

Fieldhead Junior Infant and Nursery School

Charlotte Close, Birstall, Batley, West Yorkshire WF17 9BX

Inspection dates 16–17 January 2013

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 benefit from excellent levels of care and support and this enables them to feel safe and ready to learn.
- Good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development contributes to good behaviour and safety. Pupils are polite and willingly help others.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at Year 6 have risen quickly to being average overall. Given the low starting points to the Early Years Foundation Stage, this represents good achievement.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have good quality support from talented teaching assistants. This contributes to their good progress.
- Teachers provide interesting lessons for pupils. The work is challenging enough to extend pupils' existing skills and knowledge.
- Staff work hard to widen the pupils' experience of the world. A host of educational visits, visitors to school and clubs after school extend this.
- The school is a highly valued and an essential part of the community. Parents talk with great feeling about how staff go out of their way to help them and their children.
- The management of staff is excellent. Teachers and teaching assistants willingly take responsibility for aspects of the curriculum. They have the confidence to try things out and know where they can improve.
- Underpinning the success of the school and its rapid improvement is the ambition, determination and skill of the headteacher. Her leadership, together with a strong senior leadership team and dedicated governing body, gives the school the capacity for continued improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Standards in writing are below other subjects. Some older pupils in Key Stage 2 struggle with spelling, the use of grammar and handwriting. Pupils do not write enough in different subjects.
- There are inconsistencies in teaching. At times expectations are too low for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. The quality of marking and its use to improve pupils' work varies too much.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 11 lessons.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, governors, the staff team, a group of parents and an external consultant who supports the school.
- The inspectors took account of the four responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and referred to two surveys of the views of parents conducted by the school.
- Evaluations of a range of school documentation were used to help make inspection judgements. These included the procedures relating to safeguarding, the improvement plan, the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its performance and records of pupils' attainment and progress.

Inspection team

David Byrne, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sheila Kaye

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is well above average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school provides before-school care for pupils each morning and offers holiday clubs.
- Since the last inspection, the school has been remodelled to bring together in one building the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 classes.
- A significant number of changes in staff have occurred since the last inspection, including the appointment of a new headteacher.
- The school is in the process of converting to an academy scheduled for March 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Maintain current improvements and raise pupils' achievement further by:
 - rectifying the weaknesses in spelling and grammar of some pupils in Key Stage 2
 - improving handwriting
 - widening opportunities for pupils to write to a good standard in different subjects
 - removing inconsistencies in the quality of teaching by giving all pupils more scope to take responsibility for their learning
 - ensuring that the differences in the quality of marking are removed.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Progress has accelerated rapidly due to improvements to leadership and management that have raised the quality of teaching. Pupils are willing to learn and enjoy their lessons, working hard to improve their skills and knowledge.
- When children start school in the Nursery their skills are low, particularly in language and communication and aspects of personal and emotional development. Good teaching leads to good and improving progress. The proportion reaching the expectations for their age increases quickly in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Despite this, by the end of the Reception year standards have not fully caught up and are below average.
- In Key Stage 1, standards are on the rise after a time when they were low. In 2012, teacher assessments indicate that pupils reach broadly average standards in reading and mathematics. In writing, despite some improvement, standards were below average. Robust data, checked in the school, show that for the current class, standards have continued to get better and are close to the national average. The percentage of pupils exceeding the expectations for their age is increasing. This is due to higher expectations of staff and better teaching.
- In Key Stage 2, standards have been rising very quickly. Progress exceeds national expectations with a particularly strong picture in mathematics. In 2012, standards were broadly average. This good achievement, allowing for the low starting points to school, is set to continue given the school's data and inspection evidence.
- In each class in Key Stage 2, the proportion of pupils working at the expectations for their age is increasing quickly. As time goes on, more and more pupils are exceeding expectations. Progress in mathematics is particularly strong while in reading it is good. In writing, progress is currently accelerating, but there remains a legacy of weak achievement from the past. Some pupils struggle with spelling and use of grammar, and handwriting lacks consistency.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive well-organised and sharply focused support. This leads to them making better-than-expected progress and benefiting from the welcoming nature of the school which includes them in all that goes on.
- There is no statistical evidence of a significant difference between the standards and progress of pupils in receipt of pupil premium and those who are not.

The quality of teaching is good

- Excellent leadership of teaching by the headteacher and deputy has raised the quality of teaching. It is good overall with some outstanding features. This promotes good progress for all pupils. It is not outstanding because there are still some inconsistencies in the quality of marking, in expectations for pupils in writing and in enabling pupils to take responsibility for learning.
- Throughout the school, excellent relationships are evident in all classes. Lessons are managed effectively so that learners enjoy what they do and are rarely disrupted. Planning is informed by each pupil's previous learning. Tasks are matched well to the needs of individuals. Typically, lessons have a very clear focus, which is shared with pupils. This helps them to focus their energies on achieving the purpose of the lessons and begin to evaluate how well they have done in the lesson.
- A good emphasis is placed on reading and writing across the school. In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, good and at times excellent teaching of reading and writing is building towards pupils' future success. In Key Stage 2, much is being done to improve handwriting and spelling and widen the pupils' understanding of grammar and punctuation.
- Pupils say they love reading and this reflects the good teaching they receive. They report that they like it when teachers share a class novel with them. Writing is less popular, particularly amongst older pupils. Recent initiatives to boost their enthusiasm, for example by linking writing

to real experiences and events, are reducing such negative attitudes. In Year 6, for example, pupils have created some good quality writing linked to the life of Sir Titus Salt the founder of the historic village of Saltaire.

- Mathematics teaching is good and pupils say they like this subject. The basics of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division are taught well.
- Frequently, but not consistently, time is given to enabling pupils to evaluate how well they have learnt in each lesson. This gives most pupils a good and developing understanding of their own achievement and of their targets to aim for to push on their current skills and knowledge. Marking varies in quality, however, and comments to guide pupils' improvement are not always followed up to make sure they have responded.
- The role of teaching assistants is very effective. It has changed in recent years and now involves them much more in teaching individuals and groups at risk of falling behind, especially in reading and mathematics. This support includes some pupils in receipt of pupil premium and also disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are positive and enthusiastic about learning. Pupils say that they like their teachers because 'they always listen to us'. This adds to pupils' feeling of security and gives them the confidence to learn.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage children settle quickly into school life and form good relationship with others. Pupils really enjoy coming to school. Every morning they arrive beaming and excited about the day ahead. Their obvious enjoyment of school is a key factor in improving attendance in recent years. It is now just above average.
- Behaviour is good and at times outstanding. Staff are consistent in the way positive behaviour is rewarded and manage very well the few occasions when it is not. Pupils know what to expect when they misbehave. Parents note that behaviour has improved greatly in recent years. Bullying or discrimination is rare and parents and pupils are adamant that any incidents are swiftly and effectively resolved.
- The school's excellent levels of care mean that children who have personal difficulties receive high quality support. A very experienced counsellor is available weekly to support pupils with emotional and personal needs and all staff are dedicated to supporting pupils and their families.
- Pupils are polite and helpful in class and around school. They are proud to be attending Fieldhead and are willing to contribute to it. Pupil councillors are delighted to take on responsibility, for example for taking the views of classmates to staff. Playground leaders help others at play and pupils help in many ways in classrooms and at lunchtime.
- Pupils understand how to stay safe. They are aware of the risks involved with using the internet, given guidance about road safety and made aware of the risks of abusing alcohol, tobacco and drugs.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is inspirational. She has quickly gained the respect of all involved with the school; a number of parents described her as being 'brilliant!'. Rapid improvements are underway with rising standards, much better behaviour and higher quality teaching. Staff morale is very high, pupils' confidence is rising quickly and the support of parents is increasing.
- The improvement is due to the headteacher's crystal-clear ambition for the school and decisiveness, relentlessly focused on providing the best possible education. The school is very accurate in its evaluation of its performance. Together with a talented deputy and senior teacher the headteacher is implementing a number of courageous strategies to raise standards.
- Staff are extremely well managed. Newly qualified teachers benefit from excellent support. All

staff are encouraged to state not only their strengths but also where they are less confident. This culture leads to training that is tailored to meet individual needs. Regular reviews of each teacher's and teaching assistant's performance lead to strategies for extending their professional development. Only the highest quality training is provided so that staff skills are constantly improving.

- Subject leaders for mathematics and literacy manage their subjects well. The provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is effectively managed. All staff, regardless of experience, are keen to contribute to the management of subjects, although some are still developing their ability to do so.
- The curriculum has been restructured to enable better reading, writing and mathematics. The approach taken to developing early reading and writing is raising standards swiftly at Key Stage 1. The school is aware of the need to improve writing skills at Key Stage 2 but not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to write in subjects across the curriculum.
- Staff are determined to broaden the children's limited experiences of the wider world. Initiatives to engage Key Stage 1 pupils in the environment by exploring the school grounds are extending their experiences. Year 6 pupils gained experience of the business world by developing market strategies for turning £20 into a profit. They did this - and then rewarded themselves with a visit to the local cinema!
- The appointment of a full-time parent support worker underlines the school's commitment to encouraging families to be involved with their children's education. Great trust exists between families and the school, and good communication is in place.
- In order to widen the scope of staff, close partnerships exist with a local school and others in the region. Excellent support from an external consultant contributes to the school's improvement. Productive links with the local Children's Centre benefits links with families in the community, enabling support to be given where possible.
- The role of the local authority has been helpful in working with the Early Years Foundation Stage team to secure their assessments, in training the parent support worker and in termly visits to verify the school's judgements of its own performance.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body shares the enthusiasm of the headteacher; it is energetically supporting the school on its journey to improvement. Regular training strengthens the knowledge of governors, many of whom are new to their role. Governors understand the school's attainment data well and the implications for the quality of teaching. Governors check that finances get the best out of staff and ensure income is well spent. Pupil premium, for example, is spent on enabling teaching assistants to help such pupils where required. Governors make sure that all arrangements for safeguarding fully meet statutory requirements. They keep a close eye on the performance of the headteacher and staff and targets are set to secure the school's further improvement.

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	107679
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	400929

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	216
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maxine Wood
Headteacher	Lianne Lomas
Date of previous school inspection	10 May 2010
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