

Ackworth Mill Dam Junior and Infant School

Mill Gate, Ackworth, Pontefract, West Yorkshire, WF3 7PH

Inspection dates

23 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils of all abilities make good progress through school in English and mathematics. They enjoy learning and strive to achieve well.
- Those pupils with special educational needs also make good progress because teachers set work which boosts their basic skills well.
- Children make a good start to their learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They play and work well together and are inquisitive about the world around them.
- The quality of teaching is good because lessons are engaging and well planned. Teachers use feedback and marking well to help pupils improve their own work.
- Pupils' behaviour and their safety are good. Pupils respect each other and their teachers because they feel valued and well cared for.
- Pupils are reflective and considerate because of the many good opportunities they have to learn about the lives of others and the world around them.
- The headteacher and senior leadership team set a clear direction for school development and pursue it rigorously. They are supported well by the governing body. As a result, pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching have improved well since the last inspection.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In a few lessons opportunities are missed to challenge pupils to make even better progress.
- Pupils do not always have the chance to use and apply the skills they have learned.
- Outdoor activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage do not fully develop children's literacy and numeracy skills.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed nine lessons including two joint observations with the headteacher. The inspectors also made a number of shorter visits to classrooms and observed part of the whole school drama and music production for parents.
- Discussions were held with one group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority and members of staff including senior and middle leaders.
- Inspectors took account of 25 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and outcomes from the school’s consultations with parents. They also spoke to several parents throughout the school day.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a range of documents, including data on pupils’ current and previous progress, the school development plan, performance management documentation and records relating to pupils’ behaviour and safety.

Inspection team

Andrew Clark, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

James McGrath

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are from White British families.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional government funding allocated to the school for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after by the local authority or the children of forces families, is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the already good teaching to outstanding by:
 - making full use of all opportunities in lessons to help pupils make even better progress
 - ensuring pupils regularly use and apply the skills they are learning
 - increasing the use of the outdoor areas to develop children's literacy and numeracy skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which are generally below those typical for their age. They progress well in their personal and social development, literacy and numeracy skills through carefully structured and motivating activities, establishing good learning skills.
- Pupils of all abilities consistently make at least good progress through the school and there has been a good trend of improvement since the last inspection. Standards of reading, writing and mathematics are at least average by time pupils leave in Year 6.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium make good and sometimes outstanding progress and are reducing the gap between their achievement and that of others. In particular, the impact of special programmes to improve the reading and numeracy skills in Years 1 to 3 has led to progress at well above normally expected rates which have been sustained after the programmes finish.
- Those who have special educational needs or are supported through the pupil premium make good progress from their starting points because staff understand their learning needs well and make rigorous efforts to meet them. The successful attention given to establishing literacy and numeracy skills ensures that these pupils can achieve across a range of subjects.
- Overall pupils make use of their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills in other subjects. For example, pupils' good quality work on films and animations boosts their ability to write for different purposes and increases their enjoyment of literature. More-able pupils respond well to teachers expecting the best of them and to interesting lessons.
- Pupils read fluently and widely. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 tackle new and unfamiliar words well because they develop a good understanding of letters and their sounds. By Year 6 pupils of all ages and abilities read with expression, enthusiasm and a good knowledge of different authors and writing styles.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers ensure pupils are actively engaged in learning from the start of the lesson. Teachers make good use of ICT, games and competitions to grab pupils' attention and sharpen their thinking. They ensure that these build well on pupils' earlier learning.
- Teachers make good use of accurate assessments of pupils' progress to set work which provides the right level of challenge and support. They set precise expectations for pupils of different abilities to reach during the lesson, and give them the opportunity to complete work at a higher level. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.
- They involve pupils well in assessing their own work and identifying the steps they can take to improve it. This is reinforced extremely well through teachers' marking and feedback and is a key factor in pupils' improving achievement.
- Teachers and other adults generally ask probing questions to explore pupils' understanding and develop their thinking skills. They enable pupils to make a full contribution to discussions through, for example, partner talk and presentations. This successfully reinforces their knowledge and understanding.
- Occasionally, however, teachers do not provide enough challenge when questioning pupils or give too much guidance, inhibiting pupils from making the very best progress.
- Early reading and writing skills are taught well through the Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. Pupils systematically develop their knowledge of letters and the structure of words and sentences. This is in response to briskly-paced activities which link actions, symbols and sounds. However, the use of the outdoor area in the Early Years Foundation Stage to

promote these skills is less well established.

- Pupils who have special educational needs undertake work which is well matched to their needs and builds progressively on their earlier learning. Teaching assistants and other adults provide sensitive and skilled support when needed, whilst encouraging pupils to work as independently as possible.
- Overall, teachers make good use of links between different subjects such as history or science to promote pupils' reading, writing and mathematical skills. However, some chances are less well developed for pupils to take the initiative and organise their own work to undertake investigations and solve problems. This holds them back from making even better progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in classrooms and around school. The school is calm and orderly, and relationships between pupils and adults are very good.
- They treat each other with respect and consideration. Older pupils work and play well with younger ones and take good care of them, especially in the whole school topic sessions in the afternoons. Pupils are punctual and attend well.
- Pupils take responsibilities and make a contribution to the safe environment through their roles on the school council and as house captains. They take very good care of the many school pets, which include chickens, rabbits and guinea pigs, and always pay attention to hygiene routines.
- The school works well with parents to support pupils with emotional and social difficulties and to help them manage their own behaviour. There have been no recent exclusions and poor behaviour is rare.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying and feel that very little goes on. They have a particularly good understanding of the potential dangers of the internet and ways to keep themselves safe in the future.
- The pupils respond well to the strong moral and social guidance they receive. They develop very positive attitudes to life and learning through the teaching of common values and adults' high expectations. Pupils are introduced to ethical issues through their learning in different subjects and the strong links with, for example, a school in Malawi.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a clear vision for improving the school. She is well supported by senior leaders and the governing body who share this view. The effectiveness of the senior leadership team has improved well since the previous inspection. They make good use of rigorous systems to check the quality of the school's work and plan for its future development. The school's track record on improving pupils' achievement and the quality of provision over the last three years indicates it has a good capacity to continue to improve.
- The school receives good support from the local authority. This has been carefully tailored to meet the priorities identified by the school. It has contributed well to improving the quality of teaching, assessment and pupils' well-being and safety.
- The school's leaders are acutely aware that teachers' pay should be linked to the effectiveness of teaching in raising standards, and leaders are successful in ensuring that this is the case. The targets set for teachers to achieve are challenging and effective in driving improvement. Consequently, the school is aware of the few aspects of teaching and learning requiring further development and is well placed to address them.
- Policies for safeguarding pupils meet legal requirements and are supported by detailed record-keeping. The school has introduced systems for recording and checking on child protection concerns which have been adopted by other schools.
- The school makes learning exciting and memorable through the imaginative, afternoon whole-school themes. The topic on timelines, for example, involves all age groups in practical activities linking subjects such as history, science, geography and ICT. Teachers make very good use of

visits, visitors and unusual resources such as the large dinosaur models to enrich pupils' learning. A further strength of the school's provision is the use of teachers' specialist skills and interests in the teaching of literacy and numeracy throughout the school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body is well informed about the school's work through detailed reports from the headteacher and members' own systematic audits. As a result, it makes a good contribution to establishing the strategic direction of the school. Governors ensure that financial management is matched well to improving pupils' achievement and the impact is carefully scrutinised. For example, they know well the impact of the pupil premium funding which provides targeted teaching programmes for literacy and numeracy.

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	130966
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	402437

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	104
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Susan Nunns
Headteacher	Linda Mann
Date of previous school inspection	29 April 2010
Telephone number	01977 723110
Fax number	01977 723111
Email address	headteacher@milldam.wakefield.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

