change help you to improve your work.

I hope you will help your headteacher and the teachers to make these new plans work really well so that your school can get even better.