

Dearne Goldthorpe Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106580
Local Authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	355975
Inspection dates	10–11 November 2010
Reporting inspector	John Rutherford HMI

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	254
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Peter Steadman
Headteacher	Miss Anne Skelton
Date of previous school inspection	21 October 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 14 lessons and saw eight teachers. They held meetings with school leaders, groups of pupils, two governors, a representative from the local authority and the School Improvement Partner. They observed the school's work and looked at samples of pupils' work, information about pupils' progress and a range of management documents. They analysed 27 completed questionnaires from parents and carers.

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

- The effectiveness of the leadership team's work to ensure that there are no dips in pupils' progress from year to year.
- Whether teaching is consistently of good or better across the school.
- Teachers' use of assessment to provide effective targets for each pupil and to plan work that meets the needs of all groups of pupils.
- The leadership team's capacity to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.

Information about the school

Dearne Goldthorpe is similar in size to most primary schools. The number of pupils in the school is rising and two fifths start or leave mid year. Two thirds of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. Over a fifth of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. A very small number of pupils are from a minority ethnic background or speak English as an additional language. The school was made subject to special measures in October 2008. A new headteacher was appointed at that time and a new Chair of the Governing Body soon after. Since 2008 there has been significant staffing instability, which has only recently been resolved. An Early Years Foundation Stage unit makes provision for children aged three to five years.

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

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. The school now provides a satisfactory and improving quality of education. The curriculum and care, guidance and support are good features of the school's work. The governing body makes a good contribution to the school's improvement.

The driving force for the school's improvement is the senior leadership team. The headteacher provides strong direction while enabling the deputy headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders to develop their leadership skills. The leadership team has worked hard since the school became subject to special measures and, with their increasingly skilful approach to improving teaching and greater staffing stability, they are now making a positive difference to standards and progress. They are therefore demonstrating a satisfactory capacity to bring about further improvement.

When children start school, their skills and knowledge are well below those typical for their age. They make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, then there are peaks and troughs in their progress during Key Stages 1 and 2, and their standards are below average on leaving. Although standards are low, the unvalidated results from this year's National Curriculum tests and assessments show that results have improved considerably. The dips in pupils' progress have also started to even out because improved teaching approaches are becoming embedded in more classes. Strengths in teaching include the planning of very interesting lessons and the use of targets to help pupils to accelerate their progress. Progress slows in lessons where weaknesses in planning and the deployment of teaching assistants prevents pupils from making progress at a good pace towards a clear learning objective.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead a safe and healthy lifestyle. Their attendance has improved over the past two years and is now in line with the national average. Their behaviour has also improved and is now good. Well-planned care, guidance and support and a rich curriculum contribute significantly to these improved outcomes. A key strength of the curriculum is that it provides first-hand experience linked to topical issues such as enterprise and the environment. While it includes some learning about different cultures, there is an insufficiently systematic approach to developing pupils' understanding of the range of British community groups beyond their immediate locality. The leadership team has worked hard to increase the contribution of parents and carers to enhancing pupils' learning. A good start has been made in Early Years Foundation Stage, but there is much less of a partnership approach beyond this.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in English and mathematics by increasing the consistency of good and better teaching across the school. In particular school leaders should focus on ensuring that the following features are embedded in the work of all teachers:
 - a good pace of learning
 - a sharp learning objective for each lesson
 - assessment of pupils' progress towards learning objectives to inform future lesson planning
 - challenge for all pupils during question and answer sessions
 - more effective use of teaching assistants so that they contribute to improving pupils' learning and progress.
- Improve the school's partnership with parents and carers by extending the effective work in the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Improve the quality of pupils' cultural development by increasing their experience and understanding of community groups not represented in their immediate locality.
- Up to 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' standards are below average overall, although they have risen significantly in English and science in 2010. Attainment in these two subjects has now caught up with the already higher standards in mathematics. Pupils' achievement in English is better because of the more effective teaching of a range of types of writing. They achieve more in science because they have considerably improved their skills in carrying out practical investigations.

Pupils' progress is satisfactory overall although there is good progress in parts of both Key Stages 1 and 2. The incidence of good progress has increased recently with more consistently good teaching. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make progress at a similar rate to other pupils because additional support is provided through an effective partnership between staff and external services. The majority of underachieving pupils catch up quickly because their programmes of extra work are planned on the basis of thorough and frequent analyses of their needs. More able pupils are beginning to achieve higher standards because they receive extra challenge during lessons. Pupils are enthusiastic learners and are keen to work hard to meet their targets. They work well independently and as part of a team. They are making good progress in developing their skills of discussion as a means for solving problems.

Pupils say they feel safe in school, particularly because of the recent improvements to the building and the school's work to eradicate bullying. Pupils understand how to make a healthy meal choice and many take advantage of the opportunities for exercise in after-school clubs. Pupils' views are systematically used to inform school self-evaluation and curriculum planning, although their contribution to the community beyond the school is

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limited. Older pupils are learning about the choices they can make for their future education which, with their academic skills and attitudes to work, is laying a sound foundation for their future economic well-being. The majority of pupils have a responsible attitude to managing their own behaviour and to relationships with others. They showed maturity in observing the Remembrance Day period of silence and some sensitively described how they used this time to think about people affected by war. While pupils understand the importance of avoiding racism, their knowledge of the diversity of British society is limited.

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	4
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	3
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	3

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?

Although teaching is satisfactory overall, the proportion of good and outstanding teaching has increased considerably since the previous inspection. Progress is good where pupils are highly motivated by very interesting lessons and there is plenty of opportunity to learn through well-planned practical activities. In these lessons, pupils use their targets as guidance for the skills they need to extend. Teaching assistants are prepared effectively to provide support or challenge to groups as required. These strong features are not yet consistent in every lesson. Pupils' progress slows to a satisfactory rate in lessons that do not continuously engage all pupils in sufficiently challenging work linked to a clear learning objective and teaching assistants are more focused on tasks being completed than on what pupils are learning.

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The curriculum provides stimulating learning experiences that make a significant positive contribution to the development of pupils' personal skills and to their progress in English and mathematics. Pupils learn much from topics that combine different subjects because, as one pupil sums up accurately, 'They really use our imagination'. Pupils' motivation is also increased because they are involved in planning what is included in the topics. A well-planned programme of visits and visitors gives pupils valuable first-hand experience to consolidate their learning. The school works in good partnership with external services to provide effective support for pupils who have social and emotional barriers to their learning. Attendance has improved from low to average in the last two years as a result of the effective guidance and encouragement provided for pupils and, where necessary, their parents and carers.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, well-supported by the deputy headteacher and leadership team, has established a shared determination amongst all staff to remove the school's causes for concern. They have maintained high morale while introducing significant changes to teaching and assessment methods. All leaders are involved in systematically evaluating the effectiveness of teaching and providing constructive guidance where required. They use very clear information about pupils' progress to inform their evaluation. This information is also used effectively to hold all teachers to account and to help them identify which particular pupils need more support or challenge.

Through effective and comprehensive monitoring and evaluation, the leadership team has a very accurate understanding of the school's strengths and remaining weaknesses. Their judgements of the school's effectiveness very closely match those of the inspection team. Their plans for raising standards focus on the most important priorities for improvement and are manageable. The impact of the leadership team's work on raising standards has been slow in coming because leaders had to develop their skills from a low starting point, some leaders had to take on many responsibilities and they were working with an ever-changing staff. Their skills have developed well and, with a new appointment to the leadership team and more stable staffing, their work has now started to remove inconsistency in pupils' achievement across the school. The local authority recognises the leadership team's increased capacity for driving improvement and has reduced its support accordingly.

The governing body is making a good contribution to the school's improvement. A new chair has ensured that governors have the skills to evaluate the work of the school and

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provide objective challenge and support. Effective arrangements have been put in place for a group of governors to meet regularly with members of the leadership team and the School Improvement Partner to keep the continuing development of the school under close review. This is part of the governing body's forward looking approach of putting procedures in place to help ensure that recent improvements are sustained.

Staff are developing good links with the parents and carers of the youngest children attending Early Years Foundation Stage, but too few parents and carers of older pupils are engaged in partnership with the school. Strong partnerships with support services, other schools and community organisations help staff to enrich the curriculum and provide well-tailored support to pupils who need it. In the past year, school leaders have started to collect detailed information about the progress of all groups of pupils in order to plan support for those who have reduced opportunities to achieve well. School records show that the proportion of pupils who accelerate their progress as a result of this support is satisfactory and improving. Arrangements for keeping pupils safe comply with requirements. The community within the school is one in which adults and pupils get on well with each other, but insufficient work has been done on extending pupils' experience of other 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	2
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children's progress has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. From a low starting point, children quickly develop their skills in many areas of learning, most notably in speaking, sounds and letters, number and physical development. They cooperate well with other children and confidently learn independently, for example when using computer technology.

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Children are making good progress because the Early Years Foundation Stage unit provides a well-organised and stimulating environment which promotes purposeful learning both indoors and outdoors. Adults work very well as a team to enhance children's learning in all activities, especially their use of language. They carefully observe and record children's achievements, and use this information to link their planning closely to previous learning. There is a good balance between adult-directed learning and activities that children choose for themselves to increase their independence.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led. All staff are very clear about their roles in promoting children's learning and development. Assessment information is used effectively to identify which aspects of children's learning and interests need a stronger emphasis in planning. The unit encourages and welcomes the involvement of parents and carers. They express appreciation for the opportunities provided for them to stay and play with their children. Staff provide a safe and healthy environment for the children.

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

Of the small number of parents and carers who returned an inspection questionnaire, most are content with the quality of education being provided for their children. There are some areas of relatively greater dissatisfaction, although from a very small minority of parents and carers. These relate to the management of unacceptable behaviour, the school's leadership and the extent to which the school takes account of parents' and carers' views. Inspectors judged that there has been a significant improvement in pupils' behaviour over the last two years and it is now good. Inspectors and school leaders agree that the school's partnership with parents and carers is not as good as it could be and school leaders are now committed to improving this.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Dearne Goldthorpe 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 27 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 254 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	16	57	12	43	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	12	43	15	54	1	4	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	10	36	16	57	2	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	10	36	17	61	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	12	43	13	46	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	9	32	16	57	1	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	9	32	14	50	1	4	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)	9	32	11	39	1	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	10	36	14	50	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	36	12	43	3	11	1	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	7	25	15	54	1	4	4	14
The school is led and managed effectively	7	25	14	50	2	7	4	14
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	12	43	14	50	2	7	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	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.



12 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Dearne Goldthorpe Primary School, Rotherham, S63 9NG

Thank you very much for your help when I came with my colleagues to inspect your school. You gave us very useful information that helped us to make the judgement that your school provides a satisfactory quality of education.

The school has improved considerably over the last two years and, as a result, you are making much better progress in English, mathematics and science and you are beginning to achieve higher standards. You have helped the school enormously by improving your attendance and behaviour and by working very hard in lessons. You told us, and we agree with you, that learning is much more enjoyable now because teachers plan very interesting work for your lessons. Teachers also help you to improve your progress by giving you very useful targets and making sure you know exactly what you need to do to achieve them.

The headteacher, governors and staff are determined to help you to achieve even more. We have agreed with them that the main areas that they need to improve are:

- the quality of lessons so that they are all as good as the best ones in the school
- the communication with your parents and carers so that they are more involved with the school
- the guidance you receive about the life of people from backgrounds different to your own.

Your hard work and enthusiasm for learning will help your teachers to bring about these improvements and make your school an even better place to be. My best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

John Rutherford

Her Majesty's Inspector

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