

Lothersdale Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121409
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	327480
Inspection date	9 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Kathryn Dodd

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	99
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 S Brown
Headteacher	Mrs Mary Hastings-Trew
Date of previous school inspection	16 January 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Lothersdale Keighley West Yorkshire BD20 8HB

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	9 October 2008
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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: the achievement of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS); the quality of the teaching and learning; the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance, particularly in relation to sustaining and building on the strong performance reported in the previous inspection. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation, nationally published assessment data, the school's records of pupils' progress, observations of lessons, break and assembly, the school's plans for further improvement and evidence of their impact on pupils' achievement. Discussions were held with pupils, staff and governors, and questionnaires returned by parents were considered. 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. These have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Almost all of the pupils at this smaller than average sized community school are from White British family backgrounds. The school serves the village of Lothersdale and the surrounding rural area. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, and there are no pupils with a statement of special educational need. The school makes provision in its EYFS for Reception-age children. Most pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. The school is accredited with a wide range of awards including: Activemark Gold, Basic Skills Quality Mark, Inclusion Quality Mark, Eco-Schools Bronze, Healthy Schools and Financial Management Standards in Schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Lothersdale Primary is an outstanding school, providing excellent value for money.

Pupils thrive in the extremely happy, very warm and caring setting, so that they achieve exceptionally well, both academically and in their personal development.

Excellent partnerships with parents, within the locality and with other schools, help pupils to feel a keen sense of belonging to their vibrant school and to the local community. The school enjoys a very good reputation. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive. They say that they 'could not wish for anything better for their children'. Many say that this reflects the genuine commitment and total dedication of everyone to the achievements and welfare of each and every child.

Outstanding teaching and learning ensure that pupils of all ages, including those in the EYFS and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make first-rate progress. Results of national tests at the end of Year 6 are impressive. Standards in English, mathematics and science have been exceptionally high for several years. Currently, these very high standards are continuing to rise still further and progress is outstanding. Pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to exceed the very challenging and aspirational targets they have been set. This accelerated progress links directly to teachers' consistently high expectations of pupils. Teachers' infectious enthusiasm, meticulous planning of work and clear organisation, along with very purposeful activities, makes learning lively, fun and really stimulating. Skilful questioning keeps pupils on their toes. Teachers' guidance about presenting work in an exemplary way contributes very well to pupils' rapid learning gains and to their excellent attitudes. Pupils say that they have to work hard but are also very keen to do their best. Highly skilled teaching assistants make a consistently strong contribution to pupils' outstanding achievement, particularly to offer support to those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The curriculum is outstanding. It is tailored exceptionally well to meet pupils' varying learning needs and to reflect the wide range of ages and abilities in each class. The abundant range of national and local awards achieved reflects the impressive breadth and quality of provision. Pupils particularly appreciate the wonderful range of enriching activities, especially the many and various clubs. Opportunities to take part in both sporting and musical activities, in and out of school, are another notable feature. Pupils say that these are some of the reasons why they enjoy school so very much. Making sure that pupils are equipped particularly well with the life skills they need to be successful beyond their primary education has a high priority in the curriculum. This reflects, for example, in the advanced skills that pupils gain in aspects of information and communication technology, such as in digital animation. Opportunities to raise pupils' self-esteem and aspirations, and to celebrate and value their achievements, are never overlooked. Through activities such as fund-raising, pupils develop a keen sense of awareness of why it is important to help those less fortunate around the world.

Care, guidance and support for pupils are outstanding. Pupils' confidence and maturity are seen in the ease with which they discuss their learning sensibly together and communicate with staff and visitors. They are especially respectful towards one another and to adults, and they behave exceptionally well. Pupils feel very safe because of the warmth, care and encouragement that staff radiate. Appropriate safeguarding arrangements are fully in place.

A key factor in the school's success is the inspirational and visionary leadership of the headteacher. Providing a fully inclusive and high quality learning environment, so that pupils

reach their full potential, is constantly in firm view. All staff and governors share this 'corporate vision' and strive to meet it with equal determination. The professionalism, commitment and dedication of everyone make a significant contribution to the school's success. This is a school that knows itself particularly well and has accurately evaluated its own effectiveness. Nevertheless, there is no complacency. Rigorous analysis of the school's performance by leaders, managers and governors pinpoints improvement priorities very swiftly and precisely. Regular consultations with staff, parents and pupils give a further accurate steer. Actions are consistently well thought through, planned meticulously and their impact and success are monitored and reflected upon, at every step. No stone is left unturned when it comes to seeking further opportunities for helping pupils to achieve even more. Since the previous inspection, the school has gone from strength to strength, building successfully on its track record of consistently reaching very high standards. The capacity to continue to improve further is, therefore, outstanding.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

When children join the Reception class their skills are broadly typical for their age. The extremely warm and caring relationships between adults and children, the outstanding regard for welfare, along with a bright and lively learning environment indoors and outside, fire children's imaginations and ensure that they quickly develop a real thirst for learning. As a result of outstanding teaching and a curriculum that is uniquely tailored to meet young children's varying needs and special interests, children make outstanding progress in their learning. By the time they start Year 1, the vast majority are working beyond the level expected nationally for their age. Teachers and support staff work together very closely to assess children's progress. They record carefully their small steps in achievements and plan the future based on this knowledge. Consequently, learning builds very effectively on what children can already do. Children's personal, social and emotional development is particularly notable. Adults make the most of every opportunity to help children to learn to get along well together, to talk about their learning and develop their independence. Children are already well aware that their contribution is valued highly. They play a full and active part in school life. Consequently, they grow in confidence and behave especially well. Leadership and management of the EYFS is outstanding, building very successfully on the quality of provision since the previous inspection.

What the school should do to improve further

- There are no significant areas for improvement beyond those already identified in the school's own plans.

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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	1
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	1
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?	1
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 Lothersdale Community Primary School, Keighley, BD20 8HB

Thank you so much for the extremely warm welcome you gave me when I inspected your school. I thoroughly enjoyed being part of your school and you helped me to see why you enjoy it so very much. You were all extremely keen to talk to me and answered all my questions very thoughtfully, politely and maturely. I particularly enjoyed joining in your whole-school assembly. I was very impressed with just how much you know about why it is important to help others less fortunate than yourselves in other parts of the world.

You get lots of chances to learn by taking part in exciting activities, both in and beyond school, such as sporting activities or clubs, for example the Animation Club. These are some of the reasons why you told me you like school so very much. All the adults care a great deal about you. They keep a very close eye on just how well you are getting on and this is helping them to make sure you do as well as you can. They give you lots of encouragement to grow in confidence and to help you to celebrate your successes, such as when you receive, Lothersdale Legend certificates. I enjoyed hearing about all the chances you have to make your school a healthier, happier and safer place to learn. You are so very kind and caring and your behaviour was excellent. No wonder you feel so safe and happy in school.

Your parents told me just how pleased they are with your school too. I agree with them. Your school is an outstanding school. You reach very high standards by Year 6. The rate at which you learn is also very fast. These very high standards and your wonderful attitudes to your learning are the reasons why you are so well prepared for secondary school. Everyone, rightly, is very proud of your achievements. Even though the adults who work at your school know that you do really well in your learning, they still search for ways to improve your school, so that it continues to get better all the time.

With my very best wishes for a bright future and I hope that you are successful in raising the necessary funds to buy your Shelter Box.