

# Rawthorpe St James CE (VC) Infant and Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107700
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kirklees
<b>Inspection number</b>	356218
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 April 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Eithne Proffitt

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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	234
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Peter Rock
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Joan Rock
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 May 2008
<b>School address</b>	Rawthorpe Lane Dalton, Huddersfield West Yorkshire HD5 9NT
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited eight lessons and six parts of lessons, observing nine teachers. Meetings were held with the leadership team, members of the governing body, middle managers, staff and pupils. Meetings were also held with senior leaders and representatives of staff and the community who work across the federation. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including monitoring and improvement planning, school policies, safeguarding procedures, records of all pupils' progress and the school's self-evaluation procedures. Inspectors also analysed questionnaires returned by 60 parents and carers and 20 staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The current learning, progress and attainment of pupils as they move through the school.
- The success of school initiatives to raise attainment, promote good progress and close any significant gaps between groups of pupils.
- The impact the school's and federation's work is having on pupils' attendance.
- How well the federation is enabling the school to secure better outcomes for pupils and the capacity of the current leadership to improve further.

## Information about the school

This is an average-sized infant and nursery school. Half the pupils are White British and half are from minority ethnic groups, the largest of which are mixed White and Black Caribbean and Pakistani pupils. The percentage of pupils that speak English as an additional language is well above average as is the percentage known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with a statement of special educational needs is also higher than usually found. The school is funded to provide resourced provision for up to eight pupils with physical difficulties and/or disabilities. The numbers of pupils who join or leave the school at other than the usual times has recently increased.

The school has achieved Basic Skills Quality Mark, Activemark, Inclusion Mark Gold Award and Healthy School (Gold) and Investor in People status.

Since its previous inspection, the school has become federated with the nearby junior school, high school and studio school to form the Netherhall Learning Campus. The governing body oversees the management of all the schools in the federation.

The junior school was inspected at the same time as the infant and nursery school by a different team of inspectors. The report of its inspection is available on the Ofsted website [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good school. 'I'm really happy here. All the grown-ups look after us. It's like you have a big family.' This comment typifies the pupil's appreciation of this truly inclusive school where the care and support for all pupils, including those with educational, medical and severe physical needs, is outstanding. This helps to keep pupils safe, healthy and happy; removes barriers to their learning and ensures that all pupils now progress at rates equal to their peers.

Staff are fully behind the continued drive for improvement and a keen desire to help pupils do as well as they can is firmly embedded in their work. This, along with good teaching and a strong focus on learning through first-hand experiences, results in pupils achieving well and making good progress in both their learning and personal development. This good progress begins in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children start school with skills and knowledge that for most are well below those typical for their age. They make good progress throughout the school and when they leave at the end of Year 2 attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, although hovering below expected levels in recent years, has begun to improve and is now broadly average. Indications of current work show that the small steps of improvement evident in the past three years are now rapidly increasing.

Effective teaching successfully raises pupils' confidence and self-esteem and this is evident in pupils' improved skills especially in reading and mathematics. However, there is still work to be done in ensuring that pupils have access to the full range of strategies to support their reading, spelling and writing. Teachers do not always make the most of opportunities in lessons to assess pupils in order to help raise attainment and improve learning.

Although pupils enjoy school, attendance had been low for a number of years. The school is very aware of this and, with the support and commitment of the school's federated partnership, has taken assertive action and attendance is rising. The school and federation recognise, however, that not all parents and carers are supportive of the drive to further raise attendance.

Leaders and managers are clear about the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The school has responded positively to the changing nature of the intake and the influx of pupils who start school at different times throughout the year. School action planning, whilst comprehensive and detailed, is not always sharply enough focused on how proposed actions will improve pupils' outcomes. The governing body has been resolute in its determination to ensure that the federation functions as a cohesive organisation. They acknowledge that it has taken some time to establish the systems and procedures that now allow them to begin to hold the school to account. Nevertheless, attainment and

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attendance are rising, the school has a clear vision and therefore capacity to improve is good.

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

- Raise the overall attainment of pupils by:
  - – capitalising on opportunities to assess pupils as they learn, helping them to make the best possible progress in all lessons and over time
  - – using marking and feedback to ensure that learning is built on progressively from lesson to lesson
  - – broadening the approaches to the teaching of reading and writing especially spelling
  - – ensuring that more pupils, and their parents and carers are engaged in meeting the school's attendance targets.
- Improve school action planning by:
  - – using available data to inform short-term school improvement planning and monitoring that is sharply focused on improving pupil outcomes.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Lesson observations show that pupils are keen to learn, work hard and are increasingly confident in speaking about their learning. They enjoy working in groups and sharing their ideas. It is not surprising that pupils make consistently good progress in lessons. Despite making good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, a large number of children still have below average skills when they begin Year 1, especially in reading and writing. The drive of school leaders has ensured that, through good teaching and successful nurturing, the attainment gap is now narrowing as pupils move through Years 1 and 2. Attainment is broadly average and in mathematics pupils are adept at handling number. Although progress is good in English and attainment is now much closer to average, pupils still lack confidence in applying their basic skills. School data shows that more girls are now on track to attain higher levels than before. Aided by skilled teaching assistants delivering intervention programmes and classroom support, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language make equally good progress in their learning. This raised attainment and good progress for all pupils ensures their good overall achievement during their time in school.

Pupils' enjoyment of school life is tangible. They say how safe they feel in the school's caring environment and have a keen sense of how to stay out of harm's way. Even the youngest pupils can say which foods are good for them and which are best avoided. They welcome healthy options in the lunchtime menu and enjoy physical activities. Behaviour is good both in and out of lessons. The very few pupils who find it difficult to manage their behaviour receive excellent support so that this causes no disruption to their own or other pupils' learning. Pupils have a voice through the school council. They delight in the opportunity to serve on this committee because they help to 'make things better'. Pupils' recently improved attendance and attainment and their overall achievement provides them with a sound basis for the next steps in their education when they leave this school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and most effectively

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supported by the school's Christian values. Pupils show a firm grasp of right and wrong. They are respectful of the differences and similarities between themselves and each other and of the adults working with them. They care particularly about each other, their school, their community and the world in which they live.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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?**

The consistently good quality teaching accounts for the good learning and progress throughout the school. Relationships are very secure and there is an atmosphere of keenness as pupils clearly want to do well for their teachers. As part of the school's determination to improve pupils' reading and writing staff provide a good grounding in understanding the sounds that letters make and in transferring this knowledge across to their writing. This has reaped considerable success in raising pupils' confidence as readers and writers. However, pupils have too few opportunities to understand and use other reading strategies to improve the fluency and accuracy of their reading, spelling and writing. All teachers mark pupils' work regularly and positively and target pointers for improvement. However, not all provide the opportunities for pupils to discuss and apply this direction to their next piece of work. Teachers plan and deliver exciting, engaging activities that capture pupils' interests and meet the intended learning objective. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to use the pupils' efforts as teaching points to move their own, and others', learning forward.

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The curriculum succeeds in providing varied activities that encourage pupils to be enthusiastic learners. Themed, cross-subject learning promotes excitement and enthusiasm and provides pupils with opportunities to combine their knowledge and skills from different subjects in 'real' tasks and learning experiences. In these lessons, pupils' enjoyment is further enhanced as they extend their core skills in writing and information and communication technology, applying them across different subjects and for different purposes. Extra-curricular activities, such as French, art and music add a cultural dimension to pupils' learning that broadens their horizons and sparks their enthusiasm for learning.

Inclusion is at the forefront of the school's mission, a strength of its provision and parents and carers overwhelmingly agree. All adults know pupils well and are committed to providing high levels of care. They respond sensitively to the particular needs of those with more profound challenges. Pupils say that adults working with them are always approachable and help to sort out any problems. Effective links with home and with other settings help pupils to settle in quickly when they arrive and make a smooth transition to the federated junior school. The school robustly promotes attendance which is rising. However, despite considerable investment, a number of parents and carers still fail to engage in bringing their children regularly to school.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Teamwork and shared leadership are well-established. Consequently, leaders, managers, teachers and support staff share the school's vision and high expectations. The quality of the checks made on the work of the school is good overall. Lessons are observed and assessment data analysed. The information gathered is used to support improvements in teaching and to ensure that pupils' progress does not falter. However, the outcomes of data analysis and monitoring and evaluation are not made crystal clear in the school's improvement plan. This makes it more difficult for leaders and managers to check on how well the school is performing in relation to pupils' attainment and progress.

Effective safeguarding procedures ensure that pupils are safely protected. The school's good links with health professionals and educational partners add significant value to what is provided for pupils in school. Equality is well promoted, discrimination resisted and stereotyping challenged. Tracking pupils' progress helps the school to identify gaps in performance, for example, between that of boys and girls, and to take action to close them. The school, aided by the sterling work of the federation's community worker makes a good contribution to community cohesion. Actions to promote this enable pupils across

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the federation to participate in a wide range of holiday and out-of-school activities. Positive links have been made with other schools and in other countries in which pupils have very different backgrounds. These factors strongly influence pupils' social and cultural development. Joint working between the heads of teaching and learning for each of the schools in the federation has helped staff to find a common sense of purpose, begin to explore best practice and establish a very strong commitment to working together. Governance of the individual local schools has moved to a joint governing body for the federation. Currently, the governing body provides satisfactory management, which is improving as systems have been established and the essential monitoring and evaluation of school effectiveness is now underway.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Through effective induction and links with parents and carers, children are well prepared for school, settle quickly and learn to play and work together. The teamwork of the Early Years Foundation Stage staff is the key to the provision's success. Staff are not afraid to 'think outside the box' and take risks to provide exciting and engaging learning experiences. The workshop where children can build bikes from scrap and the engaging 'minibeast hotel' in the Wild Area ensure that children have fun in exploration and do well in their learning. From starting points that are well below those expected for children of their age, they make good progress through both nursery and reception. Staff provide many opportunities for the children to acquire the basic skills of early reading, writing and mathematics. However, by the time the children transfer to Year 1, their abilities in reading and writing are behind those in other areas of learning. Leaders are aware of this and are working to promote the development of these skills in different ways and through different approaches. For example, intensive sessions to improve children's basic letter and sound skills are largely successful, though there are some missed opportunities for



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adults to promote 'tricky' word recognition and to develop pupils' use of all effective strategies in their early writing. Staff interact well with the children and are particularly adept at seizing on incidental opportunities to enhance learning. They assess, note and track children's progress and use this information to plan the next steps in learning. The outdoor provision is spacious and, alongside the school's impressive Wild Area, is beginning to realise its full potential as a permanent outdoor classroom. A good balance of activities led by adults and those chosen by children encourages independence and purposeful play. Learning is enhanced through timely adult intervention to extend children's thinking and use of language.

Leadership of Early Years Foundation Stage is fully aware of how the provision needs to develop to fully enhance the children's learning, development and well-being. Action plans are in place for this but are not at present firmly focused on how these actions will impact on children's learning, development and welfare. However, the dedication of the leadership and the whole team is rapidly driving the provision towards excellence.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

The return rate for the parents' and carers' questionnaire was below the average for infant and nursery schools. However, the overwhelming majority of those who replied are very positive in their views about the quality of provision and learning outcomes for their children and with the leadership and management of the school. Nearly all agree that their children enjoy school; that the school keeps their children safe and they are content with the education and care their children receive. Inspection evidence confirms the positive responses that parents and carers submitted about all aspects of the school's work. However, a very small number feel that the school does not help their child to have a healthy lifestyle. Inspectors visited lessons, observed pupils at play and lunch times and spoke directly with them about their personal development. These showed that, for their age, pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle; the school provides healthy and nutritious meals and snacks and pupils have access to a range of planned activities to promote their physical development.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Rawthorpe St James CE (VC) Infant and Nursery 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 60 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 234 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	46	77	14	23	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	39	65	19	32	1	2	1	2
My school informs me about my child's progress	32	53	27	45	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	33	55	26	43	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	38	63	22	37	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	47	31	52	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	52	25	42	2	3	1	2
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)	23	38	31	52	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	55	22	37	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	24	40	31	52	1	2	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	48	26	43	2	3	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	35	58	23	38	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	42	70	18	30	0	0	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and 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 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.

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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



11 April 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Rawthorpe St James CE (VC) Infant and Nursery School,  
Huddersfield, HD5 9NT**

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave the inspection team when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you and listening to what you had to say. We agree with you when you say yours is a good school!

These are the main things we found when we visited you:

- you and your teachers work hard to make sure that you make good progress in your learning
- many of you are now coming to school more regularly – well done
- you are very happy with the way all the adults look after you, care for you and help you to feel safe in school
- the headteacher and senior leaders manage the school very well and all the staff and the governing body work together in a strong team.

To help your school to improve even further, we have asked the headteacher, teachers and the governing body to do the following:

- make sure that you make even better progress by encouraging the teachers to think about how you are learning and to point you in the right direction to make your learning even better especially in reading, writing and spelling
- plan their work very carefully so that everyone knows exactly what needs to be done to improve your school further
- improve the attendance of pupils who do not come to school regularly enough.

You too can help your school by continuing to be the best that you can be!

Thank you once again for being so kind and friendly – we really enjoyed seeing you at work and play!

Yours sincerely

Eithne Proffitt  
Lead inspector

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