

Gildersome Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107848
Local Authority	Leeds
Inspection number	309517
Inspection dates	23–24 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Linda Murphy

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	
School	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr I White
Headteacher	Mr S Kurth
Date of previous school inspection	4 May 2004
School address	Town Street Gildersome Leeds West Yorkshire LS27 7AB
Telephone number	0113 2145426
Fax number	0

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger than average school serves an area characterised by broadly average socio-economic circumstances. The majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average, although it varies considerably between years. Higher proportions of pupils than usual join and leave the school throughout the year. Since the previous inspection the numbers on roll have declined reflecting changes in the local birthrate. From November 2007 to April 2008, the school was led by the deputy headteacher because the headteacher was absent.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Gildersome Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. It is an improving school and parents are overwhelmingly pleased that they chose this school for their children. The school places great emphasis on pupils' personal development and well-being and nurtures it well. As a result, pupils attend school very regularly, behave well and enjoy learning. They grow into caring and mature young people with a good sense of responsibility. Links with the community are good. For example, the accolade of the Stephen Lawrence Award acknowledges the school's contribution to community harmony. Pupils' contributions to their class, school and wider communities are outstanding, as seen in the way in which they have worked with the local council to improve the adjacent park.

Following the previous inspection the school experienced a period of staffing turbulence and a changing school population. Between inspections standards fell at Key Stage 1 and the school volunteered to accept extra help from the local authority. This has been beneficial and has placed the school in a satisfactory position to succeed further.

Standards, at Key Stage 2 have risen over a four year period from significantly lower than average to an average level in 2007. Inspection evidence indicates that this trend is set to continue this year, with the current Year 6 pupils being on course to reach slightly higher standards this year. At Key Stage 1, standards were below average in 2007. School data and evidence from lessons suggests that standards here are also set rise to broadly average levels. The picture of pupils' achievement over time has been skewed. This is because of past inaccuracies in assessment and because of the high proportion of pupils joining and leaving throughout each year, some who have gaps in their learning. The school has improved its assessment procedures and the way in which it uses assessment data to identify and tackle weaknesses. Consequently, progress accelerating. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, although more rapid in Years 2 and partly in Year 6, in particular, because of good teaching. The school has concentrated on improving the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level for their age and has also targeted support to pupils with learning difficulties. Higher attainers do not receive the same degree of extra help and as a result, they do not always achieve as well as they could.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory with some good aspects. Even so, it is inconsistent between classes and this means that pupils learn at differing rates. Arrangements for pupils' care, guidance and welfare are satisfactory. Staff and pupils get on well together and pupils say that they feel safe and secure in school. As a result of the guidance they receive, pupils mostly have a sound understanding of how to improve their work.

The curriculum is satisfactory. Appropriate emphasis is placed on literacy and numeracy, but the school is at the early stage of developing links between subjects. Opportunities for enrichment have been extended through a wide choice of activities being offered to pupils on one afternoon each week. Pupils look forward, for example, to developing skills at horse riding and rock climbing. Improvements in management systems and assessment are progressed by the senior leadership team. The work on tracking pupils' progress is a key factor in raising standards. Middle leaders are taking more responsibility for standards in their subjects and consequently are starting to have an increasing impact on school improvement. Senior leaders know what the school is doing well and where its weaknesses lie and are given effective support and challenge from the governing body. Nonetheless, on occasion, leaders overestimate aspects

of school life, looking ahead to expected outcomes rather than taking into account the immediate impact.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children make satisfactory progress in relation to their starting points. Over the last two years these have been typically below the expected levels for their ages and lower than at the time of the previous inspection. Transition arrangements from home to the Reception class are good and enable pupils to settle into new routines quickly. These typify the good focus on children's personal development. Effective teaching and learning based upon a satisfactory curriculum mean that pupils make steady progress but do not meet the levels expected of their age by the time they enter Year 1. Although outdoor activities take place, the accommodation makes it difficult for outdoor play to be smoothly assimilated into the daily routine because the classroom lacks direct access to the outside play area. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the achievement of higher attaining pupils.
- Ensure that teaching and learning are of a consistently high quality across the school.
- Develop the creative curriculum to include links between subjects so that pupils have increased opportunities to apply their skills and knowledge.

A small proportion of the schools where 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

Pupils, including those with learning difficulties, achieve satisfactorily. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 were below the national average in 2007, particularly in mathematics. Standards at the end of Year 6 improved from significantly below average in recent years to average in 2007, although too few pupils attained the higher level. More rigorous systems for tracking pupils' progress and improved target-setting are leading to many pupils making better progress. School data and evidence from lessons indicate that the current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are on course to reach average standards. However, higher attaining pupils could still achieve more.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Good leadership of pupils' personal development and very effective relationships in school promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils grow in self-confidence and in their ability to express their views on a range of issues. They have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. A five minute daily fruit break in the morning helps pupils to concentrate on their next lesson. Plentiful opportunities for sport help pupils to keep fit. Pupils' contribution to the community is outstanding. All pupils contribute to an annual community project and they make podcasts to help run the local community radio station. The school council is justifiably proud of its work, for example, in improving the local environment and it has successfully introduced schemes for recycling. Pupils are clear that

adult help is very readily available if they have problems or feel sad. The structured development of basic skills helps prepare pupils soundly for their next school. Pupils have time to reflect on many issues through their personal, social and health education lessons which promote empathy with others. Improving attendance is helping to raise standards and increase pupils' pleasure in learning. A typical comment from parents was, 'My child has not had a day off school all year because she loves school too much to miss it.'

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

It is because of satisfactory teaching that pupils' learn at a sound pace. Strengths are in the very good relationships which form a secure foundation for pupils' learning. Good recap of previous learning leads seamlessly into clear learning objectives for the next lesson. Good use is made of information and communication technology which, in particular, helps pupils who learn more easily from visual stimuli. Inconsistency in the spread and depth of questioning means that pupils are not always challenged sufficiently well. Even though their behaviour is good, they can at times be passive and allow others to answer questions rather than think hard for themselves. The deployment of teaching assistants does not always add all it should to pupils' learning. Lesson planning is improving, although the challenge for higher attainers is not always sufficient to make sure they achieve as well as they can.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

In Key Stages 1 and 2, an appropriate emphasis on English and mathematics is reflected in the satisfactory progress pupils make. Extra-curricular experiences, including visits and visitors enrich pupils' learning well and promote pupils' interest and enjoyment. One afternoon each week pupils experience a very wide range of activities. This creative and successful approach is not fully reflected throughout the whole-school timetable. Links between subjects are minimal and so pupils do not always have sufficient opportunities to apply their skills and knowledge. The good arrangements for pupils' personal, social and health education are central in supporting pupils' good personal development. Pupils with particular gifts and talents have been identified but the school is at an early stage of providing suitable programmes of work for them.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Parents agree that pupils are looked after sensitively and that they feel safe and secure. Arrangements for health and safety meet requirements. Staff have a good knowledge of their pupils and relationships are good. As a result, pupils are confident in the knowledge that staff will readily help them. Pupils with social or learning difficulties receive the help they need to make satisfactory progress. External agencies are used well to help with these arrangements. Recently introduced systems for monitoring the progress that pupils make are beginning to accelerate pupils' learning. This is because leaders and teachers make sure pupils who need extra help receive it. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Some variation in the use of targets and marking means that not all pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Management structures have been revised appropriately to ensure an increased focus on raising standards. The impact of this is starting to be seen in improving progress. Senior leaders have a good range of skills which complement each other well. The school promotes a good level of personal development due to clear leadership and the direction set by the headteacher. In the words of parents, 'The school has a headteacher who is very approachable.' Good support from the local authority is helping the school to use data effectively in improving standards. A detailed system of tracking pupils' progress enables leaders, managers and teachers to identify any underachievement promptly and take action. The use of this system is enabling the majority of pupils to be largely on track to meet challenging targets. However, this system is not yet used as effectively as it could be to enable the school to consistently provide the right level of challenge and support for higher attaining pupils. The role of middle leaders has expanded significantly and they value their increased accountability and the time given for them to do their jobs effectively. Although there are new procedures for whole class target-setting, these are not always monitored rigorously enough to ensure there is a consistent approach across the school. Governors are valued members of the school community and discharge their duties well. They hold the school to account with a clear focus on raising standards.

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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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
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	2
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 Gildersome Primary School, Leeds, LS27 7AB

Thank you for welcoming the inspectors to your school. Gildersome Primary School provides you with a satisfactory and improving education.

In the report, I explain the strengths which include your good behaviour, your very regular attendance and the excellent understanding you have of how to keep safe and healthy. Your understanding of how your school and local community works is outstanding and the way in which you have improved the local park is excellent. Well done!

Through effective teaching and learning your school helps you learn at a satisfactory rate. I have asked the school to make sure that all teaching and learning are the best they can be so that you all learn as quickly as possible, including those of you who learn easily. Improvements are coming about because better use is made of assessment and targets. The curriculum is satisfactory overall but is very special on the afternoon when you can do such things as horse riding and rock climbing; we know that you look forward to these activities. I have asked the school to build on this so that the curriculum is more interesting throughout every day.

Your school leaders are effective and bring together all the things they are good at to help you learn. In particular, they are good at understanding what needs to be done next to help you improve and your governors help a lot in this. You can help by using your skills in one subject to help you learn in another and by always trying hard to remember and meet your targets.