

Featherstone Girnhill Infant School

Hardwick Road, Featherstone, Pontefract, West Yorkshire, WF7 5JB

Inspection dates 4–5 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils make excellent progress and achieve outstandingly well. From very low starting points, a high proportion of pupils attain average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the highest level of attainment is just below the national average.
- Teaching is consistently good and much is outstanding. Teachers and classroom assistants are highly committed to pupils' success and very determined that pupils achieve high standards. The thorough assessment of pupils' learning ensures that pupils have very good advice and constant support for improving their work.
- Behaviour is exemplary and attitudes to learning are outstanding. From Nursery Year to the end of Year 2, pupils greatly enjoy and are stimulated by excellent educational experiences. The world of learning opens up for them in all of their work and activities. They are greatly enthused by learning new knowledge and skills and feel very safe and secure in school.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and a very committed staff team are highly ambitious. Their high expectations produce excellent teaching and outcomes for pupils. Governors are robust in supporting and challenging the school ensuring, alongside leaders, the school maintains its strong capacity to sustain improvement.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited seven lessons observing four of the school's five teachers. One lesson was observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, pupils, representatives of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The records examined included data on pupils' attainment and progress, a sample of pupils' work in reading, writing and mathematics, a summary of the school's view of its own performance, procedures for keeping pupils safe and the most recent external review of the school's work.
- There were too few responses made by parents to Ofsted's on-line questionnaire (Parent View) for the inspector to be able to access them.

Inspection team

Alan Lemon, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is well above average. The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school provides a daily breakfast club and an after-school club once a week for pupils.
- A children's centre on the same site as the school and managed by the governing body is inspected separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise teachers' expectations even higher in order that the proportion of pupils reaching the highest level of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics increases and is at least in line with the national average.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Many children start the Nursery Year with very low levels of skills and development. Children settle very quickly and thrive on the wide variety of work and play offered. They make rapid progress from the outset in all areas of development, especially in speaking, reading and writing, because adults give very close attention to encouraging these key skills. Given a choice of activities, boys and girls were interested in choosing writing or counting games.
- By the end of Reception Year, children achieve outstandingly well. There is a significant increase in proportion of children reaching the expected or a good level of development compared to that at the start of Nursery Year. Improvements in the Early Years Foundation Stage provision, that for learning outdoors in particular, impact positively on children's learning.
- The very good start made in Nursery and Reception Years in developing children's literacy is convincingly captured in the check on Year 1 pupils' skills in linking letters and the sounds they make. Coming from their very low starting point in the Nursery Year, in 2012, pupils achieved broadly average results matching Year 1 pupils nationally.
- By the end of Year 2, in 2012, standards in reading, writing and mathematics were broadly average, and slightly higher than the national average, as a result of pupils continuing to make exceptional progress. Compared to the proportion of pupils starting Year 1 at the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics, three times as many reached this level by the end of Year 2. The school's data for 2013 and inspection evidence show that these impressive outcomes are being maintained.
- Throughout the school, adults provide pupils with excellent support if they have any difficulty with learning ensuring all pupils have an equal opportunity to achieve outstanding results. School leaders are rightly ambitious to build further on Year 2 results and increase the proportion achieving the highest levels in reading, writing and mathematics even further. This is realistic given the good proportion of pupils who are only an extra terms work below reaching the highest level.
- Pupils supported through the pupil premium performed exceptionally well in 2012. They outperformed other pupils in reading and writing and matched them in mathematics only because 100% of pupils attained the expected level.
- The very close check kept by leaders and teachers on each pupil's progress greatly reduces the risk of any falling behind. Well-planned approaches to reading, writing and mathematics make sure those who need it get the extra boost to keep them on track. The breakfast club each morning is very effective in helping the few pupils who find learning to read particularly difficult to practise and gain the necessary skills.
- Pupils with disabilities or special educational needs all benefit from well-targeted support in lessons. Some benefit as well through the pupil premium funding. Their needs are very well understood and managed ensuring they make very good progress over time.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teachers and their assistants know pupils extremely well by using rigorous, accurate assessment procedures, and by keeping a constant check on learning during lessons and thorough marking of pupils' work. Pupils are given good advice on improving their work and their literacy and numeracy targets focus sharply on the next steps they need to take to get to the next level. Leaders understand the school is at the point where more pupils can now attain the top level in reading, writing and mathematics if teachers raise their expectations even higher.
- There is a good amount of time given to teaching literacy and numeracy. Many opportunities are provided in all activities for pupils to use and improve their key skills. When children from Nursery and Reception Years are outside, adults stay close to them asking questions and very effectively encouraging conversations. Children examining the plants they had grown and their

insect habitat were very animated in observing and describing what they saw.

- Lessons are very well planned and teachers use very good approaches for promoting learning, reflecting their knowledge of pupils and how each pupil learns best. As a result, teaching is lively and fast paced, with pupils thoroughly enjoying lessons. The division of pupils into small groups at a similar stage of learning leads to them being set work matched to their ability and is challenging. Similarly, in this way some small groups receive very effective additional support from teaching assistants, particularly where pupils have special educational needs.
- New knowledge and skills are clearly explained to pupils and are very well illustrated, especially in mathematics. For example, in a year 2 mathematics lesson this ensured pupils understood the different scales used for measuring, such as time and capacity.
- Teachers are highly skilled in teaching reading. They set high expectations and from an early stage. This stretches pupils' skills beyond word recognition into understanding stories, making inferences and finding answers to questions in the text. The key features of writing well are also expertly taught and constantly emphasised, so that Year 1 pupils confidently recall facts about punctuation and language that make their writing interesting.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They respond very positively to teachers' high expectations for good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. Pupils gain a great deal of self-confidence from the earliest stage. They are very keen to be involved and to contribute in every lesson and activity.
- There is a calm, purposeful atmosphere throughout the school, in lessons and on the playground. Bullying among pupils is not evident and pupils feel that bullying is not a significant feature of their experience at school. Pupils say this is because their concerns, if they ever have one, will be dealt with quickly and effectively by an adult.
- In the Nursery and Reception Years, children are used to getting out and putting away their outdoor play equipment and take seriously the responsibility for doing so. Doing jobs and managing responsibilities is a significant part of each pupil's experience.
- Pupils have much respect for adults and each other, which they extend to how they think about and understand others whose culture and beliefs are different from theirs. They are considerate and polite. The school has a concise, simple set of rules for behaviour to guide pupils. Pupils quote these precisely. They use them to behave appropriately and in doing so demonstrate strong moral awareness and knowledge of right and wrong. They are very aware and disapproving of when and by whom the rules are broken.
- In 2012, attendance was below average and it is above average this year as a result of leaders' concerted effort to tackle absence. The figure for attendance in this small school are significantly affected by a few pupils' absence.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- School leaders are very ambitious in raising pupils' achievement, whatever their starting points, to as high a level as possible. Now that they have produced excellent results, leaders are fixed upon taking as many pupils as possible to the next level of attainment.
- Staff value pupils greatly and this ensures each pupil thrives in their personal and academic development. Their arrangements for keeping pupils safe are robust. Throughout the school, staff are very consistent in the way they encourage pupils to work hard and achieve. They are a small, closely-knit team who work together very effectively and ensure their performance throughout school meets leaders' high expectations.
- All staff take part in checking the effectiveness of the school. Senior leaders keep a continuous check on pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. The school's strengths and areas for improvement are clearly understood. They inform its well-articulated development plans and objectives for teachers related to strengthening of their performance and professional

development. The local authority checks the school's performance annually and provides light-touch support knowing the strengths of leadership and management.

- Leaders have an excellent capacity for improving the school even further and have made exceptional progress on improvement since the last inspection. This had a positive impact upon standards of literacy, Early Years Foundation Stage provision and in pupils' attendance. They are also increasingly successful in including many parents in supporting the school's academic aims.
- The curriculum gives very strong emphasis to literacy and numeracy. Provision for reading, writing and mathematics is very well developed the school. A wide variety of activities is offered, which capture pupils' interests and develop their talents, after-school sports for boys and girls in particular. The whole curriculum makes a significant contribution to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a full membership, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Governors scrutinise robustly data on pupils' progress and the impact from spending the pupil premium funding on pupils' achievement. The headteacher's reports on the quality of teaching and teachers' performance are now evaluated by governors in relation to pupils' outcomes, teachers' pay and their career advancement. Governors are well organised to fulfil all their responsibilities and have a range of expertise, in finance, health and safety and education to do this effectively. They stay in close contact with the school and know the school's work well from the headteacher's and other detailed staff reports and by making regular visits.

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	108168
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	412704

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	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	107
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kay Binnersley
Headteacher	Sally Lowe
Date of previous school inspection	22 September 2009
Telephone number	01977 722690
Fax number	01977 722691
Email address	headteacher@girnhill.wakefield.sch.uk

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