

# Carcroft Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106757
<b>Local authority</b>	Doncaster
<b>Inspection number</b>	377459
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Jane Hughes

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	255
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Mounsey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Simon Hickton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 December 2008
<b>School address</b>	Owston Road Carcroft Doncaster DN6 8DR
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## Introduction

### Inspection team

Jane Hughes  
James Reid  
Bobbi Mothersdale

Additional inspector  
Additional inspector  
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors looked at the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection but there were no responses. Inspectors spent 10 hours observing the teaching of eight teachers in 25 lessons or part lessons, of which one was a joint observation with the headteacher. In addition, the inspection team made short visits to a few support lessons where specialist help is provided by trained assistants. Meetings were held with three groups of pupils, members of the governing body and school staff, including senior and middle managers. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's improvement plan, safeguarding and child protection policies, attainment data and assessment information and minutes of governing body meetings. They listened to some pupils read and looked at pupils' work. Inspectors analysed 51 parental and carers' questionnaires and others completed by pupils and staff.

## Information about the school

This school is of average size when compared to other primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is more than double the national average. Most pupils are of a White British heritage and few are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The percentage of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is average. The school did not meet the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school has achieved Investors in People and Healthy School status.

The school has undergone an extensive refurbishment programme over the last 18 months. The school continued to function during this period, with classes moving regularly to accommodate the rebuild. Illness has depleted the senior leadership team for significant periods of time over several years. There has been a succession of support staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The school runs its own breakfast club. An external childcare provider, 'Little Oaks', is co-located within the school building. It was inspected separately prior to this inspection. The report can be found 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

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is steadily improving. The newly refurbished building has greatly increased pupils' pride in their school and has added impetus to the leadership's push for improvement. The school is not yet good because there is variability in teaching and rates of learning are not sufficiently accelerated from Nursery to Year 4.
- All groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily. Inspection evidence shows that, across the school, pupils are making satisfactory progress in reading, writing and mathematics from much lower than expected starting points. Attainment fluctuates and, although rising, it is still too low in English and mathematics by the time pupils leave school. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage learn and develop satisfactorily, although provision and adult support are more effective inside than outdoors.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory but varies between classes. Inspection findings reflect the school's own monitoring that teaching is consistently good in Years 5 and 6. Inconsistencies in teaching elsewhere in school are evident in terms of challenge and pace of lessons including phonics (the sounds that letters make), the structured guidance to support learning in lessons and the effectiveness of teachers' marking. These prevent teaching from being securely good or better.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety are good. They confirm that they feel safe in school. Pupils say, 'We're one big family. We treat people as we want to be treated ourselves.' The very large majority of parents and carers confirm that staff effectively tackle any poor behaviour.
- Leadership and management, including the leadership of teaching and managing performance, are satisfactory, although there is insufficient challenge from the governing body. The leadership accurately identifies the school's strengths and weaknesses. Turbulent leadership and staffing in the Early Years Foundation Stage has resulted in less detailed assessment and data analysis for this age group.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency of teaching from Nursery to Year 4 so that it is as good as that in Years 5 and 6 in order to raise attainment and accelerate pupils' progress in English and mathematics by:
  - ensuring greater challenge and pace to learning in lessons
  - ensuring teachers provide structured guidance in lessons so that pupils learn and consolidate their basic skills more effectively
  - providing regular points for improvement when marking pupils' work
  - improving the quality of provision and support for children's learning outdoors in the Early Years Foundation Stage to match that indoors.
- Improve further the impact of leadership and management by:
  - providing training for all adults in the effective teaching of phonics
  - developing the confidence of staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage to use data as a tool to improve provision and outcomes for children in the Nursery and Reception classes
  - developing the challenge provided by the governing body to all aspects of the school's performance.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils behave well in lessons and are keen to succeed. They work very effectively in pairs or groups and are quick to volunteer answers to teachers' questions. They are not afraid of giving an incorrect answer as they know this is all part of the learning process. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 engage fully in their learning because of the brisk pace in lessons. Inspectors observed a range of reflective and empathetic responses during role-play activities in poetry-based literacy lessons in Year 6. In Year 5 mathematics lessons, pupils used prior knowledge of number facts to solve tricky word problems. Their confident and enthusiastic responses ensured they produced a good volume of work in the lesson.

From low starting points, particularly in their language and social skills, children make satisfactory progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage. Over the past three years, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year has fluctuated considerably due to variations in cohorts and also temporary staffing. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are starting to sound out accurately the new words they read because the teaching of phonics in these classes is lively and engages children this age well. For instance, they enjoyed searching for sounds in the sand. In other year groups, phonics lessons lack pace and interesting content.

Attainment in reading is well below average by the end of Year 2 but is improving

steadily year-on-year. Attainment in reading by the end of Year 6 is also well below average because pupils have gaps in their phonic knowledge. Pupils' current work in reading, writing and mathematics and teachers' assessments show that pupils' attainment is rising, albeit at a variable rate. They are making securely satisfactory progress overall and accelerated progress in Years 5 and 6. Pupils are on track to attain close to the current national average in 2012 due to consistently good progress in Years 5 and 6. Gaps in performance are narrowing in comparison with pupils nationally.

Disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs learn as well as their peers. Their individual needs are identified and appropriate support programmes put in place. One parent commented, 'I have seen a big impact on my children's reading and writing skills'.

The large majority of parents and carers who returned the inspection questionnaire say that their children make good progress whatever their individual needs. Inspection findings show that pupils' progress is satisfactory over time. Teachers are aware of pupils' interests and increasingly use these to help engage pupils better in their learning.

## **Quality of teaching**

In their questionnaire responses, parents and carers think that their children are taught well. Inspectors judge the quality of teaching as satisfactory; some good teaching was observed during the inspection and is documented in the school's own monitoring. In the best lessons, teachers move lessons along at a good pace and set high expectations of what pupils can achieve in the time. Teachers and teaching assistants usually work effectively together. Adults use questioning well to check what pupils understand. When teaching is less successful, inconsistencies creep in. For instance, sometimes teachers talk for too long at the start of lessons, slowing the start of pupils' independent work. Activities are not consistently challenging because staff expectations of pupils are not always high enough. This includes during phonics sessions. Pupils sometimes find tasks set harder to complete because teachers do not provide clearly structured guidance for an activity. One-to-one and small group work supports less-able pupils to develop their skills more effectively.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, adults listen carefully to what children say. However, the teachers have not had enough regular teaching assistants to share assessment and monitoring work. The outdoor learning environments are developing, following significant disruption during the building work. Although there is a range of appropriate resources, staff do not support children's learning outdoors as effectively as in the classroom.

Teachers mark pupils' work regularly. Their comments are often supportive but lack sufficient detail and modelling to clarify how a pupil can improve their work. There is little recorded dialogue between pupil and teacher.

Positive relationships ensure that pupils are ready to 'have a go' in lessons, even when unsure of the right answers. Visiting specialists enrich the curriculum such as in physical education and music. For instance, regular West African Djembe drumming sessions develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.

They provide pupils with opportunities to experience the uplifting impact of music and rhythm while honing their listening, performance and social skills, developing their self-confidence and learning more about the heritage of a different culture.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Inspectors concur with parents' and carers' views that behaviour is typically good and that pupils are safe. Pupils are confident that they can approach any adults with their problems. They confirm that behaviour is generally good in lessons and around the school. Pupils pay heed to the behaviour 'triangle' and take good care of each other. They say that 'school is paradise with the new building. There's more freedom - it's a twenty-first century school!' Pupils abide by the simple rules of 'right thing, right way, right place'. The school is harmonious. There are few instances of homophobic bullying, name-calling or racism. Any rare occurrences are speedily addressed and most parents, carers and pupils express confidence in the school's systems for dealing with bullying and harassment. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe both in and out of school. They understand well how to use the internet and mobile phones safely and how to avoid cyber-bullying. Parents and carers of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are happy with how well their children's needs are met.

Rates of attendance are average and improving. This is because the school works hard to encourage all parents and carers to bring their children to school regularly and on time. The school's breakfast club is popular and provides a good start to the day.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher, senior leaders and the governing body provide appropriate vision and direction for the school. The headteacher has shouldered a heavy workload, overseeing the building refurbishment while also working without a deputy headteacher for significant periods over several years. Senior leaders recognise that progress is not as fast as it should be across the school in order to ensure consistently improving attainment. Professional development, especially through peer coaching, is developing teaching skills in order to improve outcomes across the school. More phonics training is planned as staff skills have not been updated recently and teaching in these lessons often lacks inspirational content and rigour. School self-evaluation is up-to-date. The school shows that it has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

The governing body has the school's best interests at heart, offering support and time to the leadership. However, it does not offer sufficiently robust challenge in terms of the school's performance. The school meets requirements with regard to safeguarding. Child protection arrangements are effective. Staff identify risks and pupils recognise potential hazards.

Senior leaders ensure that staff in Years 1 to 6 are confident about using and updating the assessment information they produce. Although teachers in the Nursery and Reception classes regularly observe and assess children's learning and development, they do not use the information effectively enough to highlight key strengths and areas to develop.

Staff are aware of pupils' individual needs and know their circumstances well. This ensures equality of opportunity for pupils regardless of background or need.

Discriminatory practice is not tolerated. The leadership is firmly committed to meeting the needs of all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Support staff are generally well deployed to ensure that these pupils learn as well as their peers.

The curriculum is satisfactory and supports pupils' achievement. It is increasingly creative as seen in the much admired 'art gallery' portfolios. Pupils clearly enjoy this evolving approach. For instance, children in the Nursery class were fascinated by the mysterious arrival of a dragon's egg, talked about it and caringly looked after it.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils collaborate well and are respectful of the views and feelings of others.

Effective communication between home and school helps to engage parents and carers in their children's learning. Parents and carers say that staff are approachable. Those parents and carers who returned the inspection questionnaire were highly positive. Almost all confirmed that they would recommend the school to others.



## 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



21 March 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Carcroft Primary School, Doncaster, DN6 8DR**

Thank you for your friendly welcome when we inspected your school. Our thanks go especially to those of you who completed the questionnaires or who read to us or who met us to talk in more detail about your school. You all told us how proud you are of your new school building and we could see why – it is wonderful!

We judge that Carcroft is a satisfactory school. You enjoy school and you, your parents and carers are happy with what it provides. The school keeps you safe and teaches you how to keep yourselves safe both in and out of school. Teaching is satisfactory overall and there is some good teaching too. You behave well and all the adults show you how to be respectful and kind.

Part of our job is to look at how your school could be even better. We have asked your headteacher and the governing body to focus on some important points. These include different ways of helping you to do better in reading, writing and mathematics because we want more of you to reach higher standards in your work. You will notice that your teachers want you to work harder so that you learn even more in lessons. We are sure that you can do this! Please also remember to check your work when your teacher has marked it so you know what to do to improve. The governing body will also be checking more closely how well the school is doing.

Thank you to so many of you for coming to school every day and arriving on time. Keep this up as it is very important and will help you to be successful in the future. We send you our very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Jane Hughes  
Lead Inspector

