

Lothersdale Community Primary School

Lothersdale, Keighley, West Yorkshire, BD20 8HB

Inspection dates 15–16 July 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The headteacher, with the support of staff and governors, provides outstanding leadership and management.
- Pupils make rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics. They reach standards that are well-above average and have done so for a number of years.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is a major strength of the school.
- While over time pupils make rapid progress in mathematics occasionally the work set for less able pupils is too hard for them to do and the pace of their learning slows.
- Teaching is never less than consistently good and often outstanding. Teachers do all they can to make work not only interesting but also exciting.
- Behaviour is excellent. Pupils are very proud of their school. They say they feel very safe.
- Pupils' enjoyment of learning can be seen in their high attendance.
- The school is valued highly by parents.
- The headteacher is very skilful in supporting staff to improve their practice and in developing their areas of responsibility. As a result middle leaders carry out their duties very well, contributing to the school maintaining the outstanding quality of teaching and pupil achievement identified at the previous inspection.
- The governing body is highly supportive of the school but at the same time provides a very strong level of challenge.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out following a complaint made to Ofsted which raised serious concerns. Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector decided that an inspection of the school should take place to follow up the whole-school issues that were raised regarding whether pupils are safe and if safeguarding procedures meet requirements. The concerns expressed to be followed up as part of a Section 5 inspection.
- The concerns about pupils’ safety and safeguarding arrangements were investigated.
- The inspectors observed nine teaching sessions. The inspectors also made a number of shorter visits to classrooms, looked at a wide range of pupils' work and listened to them read.
- Discussions were held with several groups of pupils, the Chair and other members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and members of staff, including senior leaders and other leaders with particular responsibilities.
- The responses from 35 parents to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were considered. There were technical issues relating to parents not being able to access some aspects of the questionnaire. The results from the school’s own consultations with parents were considered and inspectors spoke to several parents.
- The responses from staff questionnaires were also considered.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a range of documents, including information on pupils’ current progress, the school’s plans for improvement, the management of teachers’ performance, the use of pupil premium funding and additional sport funding as well as documentation and records relating to pupils’ behaviour and safety.

Inspection team

Geoffrey Yates, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Pauline Pitman

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by school action is well-below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well-below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium funding is very low. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and for children that are looked after by the local authority.)
- The very large majority of pupils are from a White British heritage.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The headteacher is currently supporting another school in order to help it to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that in mathematics lessons the progress less able pupils make does not slow because they are not sure what to do and despite their best efforts the work is too challenging.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Over time all groups of pupils make rapid progress and achieve exceedingly well.
- The stage of development of children starting school in the Early Years Foundation Stage is typical for their age. During their time in school pupils, including the most able, maintain very high standards in their work. This results in levels of attainment at the end of both key stages being high. Over a number of years over half of all pupils reach standards in reading, writing and mathematics well above those usually found. Inspection information shows this continues to be the case.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make rapid progress. They benefit from teaching that is of an outstanding quality and are keen to learn new skills. For example, investigative skills are developed well by children using a web-cam to observe blue tits in a nest in the school grounds. One child's observation included the comment, 'The daddy bird was getting food because the mummy needs more energy.' Children confidently use their skills in linking letters and the sounds they make (phonics) in reading words.
- The number of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has improved to be above the national average. Older pupils say they get plenty of chances to read and enjoy reading.
- Pupils use these skills very well in other subjects. For example, in history, older pupils write well-scripted letters expressing their view as to where the remains of King Richard 111 should be buried. One pupil commented, 'He died for his county and that county was Yorkshire, therefore he should be buried in York.'
- The most able pupils benefit from an increasing level of challenge as they move through the school and make rapid progress, for example, by being taught in upper Key Stage 2 in groups based on prior attainment with the expertise of a teaching assistant being used very well.
- Disabled pupils, including those who have special educational needs, make the same rapid progress as their classmates because the support they receive is well-matched to their needs.
- Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium funding also make strong progress. In Year 6 in 2013 there were no pupils eligible for premium funding in the cohort or at the end of Year 2; therefore no validated judgement can be made about attainment. In the rest of the school there is no gap between what pupils eligible for free school meals achieve and what other pupils in the school achieve in English and mathematics.
- There is a very good level of participation in physical education. These include out-of-school sporting activities and experiencing new sports. Pupils are developing healthy lifestyles; they understand the importance of being as healthy as possible.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Pupils say the best thing about school is their teachers. Inspectors found that teaching is never less than good and often outstanding, and work in pupils' books indicates that, over time, pupils make sustained and rapid gains in their skills and knowledge; as a result they achieve outstandingly well.
- In mathematics, occasionally the work set for the less able pupils is over ambitious and this slows the progress they make. For example, pupils sometimes find the wording of calculation questions difficult to understand and as such their progress is limited until they receive help.
- Learning is very well planned; for example, pupils are given plenty of opportunities to write for a range of purposes including a report of a play performed by pupils. One pupil's writing included the opening comment, 'The hullabaloo of the audience as the spectacular play started was ---.'
- The school makes very good use of visiting staff with skills in music and physical education.
- Relationships in lessons are exceptionally positive. The emphasis given by teachers to encouraging pupils to make contributions during lessons is very effective. As result pupils are

articulate and explain their ideas well.

- Teachers' subject knowledge is excellent as is their checks on pupils' work to judge how well pupils are doing. For example, in reading sessions, teachers are adept at allowing pupils to talk about why they like the book they are reading and in helping them find out the meanings of difficult words.
- A major part in successful teaching in ensuring pupils make the progress they do is the work done by teaching assistants. They know the importance of allowing pupils to think things out for themselves before providing support.
- Children are very keen to learn in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where teaching is outstanding.
- There are many examples of comments in teachers' marking which provide very clear guidance on how pupils should improve their work. Teachers provide very good opportunities for pupils to reflect and respond to the advice given.
- Parents spoken to during the inspection are pleased with the high quality of teaching in the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils are very polite and friendly and are willing to share their experiences about school. For example, younger pupils say they enjoy finding out about the importance of protective clothing as part of the work done linked to the 2014 Tour de France cycle race passing through the local area.
- Pupils have exceptionally positive attitudes to learning. They are invariably absorbed in work in lessons and this love of learning enables them to make excellent progress. Pupils and parents agree that behaviour is of a high standard.
- Behaviour around the school is of a very high standard, pupils say thank you when other pupils hold open a door for them and conduct themselves exceptionally well. On both days of the inspection pupils took part in an assembly and a concert for parents, their behaviour and attitudes were impeccable.
- A scrutiny of records, and observations during the inspection, show that behaviour over time is outstanding. Isolated incidents of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with well.
- Pupils respond well to the opportunities provided for them to take on school responsibilities. These include being a member of the school council or Eco group.
- Pupils' pride in what they do can be seen in the way they present work very well. They persevere with tasks very well and are keen to help each other. They are proud of 'their' school and all it does.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Inspectors found no evidence to support the concerns expressed in the complaint made to Ofsted.
- Record keeping and follow-ups with parents about safety issues including minor bumps and bruises are effective. For example, any pupil who bumps her/his head is given a sticker which says, 'I have bumped my head today.'
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe and are very confident that any issues they raise will be dealt with promptly by the school. Two pupils are proud to be safety officers and take their duties very seriously.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of different types of bullying. They are confident that should any ever occur, adults would deal with it firmly.
- The school's curriculum for teaching health and safety issues is very well planned. The rural location of the school is very much taken into account with pupils being taught about farm safety and safety in the fields.
- Pupils recognise dangers when using the internet and know how to avoid these problems. One pupil commented, 'If I am in any doubt about something on the internet I tell my teacher.'

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher leads and manages by example. She demonstrates a very strong determination to ensure that:
 - pupils receive the best possible learning experiences
 - teaching is always of the highest quality
 - data collected about pupils' progress is used to ensure progress is rapid and, if not, strategies are put in place to address any weaknesses, which are then monitored.
- The school has an accurate view of itself but is not complacent.
- Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated and equality of opportunity is promoted exceedingly well.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is led outstandingly well.
- In this small school, leadership at other levels is effective as a result of the training opportunities provided for middle leaders to extend their skills, including the work done with other schools.
- Checks made on teaching and of the performance of teachers are of a good quality. Staff pay awards and their targets are closely linked to pupils' achievements.
- The curriculum is effective. The concentration on key skills in literacy and numeracy has not been at the expense of other subjects. Pupils are proud of their musical expertise and of the work they do linked to a study of Kenya, including developing writing skills working with a 'Soap' script-writer from a television programme. Visits enhance pupils' learning experiences.
- Parents and staff who completed the questionnaires are very positive about all aspects of school life including pupils' safety.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very strong. For example, pupils are very keen to help those who are less fortunate than themselves by taking part in regular fundraising activities.
- The local authority regards the school as one only in need of 'light touch' support. In the recent past it has been very much involved in investigating concerns about safeguarding arrangements with no evidence found to support the allegations.
- Additional funding is being used well to enhance the provision for physical education to improve pupils' physical well-being and staff expertise.
- The school closely analyses the use of pupil premium funding and there is no gap in attainment between the very small number of eligible pupils and their peers.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is outstanding. Governors have a very high level of expertise and a very sharp understanding of what goes on in school and what pupils achieve. Recent allegations about safeguarding arrangements were investigated fully and governors ensure that all statutory duties are met. The governing body is led exceedingly well and other governors are challenged to evaluate their effectiveness on a regular basis. Governors make sure that the school's finances are used well. They ensure that the pupil premium and primary sports funds are used for the purposes intended. Governors not only support the school but ask challenging questions of it. Governors ensure the systems to check on the performance of teachers are thorough. They receive information about the quality of teaching and seek assurance that any salary increases are linked to performance.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	121409
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	450865

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	107
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martin Ellison
Headteacher	Jo Robinson
Date of previous school inspection	9 October 2008
Telephone number	01535 632510
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