

Knottingley Simpson's Lane Junior and Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108178
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	377710
Inspection dates	29–30 May 2012
Lead inspector	Michael Wintle

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	296
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Shirley Dawson
Headteacher	Gillian Wiles
Date of previous school inspection	25 June 2009
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Introduction

Inspection team

Michael Wintle
Lynn Brewster
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Additional inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 22 lessons taught by 10 teachers for a total of approximately 14 hours. They also observed a number of intervention activities. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, senior leaders, members of the local authority and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, listened to pupils reading, looked at the methods for tracking pupils' progress and at a range of school documents, including policies, minutes of governing body meetings, monitoring records, samples of pupils' work and reports from the school's professional partners. Responses from 77 parents and carers to the Ofsted questionnaire were considered, along with questionnaires completed by staff and pupils. The responses from the online questionnaire (Parent View) were also considered.

Information about the school

This is an average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportions of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are above average. The school meets the current floor standards, which set the government's minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced significant changes to the cohort of pupils due to a local authority amalgamation of two schools. The school has received several awards, including Investors in People, Sing-Up and Healthy Schools status.

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 of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because attainment in writing is not as strong as in reading and mathematics, and punctuality remains an issue for a small number of pupils.
- Pupils achieve well. Children start school with skills and knowledge below those expected for their age. They achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and start to catch up with pupils of a similar age. Attainment is still below average when they enter Key Stage 1, but the gap is narrowing. Pupils make good progress overall, especially at the upper end of Key Stage 2, and leave Year 6 with broadly average attainment in English and mathematics, although attainment in writing is lower than that in reading.
- Teaching is good throughout the school. All lessons are characterized by outstanding relationships between adults and pupils, and by pupils' positive attitudes to learning. On a few occasions, teachers do not provide sufficient challenge for more-able pupils so that they are quickly able to reach a higher level. Though always celebratory, marking does not inform pupils consistently about what they need to do to improve their work, so that they can make even better progress.
- Strong and trusting relationships underpin pupils' good behaviour. Pupils are positive about their school and say that bullying is rare. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe. The progress of a small number of pupils is slowed because they arrive late for lessons.
- Leadership and management are good at all levels; the headteacher has built a strong team who share the same ambitions and aspirations for the pupils in their care. Good leadership of teaching and management of performance mean school self-evaluation is accurate and school development plans are exemplary. Staff morale is extremely high and the commitment of staff is recognised by parents, carers and pupils alike.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment further in English and mathematics, and particularly in writing, by:
 - increasing challenge for all pupils and especially the more able
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in other curriculum areas
 - ensuring that the very best practice in marking is consistently adopted across the school.
- Improve pupils' punctuality further by:
 - making sure the school continues the promotion of good punctuality with parents and carers, and especially with parents and carers whose children are often late.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

The vast majority of parents and carers say that their children are making good progress. One typical statement summed it up: 'My child is making great progress both in his education and in his self-esteem.' Children enter the Nursery classes with skills and knowledge below expectations for their age, especially in communication, language and literacy and number skills. They get off to a good start in Nursery and make accelerated progress in Reception, particularly in their development of language and literacy skills. This is because adults give good attention to children's understanding of letters and sounds. These experiences prepare children well for their learning later in their education although, by the time they start Year 1, their attainment is still a little below that expected for their age.

Pupils make good progress throughout the school and especially in Key Stage 2. Their attainment in reading is below average at the end of Key Stage 1 but improving, and the gap with national expectations is narrowing because basic reading skills are taught frequently, regularly and skilfully. Pupils make good use of their knowledge of letters and sounds to tackle new words. They read regularly to adults and this is enhancing their confidence in reading aloud. Attainment in reading at the end of Year 6 is broadly average for all pupils. They are given good opportunities to use their reading skills when carrying out research and the reading of books is promoted well. Attainment is above average at the end of Year 6 in mathematics but below in writing because pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to practise their writing skills across all subjects, especially in the foundation subjects.

Work seen in pupils' books and around the school, together with observations made during lessons, shows that all groups of pupils make good progress overall. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress in English and mathematics. All pupils learn well in lessons. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils were being challenged in using and applying mathematical concepts. Pupils made good progress in their understanding of how to consolidate multiplication numbers and to use appropriate dialogue to explain their methods. Learning was fast paced and the whole room was buzzing with active and well-motivated pupils. The teacher's planning was based on a thorough

understanding of every pupil's ability. Consequently, activities met pupils' learning needs well. In some other lessons, especially writing, more-able pupils are not challenged sufficiently to produce their best work.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is good throughout the school. The excellent quality of relationships between adults and pupils is a common feature of all lessons. Where teaching is most effective, lessons are well planned, teachers make clear to pupils what they are going to learn and then set them off to try things out for themselves. Pupils show positive attitudes to their learning because the lessons are fast paced and the verbal feedback to help pupils make progress is often outstanding. There are also examples of high-quality marking that shows pupils how to improve their work. However, this is not consistent across all classes or subjects.

Teaching assistants are deployed effectively and play a vital role in supporting different groups of pupils. This ensures that most pupils make the same good progress over time, particularly disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs or those whose circumstances may make them potentially vulnerable. Occasionally, the pace of learning slows when there is not enough challenge for the differing abilities of all pupils. The more able pupils, in particular, often complete correctly many examples at the same level of difficulty, and this means their progress is not as good as it might be if they were provided with more challenging work.

Lessons provide many good opportunities for pupils to use their reading and mathematical skills throughout the curriculum. The teaching of reading skills is systematically taught and practised in many subjects. This is less so with writing; not enough emphasis is placed on writing across the whole curriculum. Parents and carers are wholly positive about the quality of teaching in the school and pupils also say that they enjoy their learning. The school's curriculum, with the clearly stated focus on tolerance, respect and support for others, has a marked impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. An example of this is the way that pupils in a Key Stage 2 class were swapping places with each other to research the differences between themselves. The clear questioning skills of the class teacher and a range of teaching strategies meant all pupils made good progress.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Parents and carers say that behaviour is good and that their children are safe in school. This was also the view reached by the inspectors. Pupils behave well in and around the school and are very welcoming to visitors. At the start of the Early Years Foundation Stage and right through the whole school, the large majority of pupils are courteous and helpful and show good manners. They all thoroughly enjoy telling adults about life and learning in their school. From an early age, pupils know and understand the rules and routines and they are expected to treat adults and each other with respect and to collaborate well in lessons. This has had a good impact on the quality of learning in the school.

Pupils are confident that all members of staff are there to help them and are adamant that any problems are quickly sorted out. Pupils talk maturely about incidents of bullying such as name-calling and cyber-bullying and state that it is not tolerated at Knottingley Simpson's Lane Junior and Infant School. Positive attitudes and a good work ethic are constantly reinforced. Younger pupils are highly motivated by the system of rewards which has had a

good impact on learning; they are well understood by even the youngest children. Pupils' movement around the school is generally careful and this reinforces personal safety. The overwhelming majority of pupils say that they are happy coming to school and feel safe. They demonstrate this through their attendance, which has improved over time and is now average. The school gives clear messages to pupils, parents and carers about the importance of good attendance and punctuality. The initiative of 'Golden Tickets' for 100% attendance over half a term has had a good impact on pupils coming to school and is welcomed by pupils and parents. Nevertheless, despite the many rewards and procedures for following up poor punctuality, a small number of pupils often arrive late for school.

Leadership and management

School leaders and the governing body provide good leadership to a very committed staff. The senior leadership team knows the school and the surrounding catchment area well. It has driven improvements so that attainment is now broadly average by the end of Year 6, and most pupils are making good progress. The headteacher leads by example and has developed an effective team who support and drive forward the vision for the school. This, coupled with the improvements made since the previous inspection, shows the school's strong capacity to improve further. The school's improvement partner commented that 'Simpson's Lane is a special school because the people there do exceptional things.' This is a view endorsed by the vast majority of parents and carers.

The management of performance is good. A key driver in improving the quality of teaching is the good system for monitoring teaching and learning across the school. Well-targeted professional development is ensuring that the quality of teaching is continuing to improve. Members of the governing body are well-informed and very aware of the data regarding pupils' progress and attainment and the link to the quality of teaching. In particular, success is underpinned by rigorous procedures in which everyone plays a part in checking the effectiveness of the school's work. As a result, the school's own self-evaluation is accurate and the systems in place for tracking pupils' progress are comprehensive.

Members of the leadership team have succeeded in developing a broad and balanced curriculum that is effective in supporting pupils' good progress and matching pupils' needs. The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The school has a very positive relationship with the vast majority of parents and carers, who say that they find school staff approachable and very helpful. The school promotes equality of opportunity well and is very effective in tackling any form of discrimination. Inclusion is therefore a key strength of the school. There is a good awareness of safeguarding issues among members of the governing body and all staff and, as a result, the school makes effective arrangements to ensure pupils are safe. The school is very cohesive and strives to ensure that pupils work well together and get on with each other.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



31 May 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Knottingley Simpson's Lane Junior and Infant School,
Knottingley, WF11 0PL**

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when we inspected your school recently. We enjoyed our visit very much and liked having the opportunity to talk with so many of you during your lessons and at playtimes. Thank you also for filling in the questionnaires. You and your parents and carers told us that Knottingley Simpson's Lane Junior and Infants is a good school and we agree. Here are some of the good things we found:

- The teaching is good and this helps you to make good progress.
- You get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and achieve well during your time in school. Attainment is broadly average by the time you leave school.
- You are well-behaved in your lessons and around school. You also told us that you enjoy school and feel safe and secure while at school.
- You have good relationships with your teachers and we found that you worked hard in the lessons we saw.

The headteacher and all the other adults in the school, including the governing body, are working hard to make school a good place to be and a school that you all are proud of. We have asked your school to do a number of things that we feel will make your school even better. They are:

- to improve your attainment in English and mathematics and especially in writing
- to make sure you have more exciting opportunities for writing that involves all the subjects
- to make sure that all pupils arrive at school and to lessons on time.

I hope that all of you can help your school by continuing to try your very best in all lessons, coming to school regularly and on time and always behaving well. We wish you the best for your future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Wintle
Lead inspector

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