

Primrose Lane Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107869
Local Authority	Leeds
Inspection number	309523
Inspection date	12 December 2007
Reporting inspector	Keith Bardon

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	235
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr I Taylor
Headteacher	Mrs Linda Oakes
Date of previous school inspection	14 March 2005
School address	Westwood Way Boston Spa Wetherby West Yorkshire LS23 6DX
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: standards and achievement; teaching and learning; leadership and management; and some aspects of care, guidance and support. Evidence was gathered from: the school's self-evaluation; national published assessment data and the school's own assessment records, policies and minutes; observation of the school at work; interviews with senior members of staff and pupils; and the parents' questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This average sized primary school serves the local community of a small town. The social and economic characteristics of the surrounding area are mixed, but the majority of pupils come from advantaged homes. Almost all pupils are White British and there are none who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational need, is below average. The school has achieved a number of awards including Advanced Healthy School, Inclusion Chartermark, Investors in People, Investors in Pupils, Activemark and Artsmark. The school is part of the local extended school cluster group which provides additional activities for pupils and the local community. Privately managed out-of-school care is available to pupils.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Primrose Lane is a good school in which pupils achieve well. When asked if they enjoyed school pupils of different ages were in full agreement: 'I love it. It is really good.' Most parents hold very positive views of the school. 'It is easy to pick up the warm, happy atmosphere.' was a typical comment and one which the inspector fully endorses.

Children enter Nursery with skills that are generally above those expected for their age. They make good progress throughout the school to attain standards that are usually significantly above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Uncharacteristically, Year 6 pupils under-achieved in the national writing tests in 2007. A lack of progress, particularly amongst the boys, was not identified early enough. This, combined with a cohort of pupils that had historically been lower attaining than is the norm for the school, resulted in a fall in standards in English to a broadly average level. Detailed evaluation has enabled the school to put stringent measures in place to avoid this happening again. Teaching has been strengthened, procedures for assessing writing skills tightened substantially throughout the school and management strategies improved to pick up the first signs that something is amiss. As a result, pupils' progress is accelerating and standards in writing are climbing. Efforts to increase boy's interest in writing are starting to pay dividends and, while an attainment gap remains, both boys and girls are making good progress.

In contrast, standards in mathematics for this same group of pupils were above average in 2007 at the end of Year 6. This was brought about by well executed developments which focused sharply on increasing pupils' skills, particularly those needed to solve mathematical problems. After missing its targets for Year 6 pupils' performance in English in 2007 but achieving them in mathematics, the school has set very challenging targets in both subjects for 2008 and is working hard to achieve them.

Pupils' horizons are broadened exceptionally well through a number of excellent initiatives. Year 6 pupils were particularly enthusiastic about an assembly in which the headteacher had explained the school budget to them and helped them realise what influences financial decisions. They were then able to apply this to school council spending and a bid for funds for playground development. Pupils' very thoughtful appreciation of such matters demonstrates their very good level of maturity. Their preparation for future learning and life is extremely good. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. The pleasant way in which they spontaneously welcome visitors to the school clearly demonstrates their very good manners and high self-confidence. Pupils do occasionally fall out but say that, 'Teachers quickly sort things out.' Pupils agree that if they have a problem or concern they can readily approach a member of staff and get the help they need. They recognise fully the importance of eating a sensible diet and many pupils are very eager to take regular exercise.

Pupils show very positive attitudes to learning and respond very well to the good teaching they receive. They pay close attention in class and try hard to produce work of a good quality. Teachers organise lessons thoroughly, give clear instructions and make full use of interactive whiteboards to aid pupils' understanding and add interest. Praise is used regularly to acknowledge a good contribution to the lesson and the rewards pupils receive raise their self-esteem. Most lessons have a good pace and engage pupils effectively. On occasions, the activities provided are not matched fully to pupils' needs. When this happens progress slows

and some pupils are not challenged enough. Although the school has identified this as an area for development, further improvement is needed.

The curriculum is wide ranging and frequent visits to places of educational interest enrich pupils' experiences. The school has recognised the need to strengthen aspects of the writing curriculum and this is a focus of current development. French is much enjoyed by pupils, 'because we get to play lots of fun games'. Music and the arts play an important part in pupils' learning and the school is decorated with the many attractive pictures pupils have drawn or painted. Many of these have a multicultural element and show pupils' appreciation of cultures other than their own. Pupils enjoy the many clubs and extra-curricular activities that the school provides which effectively extend their learning and skills.

Procedures for safeguarding pupils meet requirements. Staff pay close attention to pupils' care and well-being. Systems for supporting pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities function effectively. As a result, these pupils make good progress and are able to participate fully in all activities. From a young age the school involves pupils in assessing their own progress. They take immense pleasure in recording their achievements in their 'Next Steps' books and evaluating how well they are doing for themselves. Pupils are given a detailed understanding of what to focus on next in order to improve in mathematics but are far less clear about how to improve their writing.

The school is led with a very clear purpose and vision. Comprehensive systems are used to check how well the school is performing and to generate priorities for development that accurately reflect its most pressing needs. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities well and play a full part in supporting and monitoring the school's work. The headteacher has led developments very effectively and the strategies that are now in place give the school a good capacity to improve in the future. The school makes a valuable contribution to the local community with a range of popular facilities, including family learning days, drop in sessions for parents and a support group for the parents of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Many children enter Nursery with skills and knowledge that are wide-ranging but generally above what is typical for their age. They are taught well in the Foundation Stage and make good progress. By the end of Reception most children meet the targets set for their age and a few have moved beyond them. Children behave well and work and play happily alongside others. They speak confidently and make a secure start along the path to effective reading and writing. When they first enter the school, children's mathematical development is often behind that of other areas. Well planned and interesting activities such as weighing out ingredients for baking, sorting buttons by colours and constructing Christmas pictures using geometric shapes, accelerate learning. As a result, by the end of Reception children's mathematical attainment often matches that in the other areas of learning. Lessons are planned well and make full use of the colourful and stimulating facilities, both in and out of doors. The Foundation Stage is managed well. Children's development is assessed and checked regularly and they progress smoothly through Nursery and Reception.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that at all times pupils of differing abilities have work that is closely matched to their learning needs.

- Ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve their writing.

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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
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	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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	2

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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?	2
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
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	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	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

Thank you very much for the very friendly greeting you gave me when I visited your school recently. Lots of you smiled and chatted to me and I felt comfortable and welcome. I thoroughly enjoyed finding out about the work you do and a special thanks to those who talked with me about the school.

Primrose Lane is a good school and I can see why you enjoy it so much. I was impressed by your excellent behaviour. It was nice that so many of you came up to talk to me and everyone I spoke to was polite and well mannered. I enjoyed my discussions with you and it is clear that you develop into very responsible and mature young people. In fact your personal development is outstanding!

You make good progress because you are well taught and work hard. Teachers plan interesting activities and give you plenty of help and encouragement. On occasions you are not challenged enough and I have asked the school to look into this. You may find teachers asking you to think even harder at times, but I know you are up to the task.

I found your 'Next Steps' books very interesting and like the way you are able to check and measure your own progress. You have a clear understanding of what you need to do to improve your mathematics and I have asked the school to look at ways of giving you an equally clear understanding of how to improve your writing. When you are given writing targets try to use them regularly and just as well as you do your mathematics targets.

Staff take very good care of you and I was pleased that you feel you can turn to them for help and advice if you need it. As I walked around the school I was impressed by the quality of your art work and enjoyed hearing how much fun Year 2 pupils have in French lessons. The school provides you with a good curriculum, from Nursery and Reception children learning the basics of reading, writing and using numbers to Year 6 pupils understanding about budgets and how to make sensible financial decisions.

Thank you once again for a very enjoyable two days and I wish you lots of luck in the future.