

Highfield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107914
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	377667
Inspection dates	14–15 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Andrew Clark

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	351
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Pells
Headteacher	Julie Colley
Date of previous school inspection	29 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 18 lessons and parts of lessons led by 13 teachers. They held meetings with representatives of the governing body, the staff, parents and carers and groups of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation and essential policies including those for safeguarding, the school improvement plan, information about pupils' progress and attainment data. They analysed 139 completed questionnaires from parents and carers, as well as questionnaires completed by staff and Key Stage 2 pupils.

The inspectors reviewed many aspects of the school's work. They looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The progress that all groups of pupils make in their written work.
- Whether pupils are sufficiently self-critical and effectively encouraged to improve their own work.
- The extent to which 'learning teams' make good use of monitoring and evaluation to improve pupils' achievement.

Information about the school

Highfield Primary is a larger-than-average-size primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of pupils of minority ethnic heritage is well above average. The majority of pupils speak English as a first language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The school has achieved several awards including a Stephen Lawrence Inclusion Award, Advanced Healthy Schools Award and Arts Mark. There is a before- and after-school club on site which is managed by a private company. This is subject to a separate inspection.

The headteacher was appointed in 2009 and almost half the teaching staff are new to the school since the last inspection, including several who are new to the profession. The school has increased its admission number and there are more pupils on roll since it was last inspected. A large new extension to the school was completed during the last academic year.

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

1

Main findings

This is an outstanding school. The extremely clear vision of the headteacher, with excellent support from senior staff and leadership teams, ensures that pupils of all abilities have excellent attitudes to learning and achieve well. The exceptional curriculum and outstanding care, guidance and support contribute significantly to pupils' exemplary behaviour, high levels of attendance and outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The governing body, which has many new members, provides good levels of support and challenge. The thorough and systematic self-evaluation procedures reflect the views of all those involved in the life of the school. As a result, the school has developed extremely well since it was previously inspected and has an outstanding capacity for further improvement.

Pupils' attainment is above average in English and mathematics by time they leave school in Year 6. The progress of pupils of all ages and abilities is at least good. Pupils have an outstanding understanding of how to stay safe from harm. They have an excellent knowledge of how to live a healthy lifestyle and take full advantage of challenging physical activities and opportunities to plan and eat healthy meals. They are extremely friendly and considerate towards each other and have an excellent understanding of right and wrong. They are very mature, reflective and aware of the needs of others.

The quality of teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. Relationships are excellent and teachers make lessons stimulating through role play and the use of information and communication technology (ICT). Lessons are often brisk and challenging. Very occasionally, pupils are not given enough guidance during lessons to help them assess and improve their own learning. The leaders sharply focused monitoring is rapidly addressing this relative weakness. The curriculum provides thrilling learning experiences which are exceptionally well planned to allow pupils to use and apply their learning. As a result, there are many examples of high quality work in subjects such as art, history, ICT and music throughout school.

Teachers know their pupils extremely well and track their progress very carefully. They make excellent use of links with other professionals, such as Autism Partnerships to promote learning and well-being. Exceptionally robust record keeping contributes to the outstanding procedures for caring for pupils and keeping them safe. There is an outstanding partnership with parents and carers who are very

proud of the school. 'The school is highly inclusive and my child has had the most amazing experiences,' is one comment which reflects their highly positive views.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - ensuring pupils are clear about what they are aiming towards and what steps they can take to make the best progress in all lessons.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils thoroughly enjoy learning and take pride in their work. Pupils' speaking skills are excellent because of probing questions and very good use of role play. They read fluently and accurately. Writing is often effective and pupils of all abilities write with imagination and care for a wide range of purposes. They enjoy working independently or with others and make good use of different sources of reference such as thesaurus, dictionaries and ICT. They develop a good vocabulary and use punctuation well. Pupils apply their good calculation skills in science and design technology activities. A relative inconsistency in teaching in a very small number of lessons means that pupils are not always clear enough about how they can reach the highest standards in lessons and make even better progress. Overall, however, pupils' learning capabilities are very well developed and contribute to their good progress and future well-being.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are generally typical for their age. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds make at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics through Key Stages 1 and 2. This is reflected in the results of national tests and assessments which have risen well since the previous inspection and are increasingly high. Very sharp use of the analysis of progress data has addressed a slight dip in writing standards. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils at risk of failure make good and sometimes excellent progress because of very well-planned interventions and excellent care, guidance and support. The more-able pupils are challenged by the many opportunities to use and apply their skills in investigative and problem-solving situations.

Pupils have an excellent capacity to consider others' viewpoints and a realistic and deep understanding of many social, moral and religious issues. They write with empathy and understanding on the plight of children in wartime, for example. Pupils show kindness and consideration towards each other and are very attentive to adults and other children. They have, for instance, a very good understanding of the need to listen impartially in their roles as peer mediators. They express this extremely well through role play and art work. The pupils have a very good knowledge of the many different cultures represented in the school and welcome its inclusivity. The pupils say they feel very safe. They have an excellent knowledge of how to avoid dangerous situations and promote the well-being of others. The school council enjoys

the challenge of its work and takes on responsibilities for fund-raising for a range of charities, sometimes in partnership with parents and carers and school governors.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching ranges from a small percentage that is satisfactory to a large amount that is good and outstanding. Teachers regularly challenge pupils to solve problems and carry out investigations by carefully targeting their questions. Expectations are high for all abilities and pupils strive hard to meet them. When teaching is outstanding teachers make it very clear what pupils are aiming for and how to get there. As a result, pupils make extremely good progress and deepen their learning skills. This is not yet consistent and is a focus for improvement. Teachers increasingly make very effective use of marking by ensuring pupils revisit the aspects they need to improve on and have the opportunity to improve their skills.

The curriculum is outstanding. It is extremely cohesive and sharply focused on providing meaningful ways for pupils to learn. For example, themes are frequently centred round very regular visits to places of interest. There are very strong links made between subjects, which give pupils excellent opportunities to apply their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. Pupils' capabilities in many other aspects of their learning are promoted in rich and systematic ways. For example, excellent observation and drawing skills are very evident for all ages and abilities. The curriculum is very responsive to changing needs as the number of pupils grows. There is excellent provision for promoting pupils' understanding of environmental and sustainable issues. A very wide range of extra-curricular activities, sometimes in partnership with other schools or sporting organisations, enriches pupils' personal and physical development. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is extremely well planned, as are opportunities for those with a gift or a talent. Pupils have opportunities to learn another language and participate in many musical activities. The curriculum makes a very good contribution to the inclusive nature of the school.

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

The school has outstanding systems to support pupils who are potentially vulnerable due to their circumstances. They are built on thorough tracking and analysis of pupils' achievement and excellent record keeping. There are extremely well-planned procedures for ensuring pupils' smooth transition through and beyond school. The success of the excellent procedures to ensure pupils' welfare can be seen in their outstanding behaviour, very positive attitudes and high levels of attendance.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has established excellent and comprehensive procedures to monitor and evaluate all aspects of the school's work and rigorously plan for improvement. The very cohesive use of 'learning teams' means these plans are rapidly and effectively implemented and staff become quickly established in their roles. This is seen as a model of good practice within the local authority. Staff morale is very high and they regularly comment that every one is able to flourish and their potential recognised. The thoroughness and enthusiasm of all staff to share best practice are well embedded in all aspects of the school's work. Rigorous monitoring of performance and well-planned professional development have led to sharply focused improvements, with only a very few relatively weaker aspects of provision to be resolved. The school is supported by an efficient and increasingly effective governing body working in close partnership with school leaders. The strong sense of purpose of all those involved in school leadership has ensured that the school manages change and development extremely well.

The commitment of parents and carers to the life of the school is excellent. They have every confidence in the management of the school and as a result, give time, energy and resources to its development. Partnerships with a wide range of other education providers ensure excellent transition to and from school and significantly enrich the curriculum. The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles diversity extremely well. As a result, there are no significant differences in the outcomes for any groups of learners and pupils from a wide range of backgrounds flourish. The school has a very strong understanding of its immediate context and is highly regarded for its inclusivity. It is building links with diverse communities in Britain and abroad and community cohesion is good. There are extremely rigorous systems to vet staff's suitability to work with children, assess risk and ensure health and safety is frequently reviewed. Initiatives, such as the pupils' own regular health and safety reports, also contribute to the outstanding effectiveness of safeguarding procedures. The school provides effective financial management and ensures that it gives outstanding value for money.

These are the grades for the 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	1
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	1
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

The excellent leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator, who has a rigorous focus on the tracking and monitoring of children's progress, is promoting increased levels of achievement. Children of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress and are well prepared for future learning. Children start school with skills which are generally typical for their age, although an increasing proportion is entering below those levels. There are excellent induction systems to support children and to quickly settle them in to the Early Years Foundation Stage. Excellent links with parents and carers contribute to the very smooth start children make. Children feel extremely safe and are supported by robust welfare arrangements. The use of the outdoors as a rich learning environment has improved significantly since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching and use of assessment are good. A good balance between adult-led activities and those that children choose for themselves contributes well to all areas of learning. Activities are often exciting and meaningful. Early letter recognition and mark making skills are taught well. However, very occasionally some of the tasks set for children to choose for themselves do not provide enough challenge for all abilities. This is a priority for development. Children and staff make good use of a wide range of resources for ICT to develop basic skills and learn more about the world around them. As a result of these experiences, children enjoy themselves and are well prepared for their next stage of education.

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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

About 40% of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire, which is a higher level of response than usual. Many other parents and carers offered their views in letters and discussions. They are wholly positive and supportive of the school. They particularly commented on the inclusivity, the caring ethos, the stimulating learning opportunities and the quality of leadership. They feel their children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning. These views are fully reflected in the inspection report.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Highfield 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 139 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 351 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	106	76	33	24	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	111	80	28	20	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	84	60	53	38	2	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	83	60	52	37	4	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	92	66	44	32	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	82	59	50	36	4	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	86	62	51	37	1	1	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)	76	55	47	34	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	79	57	56	40	3	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	74	53	56	40	4	3	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	70	50	56	40	3	2	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	88	63	49	35	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	102	73	35	25	1	1	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 all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



16 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Highfield Primary School, Leeds LS17 8DJ

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed talking to you and your families and seeing you in your lessons, assemblies and at playtimes.

These are some of the things I found out about your school.

- You go to an outstanding school.
- The headteacher, staff and the governing body work exceptionally well together to make your school the best it can be. They work extremely well with many partners to make sure the school is always getting even better.
- You make good progress through school and you reach standards which are above average.
- The school takes outstanding care of you and your behaviour and attendance are excellent.
- You feel extremely safe at school. You know right from wrong very well and are thoughtful and understanding about the lives of others.
- You keep extremely healthy through the many sporting and other activities you do as well as taking part in 'Fruity Friday' and 'Juicy Friday'.
- The school makes learning very exciting through many visits and exciting projects.
- Occasionally teachers miss the chance to help you know how you could learn even more during your lessons.

To help your school become even better, we have asked your headteacher and the governing body to help you learn even more in your lessons. You can help by always trying your best, speaking clearly about your work and continuing to enjoy school.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Clark
Lead inspector

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