

Otley The Whartons Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107881
Local Authority	Leeds
Inspection number	324667
Inspection date	19 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Roger Gill

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	199
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 Steve Richings
Headteacher	Mr J Vincent
Date of previous school inspection	12 October 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	The Whartons Otley West Yorkshire LS21 2BS

Age group	5–11
Inspection date	19 November 2008
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Telephone number
Fax number

01943 465 018
01943 465 180

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' achievements in relation to the school's judgement that teaching is outstanding; the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage; and the way that school self-evaluation is conducted. Evidence was gathered from the school's judgements about attainment on entry, the school's evidence about provisional results in 2008, teachers' records, observations of teaching, pupils' current work and discussions with senior managers, pupils and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence that the school's own assessments of these aspects, as given in its SEF, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

This is a broadly average sized school situated in a semi-rural and relatively advantaged area outside Otley. Most pupils live in the immediate locality, but increasingly other pupils travel from further afield. The vast majority of pupils are of White British origin. An average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, which is much higher than it was in 2005. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) comprises a Reception class. There is an after school club on site, which is run by a private provider and did not form part of this inspection. The school possesses the National Healthy School and Activemark Awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school that has maintained, and improved on, its high level of provision since 2005. Parents hold very positive views of the school. 'We couldn't wish for a better start for our children,' is typical of their opinions. According to them, pupils often go home saying that they have had a, 'brilliant day'. This is understandable given the school's exciting curriculum, its first-rate teaching and the enormous regard for pupils' personal development. Daily life in school includes fascinating assemblies, very positive relationships, a wealth of exciting things to do outside lessons – including yoga, ice-skating and keeping chickens – and an inspiring introduction to global issues such as sustainability. All of which ensure that pupils enjoy school to the maximum, keep very healthy and possess outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Behaviour is exemplary because the vast majority of pupils act responsibly as a matter of course without needing prompts. As a result, pupils feel very safe and confident in school. They are fired up by the many rewards and incentives. These have very effectively promoted self-discipline and a deep-seated regard for other people.

Inspection evidence shows that standards in 2008 at the end of Year 6 were above average and exceptionally high at the end of Year 2, particularly in reading and writing. Standards in previous years were often exceptionally high at the end of both key stages. Most pupils progress at a rapid rate, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The proportion of pupils who find learning difficult has doubled over the last few years owing to the school's good and growing reputation for meeting their needs very well. They often join the school in Years 3 to 6 partway through their primary education. A team of well-trained teaching assistants support these pupils extremely well. These pupils feel immensely positive about their learning. They reach standards that represent a major advance from their starting point, whether in academic terms or in relation to their behaviour.

Currently, pupils in Year 2 are outstripping the expectations for their age at a fast rate because the excellent teaching in Years 1 and 2 has boosted their progress greatly. In Year 6, all pupils are moving swiftly towards ambitious targets designed to place the majority at, and many above, expected levels. This is because teaching in Years 3, 4 and 5 has been so steadfast in developing learning and in Year 6 it helps pupils make even faster progress. The pace of progress is not quite always so fast in writing. Pupils invariably communicate their ideas clearly, but their punctuation and their lack of the adventurous use of vocabulary are relative weaknesses. The school appreciates this, but its strategies to tackle it are new and have not yet taken full effect. This is particularly the case for more able pupils, in Years 3 to 6.

Leadership and management are outstanding because of their compelling influence in every area of the school. For example, superb arrangements for care, guidance and support enable pupils' personal development to be top quality. Moreover, strong efforts to respond to the changing profile of pupils, with a range of different needs, have produced a school where achievement is outstanding. Teamwork between the highly effective governors, the senior managers and the staff is remarkable. It is steered expertly by the vision and magnetism of the headteacher, which results in adults and pupils feeling proud of their achievements and doing things for themselves. The school's self-review is thorough and accurate. All interested parties, including parents and pupils, make valuable contributions. The slight over emphasis in the self-evaluation on the changes in standards as opposed to pupils' first-rate achievements, means that the school tends to undervalue its overall effectiveness. Nevertheless, these are marginal features in an otherwise accurate picture of the school.

The school has fulfilled its potential for further improvement, as judged in 2005, in implementing a good system to track pupils' academic progress using computer software. The work on sustainability, the use of the locality to support the curriculum and the perspective pupils get from their residential visit to Hexham, all represent good provision for community cohesion. These aspects and the school's success in maintaining high achievement signify excellent value for money and an outstanding capacity to progress even further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The quality of the EYFS is excellent. Learning and development in Reception is led and managed expertly. As a result, children achieve very well across all areas of learning. Children's personal development is excellent because arrangements for their welfare are strong. Over the last three years, there has been a slight change in the skills possessed by children when they start in Reception. Currently, children's skills on entry is broadly in line with national expectations, partly because children's personal development and their early skills of reading and writing are a little lower than they used to be. Nevertheless, teaching has adapted very well to new demands and the majority of children reach expected levels for their age by the end of the year with many doing better than that in personal development and communication, language and literacy. Provision is successful because learning is so well organised, allowing children to choose their own activities and to receive direct teaching in small groups. For example, freely chosen tasks, such as making puppets or laying bricks to make a house for the three bears, stimulate very good personal development and stretch children's thinking. Very well taught sessions on letters and their sounds ensure that the early stages of reading are grasped thoroughly. Children's learning is assessed in great detail and their progress is tracked in ways that make sure that their next steps are planned with precision. Parents are justifiably delighted with the way their children learn and with the links between home and school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve achievements in writing, particularly for those older pupils who are capable of higher attainment.

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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?	1
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	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Achievement and standards

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

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	1
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 learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
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?	1
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	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

Inspection of Otley The Whartons Primary School, Otley, LS21 2BS

Thank you for your help when we inspected your school. My colleague and I thoroughly enjoyed our day with you all. As soon as we walked around the building and saw the superb displays of your work and photographs of the vast array of activities that you do, we knew we were in a school with a lot to offer.

This report tells everyone that you go to an outstanding school, but you know that already because many of you were given the same message three years ago. What is more, you are achieving as well now as the pupils were then.

Apart from your learning in lessons, I was particularly impressed by your personal development and the way you are so well looked after. I found it fascinating to talk to some of you about your work and what you enjoy most. You certainly have a healthy outlook, are free from bullying and take part in school activities with great enthusiasm. Most impressive was how keen you are about The Whartons and things such as sport, residential trips, clubs and looking forward to your new hens laying eggs. Furthermore, the children in the Reception class are lucky to have such a well-equipped, organised and appealing classroom in which to work.

You say that your teachers are very helpful and that your headteacher makes sure that the school is worthy of, 'top marks'. You do your best by behaving thoughtfully and taking a leading role in school life. Apart from the school council and house teams, several of you run clubs for other children, which is a brilliant contribution. Your school is forward looking in the way that you are learning how to conserve the planet's resources and to become valuable citizens of the future.

I know everyone wants to do even better and I have asked your school to do one thing to help. Your headteacher needs to make sure that the writing produced, particularly by children in Years 3 to 6, is always as good as it can be in terms of punctuation and the words used. This is to help you improve your writing so that it becomes even better than it is now. You can all help by trying to achieve your targets for writing and remembering the interesting vocabulary that professional authors use.