

Scawthorpe Castle Hills Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106693
Local Authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	356003
Inspection dates	28–29 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Derek Watts

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	257
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Adrian Green
Headteacher	Mr Alan Smith
Date of previous school inspection	30 June 2008
School address	Jossey Lane Scawthorpe, Doncaster South Yorkshire DN5 9ED
Telephone number	01302 780246
Fax number	01302 783830
Email address	head@castle.doncaster.sch.uk

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St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 1234 234

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Twenty two lessons or part lessons were observed and 11 teachers were seen. The inspection team examined the school's policies, assessment records, pupils' work, teachers' plans and school improvement planning. Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff, representatives of the governing body and pupils. There were informal conversations with parents and carers. The inspectors analysed 72 questionnaires completed by parents and carers and others completed by pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- The action to improve provision and pupils' performance in mathematics.
- How well teachers use assessment to match tasks to pupils' different abilities, particularly the more able.
- The role of leaders in monitoring and bringing about improvement.
- The effectiveness of action to improve attendance.

Information about the school

Almost all pupils in this slightly larger-than-average-sized primary school are from a White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is about average. The nature of these difficulties includes behavioural, emotional and social, dyslexia, moderate learning and physical difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The school holds a number of awards including Healthy School status and Artsmark.

During the last academic year, the school experienced a number of staff absences and this led to numerous changes of teachers. The teaching force is now more settled.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Castle Hills provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. There are some good aspects to its work. Good care, guidance and support contribute well to pupils' personal development. Pupils learn and play well together in a positive and safe learning environment. Most pupils are well behaved in lessons and around the school. Pupils feel safe and show a good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. Community cohesion is promoted well and pupils make valuable contributions to the school and to the wider community. Attendance has been low during the past two years and the school's action is only just beginning to show improvement.

Children in Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress in all areas of learning because of the interesting activities provided. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and 2. By the end of Year 6, attainment is broadly average in reading and writing but below average in mathematics. Not enough pupils are attaining the higher than expected levels, particularly in writing and mathematics.

There are examples of good teaching but this practice is not consistent across Years 1 to 6. Teachers establish good relationships with their classes. In the most successful lessons pupils are challenged well and learning is maintained at a good pace. In others, tasks are not sufficiently well tailored to pupils' needs, particularly the more able. The pace of learning can decline when teachers talk for too long in their introductions and pupils are not sufficiently involved in their learning. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of additional activities. There are good partnerships with other agencies and organisations to enhance pupils' learning. Positive steps are being taken to improve provision in writing and mathematics. For example, there were some good examples of practical and investigative lessons seen in mathematics. These changes are too recent to have had an impact on pupils' attainment and progress.

The headteacher, key leaders and staff are successfully promoting good care and personal outcomes for pupils. School self-evaluation is broadly accurate. The school has a clear understanding of its strengths and has identified the most pressing areas for improvement. Teaching is improving with a more settled teaching force but development of teaching is not sufficiently delegated to other senior staff. Some key leaders are new to their posts and are not fully involved in the analysis of assessments, the monitoring of provision and improvement planning. There are plans to share the good teaching practice more widely. The school currently demonstrates a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment by the end of Year 6, particularly in mathematics, by improving teaching and extending opportunities for investigative work.
 - Improve teaching and pupils' progress from satisfactory to good or better, by:
 - using assessment more effectively to match tasks to pupils' needs, particularly the more able
 - ensuring that learning and the lesson proceed at a brisk pace
 - sharing the good practice across the school.
- Ensure that all key leaders are fully involved in data analysis, monitoring, performance and improvement planning.
- Strengthen the procedures to monitor and promote good attendance and raise it to at least average levels.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils enter Year 1 with broadly average attainment. Most enjoy their experiences at school and show positive attitudes to learning. They speak enthusiastically about additional activities and visits. School assessments, pupils' work and the lessons seen indicate that most pupils make satisfactory progress including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. All groups of pupils, therefore, achieve satisfactorily.

Pupils make sound progress in speaking and listening. They respond well to teachers' questioning. Opportunities are sometimes missed in lessons for pupils to discuss their learning in pairs and small groups. Pupils write for a range of purposes and in different styles. Year 6 pupils write interesting profiles about their 'super heroes'. In a good Year 3 lesson, for example, pupils used alliteration, interesting adjectives and similes to write spiral poems. One pupil described, 'the gazing, grey, glittering moon'. There is less evidence of detailed extended writing but pupils are applying and developing their writing skills more in other areas of the curriculum.

Teachers are increasing investigative and practical opportunities in mathematics to improve pupils' progress but this good practice is not consistent. In a good Year 6 lesson, pupils identified two dimensional shapes and described their properties. They acquired and applied mathematical vocabulary well such as parallel and perpendicular. Pupils constructed models of the shapes using a range of materials. The more able showed a good understating of acute, obtuse and reflex angles.

Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is reflected in their consideration and support for others. Their skills in working with others are well developed. By Year 6, pupils show a good understanding of different cultures and faiths. They choose healthy foods and participate enthusiastically in a range of sporting activities. Pupils feel well cared for at school and are confident that there are always trusted adults they can turn to if they are upset, worried or need help. Pupils take on additional responsibilities such as serving on the school council, or as playground leaders. They

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support those less fortunate than themselves by raising funds for a range of appeals and charities. Pupils are reasonably well prepared for their future lives and education. Their personal and social skills are well developed and they are making satisfactory progress in acquiring and applying literacy and numeracy skills.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

How effective is the provision?

Teachers create a positive classroom climate for pupils to learn. The purpose of the lesson is usually made clear so pupils know what they are expected to learn. In a number of lessons, teachers also provide indicators or success criteria to guide learning and to help pupils to assess their own progress. This good practice is not consistent in all lessons. Teachers' instructions and explanations are clear and informative. Questioning is usually used well to check pupils' understanding. Assessment information is not used consistently well to plan teaching. In a number of lessons, all pupils tackle the same task regardless of their ability. When this happens, learning is not always challenging enough, particularly for more-able pupils. Learning can also decline when pupils are sitting and listening to the teacher for too long when they are eager and ready to move on to the main task. Teaching assistants are deployed well to support learning, particularly for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The curriculum is contributing well to pupils' personal development but it is not promoting consistently good academic progress for pupils. Positive action is being taken to improve

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provision in English and mathematics. There are useful links between subjects through interesting themes such 'pirates', 'plague', 'time travellers', and 'journey into space'. Health education and additional sporting activities make a good contribution to pupils' healthy lifestyles. Staff from the local secondary school make a valuable contribution to drama and sport. Pupils commented, 'There are lots of sporting activities here'. Popular clubs include, choir, cricket, football and rounders. Cricket was particularly successful last summer with Year 5 and 6 winning the Doncaster Kwik Cricket' competition. A recent residential visit for Year 6 to Robin Hood's Bay provided exciting outdoor activities and developed pupils' social skills effectively.

Good care, support and guidance underpin the school's ethos. Staff relationships with pupils are positive. The safe and secure environment provided is recognised by pupils, parents and carers. As the pupils told inspectors, 'This is a safe environment', and, 'Teachers always ask how we are'. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are provided with the support they need. Positive steps are being taken to improve pupils' attendance. In partnership with other agencies, the school is successful in supporting pupils and their families needing additional help.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers ensure good care and promote good personal outcomes for pupils effectively and their impact on improving teaching and pupils' academic progress is satisfactory. The roles and responsibilities of senior leaders have been revised to meet the needs of the school.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning are satisfactory. The school is implementing a more creative curriculum to promote enjoyment and interesting approaches to writing and mathematics but this work is at an early stage of development. Leaders and managers are not always using performance data well enough to inform improvement planning and to measure the success of their actions. There are clear plans to develop and support new leaders so they can play a full part in monitoring and improving the school.

Members of the governing body have clear understanding of the school's strengths and development points. They have been supportive through a difficult period for the school with numerous staff absences and teacher changes. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties and is rightly focusing its attention on raising pupils' attainment and strengthening partnerships with parents and carers.

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Good emphasis is placed on safeguarding. Policies and practice to protect and safeguard children work well and fully meet requirements. All staff are well trained in this area and safe practices are promoted well through the curriculum.

Equality of opportunity is promoted satisfactorily and discrimination is tackled effectively. Leaders are aware that there is more to do before all groups of pupils make consistently good progress. Community cohesion is promoted well through the school's positive links with the local community, including its partner schools. Different cultures and faiths are promoted well through the curriculum. There are plans to extend opportunities to increase pupils' knowledge and understanding of global communities.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills below those expected for their age. A significant proportion of children enter with limited language skills and social skills. Effective leadership and management are promoting good provision and positive outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development because of the positive relationships between adults and children and the good attention given to care and welfare. Children feel safe and secure and grow in confidence. They learn and play well together in a range of activities. Behaviour is consistently good.

An interesting range of learning activities is provided around topics such as 'all about me', 'mini beasts', 'toys' and 'life cycles'. However, assessment information is not always used fully to plan and modify provision. Children thoroughly enjoy their learning and make good progress. Children are well taught and there is an effective blend of adult-led activities and those chosen by the children. They have good opportunities to explore, be creative and work independently. Adults successfully integrate language development into all activities

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so children make good progress in this area. There is considerable space and scope for outdoor learning activities but these are not always fully utilised. Outdoor learning activities are less effective and purposeful when they are not linked to the main topic. The school has clear plans to tackle this area.

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 of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Nearly a third of parents and carers returned the questionnaire. Most parents and carers who returned the questionnaires are generally satisfied with the care and education provided by the school. They are pleased with safety in school, with their children's sense of enjoyment and with the promotion of healthy lifestyles. The inspection team supports these positive views. A small minority of parents and carers express concern about dealing with unacceptable behaviour, taking account of their suggestions and concerns and the leadership and management of the school.

A number of parents and carers understandably commented about the number of teacher changes last year. Staff absences led to a series of temporary teachers and this had an adverse impact on the school's performance and its development. The school has a few pupils with challenging behaviour and disruptions to staffing last year did not help this situation. Most pupils are well behaved and a more settled staff has contributed to improved behaviour. School leaders and the governing body are aware that partnerships with parents and carers need to be stronger and are beginning to take steps to tackle this. In particular, there is more work to do in addressing parents' and carers' suggestions and concerns.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Scawthorpe Castle Hills 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 72 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 257 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	29	40	37	51	5	7	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	32	44	35	49	3	4	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	20	28	40	56	7	10	2	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	32	36	50	7	10	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	24	33	41	57	3	4	2	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	32	36	50	8	11	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	23	32	41	57	1	1	4	6
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)	16	22	41	57	3	4	2	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	32	32	44	8	11	2	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	35	28	39	12	17	3	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	31	28	39	12	17	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	24	33	27	38	11	15	4	6
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	33	32	44	9	13	3	4

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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.



30 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Scawthorpe Castle Hills Primary School, Doncaster, DN5 9ED

Thank you so much for welcoming us into your school and showing us your work. We thoroughly enjoyed our visit and would like to tell you what we found. Yours is a satisfactory school. There are some good features.

These are the school's main strengths.

- Most of you enjoy school and the activities provided.
- The school is a pleasant place in which to learn.
- Children in Nursery and Reception get off to a good start and make good progress.
- A good range of additional activities is provided for you.
- You get on well with each other and behaviour is generally good.
- You have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and fit.
- You feel safe at school because the teachers and other adults take good care of you and provide strong support and guidance.
- You make positive contributions to the school and to the wider community.

We have asked the headteacher and teachers to do a few things to improve areas of the school.

- Some of you in Key Stages 1 and 2 could be making better progress and reach higher standards, particularly in mathematics by having more practical tasks.
- We have asked the teachers to:
 - match the work more carefully to your abilities, especially those of you who find learning easy
 - ensure that learning and the lessons move along more quickly.
- All senior leaders and staff need to be more involved in checking how well the school is doing and making improvements where needed.
- Attendance is below average and this should be improved to at least average.

You can all help by continuing to work hard and attending on a regular basis. We wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Derek Watts

Lead inspector

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