

# Home Farm Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131357
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bradford
<b>Inspection number</b>	315787
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Peter Howard

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	471
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Angela Pullan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr John Macdonald
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Home Farm Close Bradford West Yorkshire BD6 3NR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01274 777020
<b>Fax number</b>	01274 777020

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<b>Age group</b>	2–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This large primary school with a Nursery was opened in September 2006 as part of a reorganisation of educational provision in the area. Two schools were closed and Home Farm opened in the premises of one of the closed schools. Major building work continued during the school's first year. The school serves an area of mixed housing,. The proportion of children entitled to a free school meal is above average. The majority of pupils are White British and about one third are of a minority ethnic heritage, which is above average. A small number are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is smaller than average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. The headteacher, with good support from senior managers, has managed the process of merging two school communities effectively. While this process initially had an unsettling effect on pupils and affected their learning and progress, they are now settled into their new school. Staff are working increasingly well as a team and the partnership with parents is becoming well established. Children enter Nursery with levels of attainment that are below those expected for their age, with particular weaknesses in the basic skills of literacy and mathematical development. Pupils leave school in Year 6 with standards that remain below average overall but, given their starting points, achievement is satisfactory.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, but the progress pupils make in lessons varies throughout school. This reflects inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and assessment. In the best lessons, work is well planned to meet the needs of all pupils in the class. The more able pupils are challenged and those who find learning difficult receive well targeted support from teaching assistants. Teachers use a wide range of teaching strategies, including information and communication technology (ICT), to motivate and involve pupils in their learning. However, these strategies are not used in all classes to ensure that pupils make good progress. Within the satisfactory curriculum there is a strong focus on English and mathematics. However, it is too early to judge the impact of this on raising standards. In science, the limited opportunities to engage in practical work, and for older pupils to record their work, contribute to the particularly low standards attained.

Relationships between staff and pupils are good and pupils demonstrate an increasing sense of belonging and emerging pride in their new school. Pupils have a positive attitude towards their learning. They are attentive in lessons, which they mostly enjoy, particularly those where teaching is lively and engages their interest. Pupils' behaviour, which caused concern during last year's transition period, is now satisfactory. While pupils' moral and social development is good, they are given insufficient opportunities to develop their understanding of cultures different from their own.

This is a caring school, where staff are concerned about pupils' welfare and well-being. The school provides a settled and calm environment in which pupils generally feel safe. However, statutory requirements for safeguarding pupils' welfare are not yet fully in place. Academic guidance, based on a detailed system for recording pupils' progress, is satisfactory. However, teachers' assessments of what pupils can do are not yet consistently accurate.

Issues related to the establishment of the new school, such as building work, staffing and organisational matters, have taken up a significant proportion of the time of school leaders at all levels. Procedures to improve provision and raise achievement and standards are being implemented, although it is too early to judge their impact. The checking of teaching and learning is not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that they are consistently good. Middle managers are beginning to have an impact. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are committed, provide good support and have made a good contribution to the establishment of the school. After a period of major disruption, which was well managed and with a clear and strong commitment to raising achievement and standards, the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Lively teaching, in a vibrant setting in which displays and activities are well matched to the needs of young children ensures that they make a good start in the Nursery. Accurate assessment is used effectively to plan future learning experiences. The environment is stimulating and parents are encouraged to work closely in partnership with teachers for the benefit of their children. In Reception, assessment is not always accurate and as a result, the pace of children's learning slows down. By the end of Reception, standards in 2007 were generally below average, particularly in aspects of communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development. Children's progress through Foundation Stage is satisfactory.

The leadership of the Foundation Stage has worked effectively to create an environment where children are happy and work and play well together. Assessment issues are being addressed with support from the local authority. Children respond well to adults and their peers, demonstrating an ability to share and take turns. They understand the rules of their classrooms and demonstrate a developing responsibility for their actions.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement and standards in English, mathematics and, particularly, science in Years 1 to 6.
- Improve the quality of teaching and assessment of pupils' work by checking teaching and learning more rigorously.
- Improve pupils' awareness, knowledge and understanding of cultures other than their own.
- Ensure that all statutory obligations are met in respect to the safeguarding of pupils.

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

Standards are below average, but achievement is satisfactory. Pupils enter Year 1 with skills and knowledge that are below expectations for their age and make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2. At the end of Year 2, although pupils are consolidating their basic skills in literacy and numeracy, attainment remains below average and standards in writing are particularly low. At the end of Year 6, standards are below average. In science, they were particularly low in 2007. The latter reflects the school's focus on English and mathematics during its first year and leaders are aware of the need to place greater emphasis on science. Progress throughout Years 3 to 6 is uneven but satisfactory overall. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those of minority ethnic origin receive effective support and make satisfactory progress.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 3

The great majority of pupils enjoy coming to school and have a positive attitude towards learning. Most pupils behave well in class and around the school. Improvements to lunchtime arrangements are having a positive impact on pupils' behaviour. However, while most pupils say there is somebody that will help them if they have a problem, some continue to express

concerns about behaviour in the playground. Pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall but insufficient attention has been given to the development of pupils' awareness and understanding of those from different cultures and backgrounds. Pupils know how to make healthy choices regarding exercise and diet and make healthy choices at lunchtime. Their involvement in the community and preparation for the next stage of learning are satisfactory. Pupils take responsibility and members of the school council provide sensible ideas about how to improve aspects of the school. Attendance is below average. The school recognises the need to reduce the absence rates of some pupils.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Although the school judges teaching and learning to be good, inspectors judge them satisfactory because there is not consistently good practice throughout the school. Good relationships and high expectations of behaviour are strengths that mean pupils generally work hard, are keen to succeed and behave well in lessons. Teachers helpfully explain to pupils the objectives of lessons. However, other strategies, such as setting pupils' individual targets for improvement, new approaches to improve writing and the use of ICT, are not always implemented effectively. The good teaching is lively and creative. In some other lessons too little is expected of pupils and teaching does not fully hold their interest. Teachers do not always make effective use of their assessments of what pupils know and can do. As a result, work is sometimes not well matched to pupils' needs and they do not make the progress they should. Teaching assistants contribute effectively to pupils' learning, especially through their support of individuals and identified groups of pupils.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum provides a strong focus on English and mathematics and appropriate strategies are being introduced to raise standards in these subjects. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise these skills in other subjects. A significant investment in ICT is being made and leaders are working hard to extend staff expertise in its use. The school recognises that because of its emphasis on raising standards in literacy and numeracy in Years 3 to 6, it has not given science the attention it merits. This contributed to some underachievement in science last year. The school is now working to ensure that curricular opportunities in science are improved and standards raised. There is good emphasis on promoting good behaviour and pupils' personal development, which has had a positive impact on learning in the classroom and in improving behaviour around the school. The curriculum is enhanced with a satisfactory range of educational visits which serve to broaden pupils' learning. These include residential opportunities in Years 3 to 6, visitors to the school and visits, for example, to Skipton Castle.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 3**

Staff know pupils well and demonstrate good levels of care and concern for their well-being. The great majority of pupils feel safe in school. However, the school does not yet meet all the

statutory requirements for safeguarding pupils. In other respects there are effective arrangements in place to ensure pupils' health and safety.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are given effective support. The school has set up a sound system for recording pupils' progress, but as yet it is not consistently used to ensure that all pupils are set tasks that are well matched to their learning needs. Academic guidance is satisfactory, although setting pupils individual targets for improvement is still in the early stages of development.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher and senior managers have successfully created a school with a calm, settled atmosphere in which pupils can learn. The process of bringing two staff teams from different schools together has been well managed and staff are working collaboratively with increasing effect. A range of strategies to raise achievement and standards is being introduced, and the impact can be seen on improved pupils' learning. One example is the new approaches to the teaching of writing in Years 3 to 6. Subject leaders and middle managers are beginning to make an effective contribution to school improvement. There is a lack of rigour in some of the systems for evaluating the school's provision, for example checking on the quality of the teaching and learning. This has sometimes led to self-evaluation being too generous. However, leaders' overall self-evaluation of where the school now stands in respect to its strengths and weaknesses is generally accurate. The school has begun to set more challenging targets for pupils, but it is too soon to judge their impact. Governors played their part in establishing the school effectively, but their leadership of the school's strategic development is not yet sufficiently strong.

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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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
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 <sup>1</sup> 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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	3
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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	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

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

The inspectors who visited your school recently would like to thank you for your polite and friendly welcome. We really enjoyed meeting you and talking to you.

We were pleased to learn that, after the big changes that took place when Home Park opened, many of you are happy at school, enjoy lessons and generally feel safe. We appreciate that when everybody came together last year, some children found it difficult to behave well. However, when we visited your classrooms we were impressed by how well you behaved and listened to your teachers.

We have found that yours is a satisfactory school. The adults in school look after you well and work hard to give you interesting and helpful work to do. We think that you make a good start in Nursery and you make satisfactory progress while you are in school.

We have suggested some things for the adults to work on that would make your school even better.

- Improve how well you do in literacy, numeracy and especially in science.
- Work even harder to check that all teaching is helping you to learn as much as possible.
- Help you all to have a better understanding of people who have different backgrounds and beliefs from you.
- Make sure the school does everything expected of it when it makes arrangements to look after you and keep you safe.

You can help too, by trying your best and working hard in every lesson.

We wish you all the best for the future.