

# Skelmanthorpe First and Nursery School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107652
<b>Local authority</b>	Kirklees
<b>Inspection number</b>	377618
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 November 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Yvonne Mills-Clare

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>	First
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–10
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	165
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Louise Sheehan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Boothroyd
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 January 2009
<b>School address</b>	Elm Street Skelmanthorpe Huddersfield HD8 9DZ
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons and observed seven teachers. Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, looked at samples of pupils' books, information about their progress, the school improvement plan and the school's procedures for safeguarding. They also considered questionnaires returned by 104 parents and carers along with questionnaires returned by staff and pupils.

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

- It evaluated the impact of teaching at all stages on learning and on enabling pupils to build on their progress as they move through the school.
- It considered how effectively teachers use assessment to provide activities that consistently challenge all pupils.
- It assessed the extent to which the curriculum meets the needs of all groups of pupils.

## Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average-sized first school where almost all the pupils are of White British heritage. A much smaller proportion than average of pupils is known to be eligible for free school meals. There are a lower than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and with a statement of special educational needs. At the time of the inspection, the deputy headteacher was on medical leave and the post was being covered by another teacher in the school. There is a community nursery on site which did not form part of this inspection. It is inspected separately and receives a separate report which is available on the Ofsted website.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate**  
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

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

**3**

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

**3**

## Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. It has, however, strengths in terms of a warm, welcoming ethos, the openness of its staff and the rich learning environment. This ensures that pupils are very happy to come to school. Parents and carers value the school and in particular its pivotal role at the heart of the local community. The view of one typifies the opinion of many by describing the school as, 'Very special..... with dedicated, caring teachers.' Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. They say that they feel safe, enjoy lessons and that adults take good care of them. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils adopt a healthy lifestyle and make a good contribution to the school and local community. The school works effectively with outside agencies to ensure that all pupils, including those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, are cared for well. Safeguarding procedures are effective.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with a range of skills that are, overall, typical for their age. They make satisfactory progress and their attainment is average by the time they enter Year 1. Restrictions of staffing often limit opportunities for children's free access to outdoor learning, while indoors not enough scope is provided for children to develop their skills of being independent and developing their language through meaningful talk. Progress overall is satisfactory. It is good in in Key Stage 1 because of effective teaching, and by the end of Year 2 pupils' attainment is above average. Progress slows in lower Key Stage 2, but for older pupils it accelerates. Attainment at the end of Year 5 is above age-related expectations. As a result of effective support, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress.

Although some good teaching was seen during the inspection, the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. There are variations in the quality of improvement targets set for pupils, differences in expectation for pupils' performance and discrepancies in the quality of marking. Senior leaders are aware of these inconsistencies reflecting an accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Middle leaders and managers, however, are not fully effective in driving improvement. The strategies in the improvement plans lack milestones against which the school can evaluate its progress towards its targets. In addition, there is often no permanent record of how effectively the school uses outcomes of this monitoring to identify the next steps in bringing about further improvement. Strategies to raise achievement in writing, particularly among boys, are beginning to show impact with their improved attitude

to writing. The good curriculum, enriched well by trips, visits and visitors, is being effectively used to narrow the gap in attainment between boys and girls in this area. This demonstrates the school's ability to raise achievement which, coupled with accurate priorities for improvement, demonstrates a satisfactory capacity to improve in future.

Up to 40% of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit from an Ofsted inspector before the next section 5 inspection.

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

- Raise the overall quality of teaching to at least good in order to speed up the rate of progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and lower Key Stage 2 by:
  - planning targets that focus consistently and sharply on next steps in learning
  - making certain that pupils know how well they are doing and how to improve, including through marking
  - ensuring expectations for the different ages and abilities are clearly identified for pupils through the use of agreed criteria.
- Ensure that monitoring and evaluation activities by leaders at all levels impact as fully as possible on provision and pupils' outcomes by:
  - developing and extending the monitoring role of subject leaders, including the Early Years Foundation Stage, so that they play a greater role in whole-school improvement
  - recording formally the outcomes from monitoring initiatives undertaken by leaders, including those of teaching, to provide a permanent record as a basis for evaluating improvement
  - using the findings of monitoring and evaluation consistently well to set further targets that are closely linked to pupils' needs and to their better acquisition of skills
  - ensuring that improvement and action plans are regularly and rigorously monitored and evaluated against specific targets and contain milestones towards those targets.
- Improve outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
  - providing greater opportunity for independent, child-initiated learning
  - extending the use of meaningful talk
  - ensuring outdoor activities are planned with clear purpose and promote all areas of children's learning as effectively as those they enjoy indoors.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3
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During lessons, pupils respond positively to their learning. For example, pupils in Year 1 had great fun working collaboratively in creating bar charts on laptop computers. Most pupils are keen to do their best, and their good behaviour and willingness to learn contribute well to their progress. However, overall, pupils' progress is no better than satisfactory because inconsistencies still remain in

teaching, leading to some year groups making slower progress than others. In contrast, those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, especially those with a range of significant and complex needs, make good progress as a result of the carefully designed pastoral and learning support programmes.

The school's calm, caring ethos promotes a strong sense of belonging and pupils' respond by showing care and courtesy towards others. Pupils feel safe at all times because they are confident that any issues are dealt with quickly and they trust their teachers implicitly. Their behaviour is positive, welcoming and friendly. They have a good understanding of the benefits of taking exercise and of eating fruit and vegetables. Pupils' average attendance, coupled with their secure skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology give them a satisfactory preparation for the next stage of their education.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
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	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 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>

## How effective is the provision?

Relationships between adults and pupils are good and there is good team work among staff. The atmosphere in lessons is purposeful and pupils' learning and behaviour are, in the main, managed well. In the most effective lessons, expectations are high, pupils are given clear instructions, interesting and relevant practical activities and they are challenged to produce their best work. In these better lessons, extended questioning is used well to challenge pupils' thinking and justify their answers, planning is thorough for all groups of pupils and information about their prior learning is well used to plan daily activities that improve pupils' skills and knowledge. In the less successful lessons, time is not used as effectively and pupils are not always active participants in their learning. This is particularly the case in lessons where teachers choose those with raised hands to answer questions and miss opportunities to involve all pupils in meaningful talk. Pupils do not always understand how well they are doing or how they can improve, because the quality of guidance given to them on how to improve their work, especially through marking, is not always precise enough.

<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

The good curriculum has been skilfully crafted to develop pupils’ skills and to provide ‘hands-on’ experiences through a range of visits, visitors, topics and themes to enthuse and motivate pupils, particularly boys. There is an appropriate focus on the development of literacy and numeracy skills and the curriculum supports pupils’ personal development well. These experiences are further enriched by well-attended after-school clubs.

Caring well for pupils is at the heart of the school’s ethos. Pupils receive good care, guidance and support throughout the school and say adults working with them are always accessible and any problems are resolved swiftly. The school also liaises effectively with outside agencies to support pupils and their families. Older pupils feel confident about their move to the next stage in their education because effective links have been forged with the local middle school. Close relationships with parents and carers ensure the very youngest children settle quickly into school. Pupils happily take on responsibilities across the school, which helps them to feel included at all times.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</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>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The leaders and managers have been successful in establishing a safe and caring learning environment by putting in place good safeguarding procedures, including regular risk assessments and good-quality training for staff in child protection. The headteacher knows the school well and provides sensitive leadership, which promotes a strong sense of teamwork. Middle and subject leaders ably support the headteacher, but their roles are not fully developed. As a result, they currently have a limited impact on whole-school improvement. Self-evaluation is generally accurate, but a lack of detail in school improvement plans reduces their impact on school improvement.

The governing body is supportive and challenging in equal measure and has a well-informed understanding of the school’s strengths and areas requiring improvement. It makes a positive contribution but is not fully involved in the systematic evaluation of the school's performance, which reduces the governing body's contribution to shaping the school's educational direction.

The school is committed to promoting equal opportunities but current variations in pupils' progress means that this aspect of its work is currently satisfactory. Discrimination of any sort is not tolerated and good procedures ensure the good inclusion of pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Engagement with parents and carers is good and promoted by good communication and a range

of workshops. Good partnerships with other schools and productive links with outside agencies ensure good support for pupils’ learning and well-being.

The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion by promoting a harmonious community and playing an active role in the local neighbourhood. The curriculum provides good opportunities to raise pupils’ awareness of other cultures and traditions. However, the school does not yet routinely evaluate the impact its planned actions are having on pupils’ understanding of the richness and diversity of modern society.

*These are the grades for the leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Although the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory, its provision has a number of good features. Children behave well, readily follow instructions from adults and sustain concentration in self-chosen and adult-directed activities. They take turns and develop an understanding of routines. They play and learn happily and safely and are curious about the world around them. For example, Nursery children were actively involved in making a fruit salad and their enthusiasm was clear.

Adults support and model spoken language, but, at times, miss opportunities to engage children in meaningful talk with each other. The indoor environment is bright, with a range of resources to entice children to investigate and explore and there is a strong focus on the development of children’s reading, writing and numeracy skills. Activities are chosen to engage children, but sometimes adult-directed sessions leave little chance for children to initiate their own learning. Staffing ratios limit opportunities for children to have free access to the outside area in the Reception class. This means that outdoor activities, while being enjoyable, do not always have a clear purpose nor are they as effective in developing all areas of children’s learning as those in which they participate indoors.

Records of children’s development celebrate their achievements. Parents and carers appreciate and enjoy being involved in their child’s learning journey through home visits and ‘Let’s Move, Let’s Talk’ workshops. The children are well cared for and have



a good understanding of their own safety, happily reaching for and putting on helmets before setting off on their tricycles in the nursery. The location of the nursery in a nearby building hinders the collaboration between the two Early Years Foundation Stage classes.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

**Views of parents and carers**

The response to the questionnaires was well above average with approximately 62% of parents and carers returning the forms. Of these, parents and carers were unanimously positive in their response to four out of the 13 statements. They say their children enjoy school, are kept safe; are pleased with their child’s experience of school and that the teaching is good. A small minority of parents and carers disagrees that the school deals effectively with any unacceptable behaviour. During the inspection, behaviour was good in the school and teachers managed it effectively. Inspectors concluded, after various discussions that procedures are in place to deal effectively with these concerns. However, inspectors did find that some pupils could make better progress and that not all teaching was promoting progress as effectively as it could.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Skelmanthorpe First 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 104 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 165 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	74	71	30	29	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	69	66	33	32	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	60	58	41	39	3	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	59	57	44	42	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	55	53	49	47	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	53	51	49	47	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	53	51	48	46	2	2	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)	51	49	44	42	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	46	44	52	50	1	1	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	47	45	42	40	7	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	41	39	53	51	2	2	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	45	43	53	51	3	3	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	63	61	40	38	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 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 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"><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.**



17 November 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Skelmanthorpe First and Nursery School, Huddersfield, HD8 9DZ**

What a delightful time my colleagues and I had when we inspected your school. Thank you for talking to us and for showing us your work. We appreciated especially hearing all about your visits, achievements and what you enjoy. It was very clear from our chats and the questionnaire replies we received from you and your parents and carers, that you enjoy school and feel safe and cared for well. The school provides you with a satisfactory education, but does many things well. You get on well together, your behaviour is good and you look after each other, you take plenty of exercise and know all about keeping healthy. Your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and you make a strong contribution to the school and the local community.

To improve your school further we are asking your headteacher, teachers and the governing body to do a number of things. We would like all of you to know how well you are doing in your work. Some of you know what teachers expect you to achieve in your lessons as you have targets to help you. We would like all of you to have these to help you in your lessons. Also, we have asked teachers to make sure that your targets and their marking of your books clearly show you how to improve your work. In addition, when all leaders in your school are finding out how well you are all doing we have asked them to use their findings to set targets that help you make even better progress and then record what they find so they have some way of measuring the improvement that has been made. We have asked that the very youngest children in your school have more scope to choose activities for themselves and that they talk to each other more about their learning. They enjoy being outside, so we would like them to have activities that really help them to learn and develop all their skills.

You can help by coming to school, on time, every day and always do the very best you can. I wish you all well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Yvonne Mills-Clare  
Lead inspector

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