

Old Bank Junior Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107687
Local Authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	324623
Inspection dates	9–10 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Gill Hepworth

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	134
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Charles Cope
Headteacher	Miss C Walker
Date of previous school inspection	10 July 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Taylor Hall Lane Mirfield West Yorkshire WF14 0HW
Telephone number	01924 326605
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a much smaller than average school. It serves a community of mixed social and economic circumstances and attracts a significant proportion from outside the school's catchment area. Most pupils are of White British heritage but there is an above average number of pupils from minority ethnic groups, many of whom come from Eastern Europe and are Travellers. Over half of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. A well above average percentage of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Significant numbers of pupils leave and join the school during each year. Pupils in Years 1, 4 and 5 are taught in mixed-age classes. Old Bank holds the Investors in People award, the Activemark and the Healthy Schools Gold Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Old Bank is a good school with a number of outstanding features. It lives up to its aims of 'providing a secure, happy and stimulating environment where children can develop their own potential as individuals'. The school's success owes much to the headteacher whose committed leadership ensures that pupils receive good educational opportunities. Her high expectations set the standards for her team of capable staff. Excellent partnerships with a wide range of other institutions and agencies enhance the quality of provision. Pupils and parents appreciate the caring atmosphere. 'If you have a problem you can always talk to a teacher and they will help you,' agreed a group of pupils. There is an ethos of 'I can do'. This helps pupils develop confidence as they learn to work well with others in a team and enjoy contributing to the smooth running of the school.

Children arrive in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are well below those expected for their age. In the Nursery and Reception classes they make good progress and develop positive attitudes to learning as a result of the good provision. By the end of Year 6 standards in reading, writing and science are broadly average. This represents very good progress from a low starting point. Despite improved progress, pupils' mathematical skills are not as good as those in reading, writing and science. Good quality teaching ensures that pupils are interested in their lessons and there are high levels of support available for those who find learning difficult. However, pupils make better progress in some classes than others, as the teaching they receive is more effective. This high level of expertise has yet to be shared throughout the school to provide a more even rate of progress across year groups to raise standards further.

The school shows outstanding levels of care for all pupils. As a result of the positive atmosphere and high quality support, pupils thrive and their personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils' behaviour is excellent and they greatly enjoy coming to school because, as they say, 'We get a good education and we feel safe.' They have an excellent understanding of the part that food and exercise play in remaining healthy. The school's inclusive atmosphere makes a strong contribution to community cohesion. Pupils very much enjoy taking responsibility, for example by looking after the library or monitoring the telephone at lunchtime. As a result, pupils are well prepared to move on to the next stage of their education. The good quality curriculum places a high priority on developing pupils' basic skills. The emphasis on creativity adds interest, enjoyment and challenge to pupils' work and, as a result, they make good progress, particularly in reading and writing. The rigorous tracking of pupils' progress is central to their achieving well. The school keeps meticulous records of how well pupils are doing and uses the information to set challenging targets and to provide extra support for the many pupils who need it. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are, consequently, catered for extremely well.

Good quality leadership and management underpin the school's rate of improvement since the last inspection. More effective teaching strategies have led to higher standards and better achievement. Governors have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The school carefully evaluates its effectiveness and makes plans in its quest for excellence. Consequently, a shared vision gives the school its good capacity for improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

In addition to their overall weak skills on entry to the Nursery, many children have particularly poor language and social skills. The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a language-rich environment, with learning activities that are very well targeted to the needs of children. They are keen to do well and are proud of their achievements. Success is celebrated and relationships are excellent. The curriculum is enhanced by an outdoor learning environment that has been developed into a genuine classroom supporting all areas of learning. Good quality leadership ensures that adults continually assess how well children are doing, and use the information rigorously to provide appropriate challenge for their different needs. As a result of effective teaching and excellent levels of care, children make good progress. However, by the time they enter Year 1 their skills are below those expected for their age. They make particularly good progress in their personal and social development and communication, language and literacy skills, which provides a very solid foundation for learning higher up the school. Progress in their mathematical development is slower. There are very good links with parents who appreciate all that the Early Years Foundation Stage has to offer.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the rate of progress and raise standards in mathematics.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in line with the best practice in school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. From their starting points, which vary year on year, pupils make good progress throughout Key Stages 1 and 2. Inspection evidence and the unvalidated results of 2008 national tests show that by the end of Year 6 standards are average overall. While pupils make good progress in reading, writing and science progress in mathematics, although satisfactory, is slower. The school has identified this weakness and is implementing a number of strategies to boost learning and get pupils back on track but standards are still below average in this subject. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, many of which are complex, make good progress from their starting points because of the high quality support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils very much enjoy their time in school. When they enter school they are immersed into a community that really does have children at the heart of learning and they settle very quickly into school life. Pupils participate with great enthusiasm in activities both in and out of lessons. Despite the school's best efforts, attendance is average. This is due in part to some pupils taking extended breaks from education in the term and some pupils travelling with their families. Pupils are very aware of how to stay healthy, especially through eating well and being physically active. They behave in an extremely safe and sensible manner, working well collaboratively, treating each other and adults with great care and respect. The school's contribution to the community is exceptional, whether it is through pupils raising funds for charities at home or abroad or through caring for the environment. Pupils have a strong voice in school and express their views confidently. They

take on many roles of responsibility which prepare them well for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers plan their lessons carefully, based on detailed assessment of pupils' progress and paying good attention to the individual needs of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Teachers are well organised. Good relationships help create a positive learning environment. Most lessons are delivered in a lively manner with good pace and skilful management of behaviour. The result is that pupils settle well to work, understand what needs to be done and try hard. They share ideas well with others and are confident to explain their thinking. Skilled teaching assistants make an effective contribution to the learning of all pupils. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school varies. In the best lessons teachers have very high expectations of pupils and learning proceeds at a brisk pace. Teachers ensure that learning activities have the right amount of challenge for pupils to progress very well. However, this best practice is not sufficiently shared between teachers and in some lessons the pace of learning slackens. This is because some teaching does not provide the same degree of challenge for pupils who, therefore, do not make as much progress as they could. Marking of pupils' work is thorough, clearly showing them how well they have done and what they must do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is effective in meeting the needs of all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. This is a school prepared to explore new ideas for the benefit of pupils. As well as a strong focus on English, science, and information and communication technology (ICT), it offers an increasing variety of personalised learning opportunities. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical skills to raise standards. Creative and imaginative activities feature prominently in the planning of lessons. Provision for music and art play a big part in enriching the curriculum. In Years 1 and 2, teachers work closely with the Early Years Foundation Stage to develop basic skills providing, as stated in the school aims, opportunities for pupils to 'develop their own potential as individuals'. A wide range of extra learning activities, including a residential visit, appeals to the interests of many pupils and adds to their enjoyment of school. In addition, pupils have the opportunity to learn French.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Staff are fully aware of pupils' individual needs and pupils are happy to approach them with concerns because they know they will receive help. The support given is excellent in promoting pupils' personal development and good academic progress. These aspects have been strengthened owing to the need to accommodate the high numbers of pupils who arrive at irregular intervals throughout the school year especially those from Eastern Europe and of Traveller origin. The nurture group provides special support for pupils with specific learning needs. The breakfast club gives pupils a good start to the day. Arrangements are in place to

promote child protection, health and safety. Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements. Careful diagnosis and tailored support, including that of outside agencies, ensure that those pupils who speak English as an additional language or who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress alongside their peers. There are excellent systems in place to check and maintain pupils' progress and, from these, challenging targets are set.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Together with the deputy headteacher and senior staff, the headteacher has created a common sense of purpose among staff. Initiatives to raise standards are top priority. As a result, effective assessment strategies have been introduced and prompt interventions made to speed the progress of any pupils who might underachieve. The impact is seen in the good progress made by pupils towards their targets and in their sense of security and well-being. Effective teamwork and mutual respect for each other contribute to a lively learning community where staff have good access to training and are open to new ways of doing things. The senior leadership team is actively involved in the process of self-evaluation and this is underpinned by rigorous monitoring and evaluation of performance. As a result, the school is aware that standards in mathematics are not yet high enough and it has drawn up plans to address specific areas of weakness within them. Community cohesion is good. The school has well-established links with the local schools. There are developing links with a school in Hungary which is the home country of a number of the pupils. This is making a significant impact on pupils' understanding of and respect for diversity. The school underestimates the quality of some aspects of its provision because it sets high standards for itself. Governors are very supportive of the school. They are well informed and offer it good levels of challenge and support. The school provides good value for money.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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?	1

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	2
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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

I would like to thank you for the warm welcome you gave me. I very much enjoyed talking to you about your work, speaking to the staff and joining you in lessons.

Yours is a good school. This is what I judged to be good.

- You make good progress in all your classes. You reach average standards in reading and writing.
- Those of you who are in the Nursery and Reception classes get off to a good start because the adults plan lots of fun things for you to do.
- Your classrooms are very busy places, where it is good to see you all working hard and trying to do your best. It is clear you really enjoy school.
- Your headteacher and staff run the school well.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you should be proud of the way you look after each other.
- You know a lot about healthy eating and take lots of exercise to keep fit.
- Your teachers make lessons interesting and you know what to do next to improve your work.
- You have a good curriculum which is made even better by the visits, visitors and extra clubs you attend. I was impressed with the very attractive artwork around school.
- You feel safe in school and adults take very good care of you.
- Your school has excellent systems for checking that you make enough progress every year.

I feel that the school could do even better, so I have asked the headteacher and other staff to do the following things.

- Ask your teachers to share ideas with each other about how they can help you learn well and provide even more exciting and challenging activities for you to do in the classroom.
- Make sure you do even better in mathematics.

You can help with these improvements by continuing to work hard and remaining the happy and smiling young people you already are.