

Sandhill Primary School

Dearne Street, Great Houghton, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S72 0EQ

Inspection dates 17–18 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress throughout the school. They reach levels of attainment in English and mathematics that are at, or above, those expected for their age by the time they leave the school.
- Teaching is good and improving. Teaching in all subjects excites pupils and helps them to learn quickly. In most lessons, adults are used well in the classroom to ensure all pupils receive appropriate help.
- Pupils have a very positive experience and enjoy school. Relationships are good and adults care a great deal for pupils' well-being.
- Pupils behave well in lessons, at break times, and around school. They feel safe and are confident that any problems that do occur will be resolved quickly by adults.
- Attendance has improved and is now average.
- Leaders and managers regularly check the quality of teaching and this has been effective in raising standards.
- Governors take an active part in school life and work hard to challenge and support the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In some lessons, particularly in mathematics, adults do too much for the pupils and do not allow them to work things out for themselves.
- Just occasionally, all the pupils do the same task and this means that some pupils have work that is too hard or too easy.
- Marking of books does not always help pupils to know how to improve their work.
- Although the school council has arranged some fund raising and other school events, they do not have enough say in what happens in the school.
- A small number of pupils do not always arrive at school promptly in the mornings.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons in a range of subjects. The headteacher and deputy headteacher both took part in joint lesson observations with the inspection team. Inspectors also attended an assembly and observed other school activities.
- Inspectors analysed 45 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke with several parents.
- Inspectors analysed 30 staff questionnaire responses.
- Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, pupils, the local authority and all members of the senior leadership team.
- A number of documents were studied, including: the school’s own information about pupils’ progress, lesson observation records, the school’s self-evaluation, development plans and performance management records. Documentation relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance were also scrutinised.

Jo Sharpe, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Joe Woodyatt

Additional Inspector

James Reid

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a slightly larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is higher than that found in most schools.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The school exceeds the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the learning and progress of pupils in lessons by:
 - giving pupils more chance to work out how to solve problems and to think and do things for themselves
 - making sure that all pupils are always set work that is at the right level for their needs
 - making sure that marking always helps pupils to improve their work.
- Give pupils more of a say in shaping things that happen in school by encouraging the school council to gather and consider the ideas of all the pupils at the school.
- Improve punctuality by working closely with parents to ensure that all pupils get to school on time every morning so that they do not miss the start of lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Over the last three years, achievement has improved and pupils in all classes make good progress from their starting points and leave school with levels of attainment in English and mathematics that are at least in line with age-related expectations.
- Many children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are below those expected for their age, especially in language and communication skills. They make good progress and, by the beginning of Year 1, reach levels of attainment which are only just below average.
- Pupils' progress and attainment is tracked carefully by the school and any pupils not making fast enough progress are given extra help to catch up. Pupils supported by school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, also do well because of the high quality, well-targeted and timely support that they receive.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding make similar progress to their peers. The school uses the extra funding it receives for these pupils to pay for extra adult support. Governors tell parents how this funding is managed and spent by putting this information on the school website.
- In most lessons observed during this inspection, pupils were seen to enjoy learning and make good progress because teachers and other adults gave them work at the right level and allowed them to solve problems and make decisions. In the few lessons where this does not happen, adults do too much for pupils and this limits their independence.
- All pupils make good progress in reading due to the importance given to reading in school and the effective support from parents. They are taught to use a range of techniques when learning to read and pupils clearly enjoy reading and choosing their own books.
- Although there was a slight dip in attainment in reading in the 2012 assessment tests at the end of Year 6, standards in reading at the school are good.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils enjoy learning because the teachers know their pupils well, are sensitive to their needs, and make learning fun. This means that pupils are keen to learn. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage had great fun with pipes and tubes when playing with water. This activity helped to develop their social, communication and problem solving skills well.
- In the best lessons, teachers give pupils the opportunity to make decisions and do things by themselves. However, when teachers use too many worksheets or give too many instructions, pupils do not learn to think for themselves.
- All teachers use WALT (We Are Learning To) and WILF (What I'm Looking For) and this helps to guide and direct pupils to understand what they are learning and what they need to do to succeed. In most lessons, teachers continually check pupils' understanding and then adapt their teaching in order to make sure work is being pitched at the right level. However, this does not happen in every lesson which means that pupils do not always learn and make progress as quickly as they could.
- Teachers have high expectations of the presentation of pupils' work and expect consistently good English across all subjects.
- Mathematical calculation skills are taught well on a daily basis. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to select and apply these skills for themselves in problem-solving situations.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well and receive high quality training to ensure that their support is effective, such as in a Year 5 mathematics lesson.
- Teachers' skilled questioning and the opportunities for pupils to talk and discuss their ideas helps teachers to find out what pupils already know and what they need to do next. This was clearly evident in a Year 3 literacy based science lesson, where the teacher's probing questions and use

of talk partners created a brisk pace to the learning.

- There is a clear marking policy which is used regularly throughout the school. Although pupils are given guidance about how to improve their work, the feedback they have is not always detailed enough or as helpful as it could be. Consequently, teachers are missing opportunities to support and guide them through the next steps in their learning.
- Most of the parents who responded to Parent View consider that their child is well taught.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are happy, enjoy coming to school and feel safe. Pupils are polite, friendly and welcoming. They talk comfortably to visitors and hold doors open for them without any prompting from adults.
- Behaviour at playtimes and lunchtimes is good. Older and younger children play well together and playtime arrangements involve the older pupils caring for younger children.
- Pupils are comfortable to turn to school staff if they have a problem because they are confident that they will receive the help they need. Pupils are aware of the behaviour code, consider it is fair, and understand why it is necessary. They say that any form of bullying is extremely rare and feel sure that if it happened, it would be stopped.
- Teachers use a range of strategies to manage behaviour and pupils respond quickly and appropriately. Any accidents or incidents of poor behaviour that do occur are responded to promptly by adults and properly recorded.
- The Parent Support Advisor plays an important role in ensuring that any issues with behaviour are communicated swiftly to parents so that any difficulties can be dealt with sensitively and quickly.
- Attendance has improved and is now average. This is the result of a consistent and concerted effort by the school and parents to challenge unnecessary absence. Nevertheless, a small number of pupils are not always punctual in the mornings and this means that they miss the start of lessons.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and this is reinforced in a number of ways, such as an assembly where local police informed pupils about staying safe at Halloween and on bonfire night.
- The school council is actively involved in fund-raising events and has brought about a few changes within the school. However, these are somewhat limited. Pupils would benefit from being more involved in the shaping of this busy and dynamic school environment.

The leadership and management are good

- The commitment and determination of the headteacher to improve the quality of education the pupils receive is shared by governors, the senior leadership team and all adults at the school. The leadership team communicate well together and the improvements seen since the last inspection are a clear indication that their actions have been effective.
- School leaders check the quality of teaching and organise training to help teachers improve their skills. All are committed to doing their best for pupils. Leaders know they must make sure that pupils learn well in every lesson.
- Lesson observations by senior leaders take place regularly. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and all staff are always looking for ways to make teaching better.
- Leaders make sure that all the pupils have the chance to learn well and have opportunities that are appropriate for their age and individual needs.
- School leaders keep detailed records of pupils' progress and these help to identify any pupil, or group of pupils, at risk of falling behind. These pupils are then given extra support to help them to make better progress.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is promoted well. They have a

clear understanding of right and wrong and events such as the Sikh workshops and Danceathon serve to enhance pupils' cultural awareness.

- The wide range of subjects on offer allow pupils to develop key skills and the range of exciting topics motivate pupils to work hard. A number of extra-curricular activities enthuse and inspire pupils further.
- The Parent Support Advisor plays an important and active role in providing pastoral support for parents and pupils. She has been instrumental in bringing about the recent improvements in pupils' attendance.
- A range of activities have recently been developed to engage all parents in the life of the school. Parents' coffee mornings, workshops and Friends of Sandhill meetings are well attended. Other developments such as the Parents' Forum and Governors' Forum, which encourage parents to share their views, are still at an early stage of development.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet current requirements.
- The local authority provides light touch support and is highly supportive of the work of leadership and management team.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors challenge the school well. They work hard to bring about school improvements and demand first-hand evidence to answer any queries that they have.
 - Financial planning is transparent and parents are informed about how the school spends the pupil premium funding. Most of this extra money is being used to provide additional adult support in the classroom.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	106583
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	405044

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	260
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gavin Smith
Headteacher	Judith Hirst
Date of previous school inspection	9 September 2010
Telephone number	01226 345030
Fax number	01226 754302
Email address	Sandhill.primary@barnsley.org

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