

Ashlands Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107277
Local Authority	Bradford
Inspection number	336853
Inspection dates	10–11 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Marie Cordey

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 of pupils on the school roll	359
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Matt Bacon
Headteacher	Mrs Eileen Fitzpatrick
Date of previous school inspection	7 October 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 13 lessons and spent 50% of their time observing learning. They held meetings with the chair of governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including the school's updated self-evaluation evidence, the school improvement plan, internal and external monitoring of the school and 154 parental questionnaires, 100 pupil questionnaires and 12 staff questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the extent to which all pupils make progress and enjoy their learning, particularly in the subjects of writing and mathematics
- the quality of teaching and assessment to support learning
- outdoor provision and how well children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make progress
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels.

Information about the school

The school is larger than average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. There is a very small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision for children in the Reception classes. The school has achieved Healthy School status and the Artsmark for its provision in art.

Nursery provision and before- and after-school care are located at the school which are not managed by the governing body and did not form part of this inspection. A separate inspection report for this provision is available on the Ofsted website.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is an outstanding school where each pupil is cared for exceptionally well. Many pupils say, 'I love it here. I feel safe and looked after.' Their parents comment, in their words, on the 'excellent leadership of the headteacher who provides such a fantastic education for our children'. Spirited and uncompromising leadership and management involve all staff in driving the school's commitment to the personal and academic development of every pupil. Exemplary behaviour and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are displayed by these joyful and confident young people because they are held in such high regard. Pupils respect and celebrate people from different backgrounds, both in their community and internationally. Equality of opportunity for all and tackling discrimination are non-negotiable aspects of the school's character and they are promoted exceptionally well.

The quality of teaching is consistently good across both key stages and some is outstanding. On occasions, however, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to explore ideas and discuss their learning. The good teaching, along with an inspiring curriculum and pupils' extremely positive attitudes, ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve outstandingly well. They thoroughly enjoy their learning and make excellent progress to reach high standards in all subjects when they leave school. 'The teachers are great', say many pupils. Pupils and their parents welcome the many visits, visitors and after-school clubs provided by the school. 'Brilliant and life enhancing', sum up many parents' views.

The school has an accurate understanding of its strengths as well as what is needed in order to improve further. Some improvements to the outdoor provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage have already taken place, but leaders and governors realise that more needs to be done. The governing body is well led and focused on school improvement. The school has acted effectively on the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection, particularly in improving the curriculum and the quality of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. These developments demonstrate the school's good capacity to sustain further improvement. The school provides excellent value for money.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase opportunities for pupils to explore ideas and discuss their learning.
- Improve children's skills and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - enriching the quality and purpose of the outdoor provision.

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Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils achieve very well and enjoy learning particularly in lessons where they are active and involved. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils thrived in their individual tasks and were proud to be given the chance to work both independently and in small groups. One pupil spoke for many with the words, 'I really enjoy learning lots of stuff'.

Pupils' attainment is high and improving further. They make excellent progress from their average starting points in Key Stage 1. This progress is maintained in Key Stage 2 where standards are high in English, mathematics and science. Standards in writing were above average last year but lessons are increasingly well planned in order to focus on improving pupils' writing skills and, consequently, attainment is now high. The 'Igniting Writing' innovation revitalised and energised pupils' imagination and writing quality. More able pupils are stimulated and challenged; they make similarly excellent progress as others. Vulnerable pupils are rapidly identified and provided with excellent, sharply focused support. At the same time, they appreciate and share in the joy of learning because they are motivated and involved. Marking is up to date and pupils know what to do to improve their work in most lessons.

Pupils feel safe and are aware of potential dangers, such as the busy main road. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and are keen participants in the many sports activities on offer. Pupils welcome opportunities to take on responsibility and take great pride in, for instance, their roles on the school council. They make excellent contributions to the school and local community and are further developing their good contributions to the wider community. Pupils' good attendance reflects their enjoyment of school life. Exceptionally good preparation for secondary education, high standards and their very good social skills all contribute to preparing pupils outstandingly well for the future.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Well-planned lessons offer a range of activities which engage pupils' interests. For instance, Year 5 pupils enjoyed acting and energetically participating in 'drama games' to deepen their knowledge and understanding of character. Lots of activities, meaningful and enjoyable tasks and extremely positive relationships characterise lessons. In a small number of lessons, teachers work harder than their pupils and learning is slower because pupils do not have enough opportunity to explore ideas. One-to-one sessions and small group work with skilful teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities very well and help them learn very effectively. Occasionally, teaching assistants are under-used, especially when the teacher is introducing the lesson.

The major thrust of the wide-ranging curriculum is to generate enjoyment of learning. A typical comment from parents was, 'My daughter has had a great time.' The revitalised curriculum has been extremely effective in improving standards. Excellent provision for information and communication technology (ICT) leads to broader learning across subjects as well as in ICT itself. The provision for art and for pupils to ponder and reflect is exceptional. Pupils of all ages have enquiring minds and develop an abiding curiosity for learning. This is because the curriculum is challenging and fosters intellectual and philosophical enquiry. The school environment is enlivening, dynamic and very attractive because of the numerous examples of pupils' work on display.

Staff know each pupil very well and they are all valued as individuals. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make outstanding progress because of innovative and carefully planned support; vulnerable pupils develop their confidence and self-esteem through role play and the many booster classes and individual support that is provided. The school works very effectively with outside agencies, such as speech and language therapists, to meet individual needs.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1

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The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1
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How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, acting deputy headteacher and governors are relentless in their drive to improve outcomes for each pupil. Meticulous tracking of pupils' performance means that work is well adapted to meet pupils' requirements and pupils meet, and often exceed, their challenging targets. This is communicated well to parents, both through their child's work and on the school's website. Parents are extremely supportive and involved in the school's work.

The care and welfare of pupils are paramount and governors ensure that safeguarding procedures meet current requirements. The school is extremely active in the local community and works very closely with the local network of schools to improve its work further. Community cohesion is actively promoted and the school has correctly identified the need to evaluate its strong contribution and further develop its links with the wider community. Excellent partnerships with local residents and community groups lead to an exceptionally strong focus on pupils' personal and academic development. School self-evaluation is mostly accurate and has led to effective monitoring of the school's performance.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good and improved progress from their broadly average starting points in

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the areas of communication, language and literacy, and problem solving, reasoning and numeracy. Good overall progress is made in their personal, social and emotional development because of good arrangements to welcome children to the setting and the good care provided for them. A broad range of well prepared indoor activities encourages children to explore and enjoy their learning. Good and sometimes outstanding teaching ensures that children become very skilful in linking sounds and letters and playing and learning, particularly when using role play. Limitations in the outside space and fewer resources mean that children are not always fully engaged or enthusiastic about outdoor play. Consequently, their opportunities to explore and develop physically and improve their knowledge and understanding of the world are restricted. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader and the school are aware of what is required to improve further and develop children's learning. An action plan is in place and agreed by governors to improve outdoor provision in order to secure that improvement. Children are well cared for and requirements regarding their welfare, health and safety are fully met. Good leadership and management put the setting in a good position to improve provision further.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parents who responded were happy with the school's provision and indicated that their children enjoyed school. The vast majority of parents also agreed that the school helped their child to have a healthy lifestyle and that the school met their child's individual needs. There were a few concerns about behaviour but inspectors found no evidence to support these.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ashlands Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 129 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 359 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	77	60	46	36	3	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	93	72	35	27	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	58	45	61	47	9	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	67	52	54	42	5	4	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	84	65	39	30	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	69	53	55	43	4	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	63	49	60	47	4	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	72	56	46	36	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	64	50	62	48	3	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	58	45	54	42	10	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	55	43	59	46	11	9	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	95	74	31	24	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	84	65	43	33	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



Dear Pupils

It was a privilege to visit your school. The inspection team thoroughly enjoyed talking to you all and listened carefully to what you had to say. You told us how happy you are at school and your enjoyment was infectious. We all thoroughly enjoyed our time with you. Yours is an outstanding school. You are exceptionally well behaved, polite and welcoming. Well done to each one of you! Like you, we were impressed by how many interesting things there are to do and the excellent displays of your work around school.

You help and care for each other. Younger children settle down well in the Reception classes and you make sure that older pupils look after the younger ones. I think that you make a very important contribution to your future because you are very good communicators, your work is very good and you are confident young people.

You are very keen to learn and this helps you to produce excellent work and achieve exceptionally well. You enjoy lessons most when you are given the chance to develop your own ideas. We have asked your teachers to give you more opportunities to do this. We would also like the outside area to be made more interesting and exciting for children in the Reception classes. Your headteacher and all the staff are working very hard to make your school even better. I wish you every success for your future.

Yours sincerely

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