

Herringthorpe Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106840
Local Authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	363709
Inspection dates	20–21 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Rosemary Eaton

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	256
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anthony Trueman
Headteacher	Jane Fearnley
Date of previous school inspection	4 February 2008
School address	Chatterton Drive Rotherham South Yorkshire S65 2JW
Telephone number	01709 828168
Fax number	01709 828998
Email address	herringthorpe.junior@rotherham.gov.uk

Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors spent approximately eight hours observing teaching involving eight teachers. Meetings were held with staff, groups of pupils and members of the governing body. Informal discussions took place with a number of parents and carers and, during lessons, clubs and at playtimes, with many pupils. Inspectors listened to groups of pupils reading and talked to them about this aspect of learning. The inspection team observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents including samples of pupils' work in English and mathematics, assessment information, records of incidents relating to pupils' behaviour, safeguarding policies and procedures, and the school development plan. The 112 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were read and analysed.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average-sized primary school. The majority of pupils are White British. However, since the previous inspection the number of pupils from minority ethnic groups has increased. Nine languages are spoken within the school population. More pupils now join the school at other than the start of Year 3 or leave before the end of Year 6. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average, as is the proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Since the last inspection the school has moved into purpose-built accommodation which it shares with an infant school. The school's awards include ones for excellence in information and communication technology (ICT) and Enterprise. It holds the Activemark Gold and Artsmark Gold and has Advanced Healthy Schools status. The government floor targets for the standards reached by pupils have been exceeded for the past three 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	2
Achievement	2
Teaching	2
Leadership and management	2
Behaviour and safety	1
Does the school adequately promote the pupils' well-being?	Yes
Does the school adequately promote community cohesion?	Yes
Does the school provide value for money?	Yes

Key findings

- Pupils achieve well, making good progress overall. Progress in reading is outstanding and pupils' attainment in reading is above average. Attainment and progress are not as strong in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils have a clear understanding about what and how they are learning. The school teaches them about what is involved in good learning and provides plenty of opportunities for them to evaluate their own learning and follow their progress as they move through the school.
- Teachers choose activities and resources carefully. They frequently link subjects together. For example, topics such as 'the Vikings' are used to generate exciting opportunities for reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils enjoy practising important skills in such interesting settings.
- In their enthusiasm for learning pupils do not always pay quite enough attention to the accuracy of more technical aspects of their work, such as presentation in mathematics or spelling when they write.
- Pupils' very good behaviour contributes strongly to their learning because they are able to concentrate on their work without distraction.
- Pupils say that they feel very safe in school. They have a very clear understanding of situations that might be unsafe and, for example, the need for care when using the internet. Although bullying is extremely rare, pupils understand about different types of bullying and know what to do if they have any concerns.
- Leaders have high expectations for pupils and all aspects of the school. Their work has led to a number of significant improvements, such as higher attainment in reading. A close eye is kept on how well different groups of pupils perform, supporting leaders' consistent efforts to provide all pupils with equal opportunities.

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

Raise attainment and accelerate progress in writing and mathematics by ensuring that:

- teachers encourage pupils to check the accuracy of their work and refer to the full range of resources available to help them improve their accuracy
- pupils consistently present their work in mathematics accurately
- lessons always challenge pupils to work at the highest possible levels when working independently
- systems for assessing learning in mathematics are adapted to enable precise gaps in learning to be identified and ways forward planned
- the school's plans for improving writing and mathematics show the intended impact on pupils' outcomes so that the success of actions can be measured.

Main report

Pupils take great pleasure in learning and are genuinely pleased when they spot that they have achieved one of their targets. They say that their 'learning journeys', which set out graphically the progress they are making, help them to understand what they need to do in order to improve. A strength of their learning is the way in which pupils develop their ability to use basic skills to support their work in different subjects. For example, their well-developed skills in ICT enhance their writing and because they read fluently they can understand written problems in mathematics. Pupils work together very well, cooperating in pairs and groups to share ideas and complete tasks. They often learn particularly well through practical activities, including acting out roles, such as when Year 6 pupils applied their knowledge of the Second World War to improvise scenes in their 'Anderson shelter'. Teaching and the lively curriculum make sure that pupils have plenty to write about and are ready to use their imagination, for example, to write poems and stories. In their haste to get on with work pupils do not always use resources such as 'punctuation pyramids' that are available to help them with grammar or spelling. Although they make sure that they have achieved the learning goals for their lessons, pupils do not consistently check that their work is accurate and then correct errors in calculations or punctuation, for example. When setting out answers in mathematics, lack of attention to detail sometimes means that these can be misinterpreted.

By the end of Year 6 attainment is broadly average in English and mathematics but is above average in reading. Pupils make exceptional progress in reading because the school tackles it in a very systematic and highly creative way. Daily sessions for all pupils are planned thoroughly and imaginatively so, for example, Year 6 pupils read newspapers about events in the Second World War. By carrying out research pupils develop their ability to skim, scan and locate relevant information. Resources are chosen with great care, for instance, to compensate pupils who have fewer opportunities for reading at home. Pupils in Year 6 read fluently and with expression, predicting how a story might be developed by the author. Reading is a natural part of pupils' day-to-day lives, for instance, as they play games during the breakfast

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

club.

The school's analysis of the progress made by different groups of pupils shows clearly that variations are minimal. Gaps between pupils' achievement and that of pupils nationally are being successfully narrowed. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language make the same good progress as other pupils because a range of programmes and approaches are used to meet particular needs. The gap between the achievement of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and that of other pupils is narrowing because of the steps the school takes, such as making sure that teachers' planning takes full account of these pupils' needs. This year, for the first time, such pupils are amongst the school's highest attainers.

Teachers judge carefully the time they take to introduce lessons. This means that pupils have plenty of time for independent work. 'Learning breaks' are used effectively by teachers to pause pupils in order to check on their progress, often referring to individual pupils' targets, or to make specific points to move learning forward. The use made of assessment information has improved well and as a result lessons are nearly always planned to accurately meet the needs of different groups of learners. For example, resources and activities are often modified to suit the lower-attaining pupils. The same tasks are sometimes set for all pupils to work on independently. In these instances there are not always additional challenges built in to ensure that pupils work at the highest levels of which they are capable. Teachers promote speaking well through good use of questions and opportunities for pupils to talk together and act out roles. This means that they practise structuring sentences and this helps them to write coherently. ICT is used extensively and imaginatively to support learning. For example, in a literacy lesson, pupils used film to explore different methods of communication. The school shares its expertise in this area with other schools.

Pupils' very good behaviour during lessons and around school means that this is a happy place in which to learn and reflects the success of the school's varied ways of promoting moral and social development. Their enjoyment of school is reflected in pupils' above-average attendance and the numbers who join clubs and pursue their enthusiasm for hobbies such as dance, golf and cookery. In discussions and through their own questionnaire pupils are adamant that they feel very safe in school. Almost all parents and carers support this view. Pupils have great confidence in the school's ability to care for them and they learn to take some responsibility for their own safety. The school makes sure that pupils understand what is meant by 'bullying' and pupils say that there is 'hardly any'. They point out that they squabble with their friends from time to time and, because these are lively and energetic young people, they sometimes trip over or bump into each other when playing. They are very clear that these incidents are not bullying. A small minority of the parents and carers who completed the inspection questionnaire feel that bullying is not handled well by the school. The inspectors looked very closely at this issue. Accidents and incidents of all types are recorded thoroughly by the school with details of how they are dealt with. These records show that the extremely rare instances of bullying are followed up and

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

that the school does not shy away from taking firm action when necessary. Pupils confirm this and mention particularly the learning mentor's role in 'sorting things out'. Trained peer mediators and the playground 'friendship stop' help to resolve disputes and ensure that no-one feels lonely or left out. The school pays close attention to ensuring safeguarding requirements are met, supported by positive relationships with a range of external agencies.

The stunning displays of pupils' art and design demonstrate the success of efforts to promote their spiritual development and particularly their confidence and self-esteem. Pupils learn about the traditions of the cultures represented in the school population but also explore the local culture and heritage, for example, the steel industry.

The headteacher's determination to strive for excellence in all aspects of the school is unwavering and staff are committed to the drive for improvement. Self-evaluation is accurate, enabling leaders to identify the priorities that will have most impact on pupils' outcomes. Planning to achieve these is detailed and has led directly to improvement, for example, in teaching and attainment in reading. The intended impact of actions to improve writing and mathematics is not always precise enough to enable leaders to accurately measure the success of initiatives and decide which are most worthwhile. The leadership skills of middle leaders have developed well since the previous inspection through focused training and opportunities for them to analyse assessment information and lead teams of staff. Assessment systems have become increasingly rigorous, particularly in English. They enable teachers and leaders to identify precisely each pupil's strengths and where they need more support. Assessment in mathematics is a current priority as leaders have recognised that the current arrangements are not as stringent as those for English.

The governing body helps to provide the school with its clear capacity to improve further. It uses a range of methods to monitor the school's performance, providing a clear view of strengths and comparatively weaker areas. Members of the governing body also support the school in practical ways and are ready to hold it accountable, for example, for the progress of all groups of pupils. Ensuring equality of opportunity is at the heart of the school's work. Successful steps are taken to minimise any disadvantages that pupils may face owing to their circumstances. The school employs a range of approaches to encourage parents and carers to support its work and become involved in its life. For example, in addition to family learning opportunities, less formal approaches are used, such as invitations to see a demonstration of chocolate-making. Family members are included in visits and there are opportunities for parents and carers to come and read or play mathematics games with their children.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Herringthorpe Junior 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 112 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 256 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Q1 My child is happy at school	58	52	47	42	6	5	1	1
Q2 My child feels safe at school	68	61	40	36	3	3	0	0
Q3 The school helps my child to achieve as well as they can	56	50	46	41	10	9	0	0
Q4 The school meets my child’s particular needs	50	45	50	45	11	10	1	1
Q5 The school ensures my child is well looked after	64	57	40	36	6	5	1	1
Q6 Teaching at this school is good	61	54	44	39	4	4	2	2
Q7 There is a good standard of behaviour at this school	45	40	58	52	7	6	1	1
Q8 Lessons are not disrupted by bad behaviour	37	33	53	47	16	14	2	2
Q9 The school deals with any cases of bullying well	48	43	36	32	18	16	5	4
Q10 The school helps me to support my child’s learning	52	46	48	43	9	8	3	3
Q11 The school responds to my concerns and keeps me well informed	51	46	36	32	16	14	7	6
Q12 The school is well led and managed	53	47	36	32	19	17	4	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see 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.

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"> ■ The achievement of all pupils. ■ Behaviour and safety. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The effectiveness of leadership and management. <p>and taking into consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ how well the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
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.



22 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Herringthorpe Junior School, Rotherham, S65 2JW

Thank you for being so helpful, friendly and polite when we inspected your school. We enjoyed our short time with you and have some great memories, such as seeing so many of you dancing the cha-cha-cha! We have judged that yours is a good school. These are some of the school's best features.

- You like your school very much.
- You make good progress in mathematics and writing but outstanding progress in reading, so you reach above average reading levels by the end of Year 6.
- You behave very well in lessons and around school, so everyone can enjoy learning and playing.
- You and your parents and carers told us that you feel very safe in school.
- Teaching is good in your school and teachers choose activities carefully so you learn well and often use skills like reading, writing, ICT and numeracy in lessons.
- You understand how to be good learners and help to assess your own progress.
- Your art work is stunning.
- The school's leaders are doing a good job and have made sure the school has improved since its last inspection.

The leaders want the school to continue improving. We have asked them to make sure that your progress in writing and mathematics is as good as that in reading, so you reach the same higher levels. We have suggested a number of ways they can do this, such as asking you to: check your writing and mathematics work more thoroughly; set your mathematics out more carefully; and make use of resources such as 'punctuation pyramids' that will make your work more accurate. You can help by following your teachers' advice and continuing to work hard. We still want you to have lots of fun and to keep enjoying your time at school.

We send our very best wishes to each of you.

Yours sincerely

Rosemary Eaton
Lead inspector

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