



Linthwaite Clough Junior Infant and Early Years School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107693
LEA Kirklees
Inspection number 277811
Inspection dates 19 September 2005 to 20 September 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs June Sharpe CfBT Lead Inspector

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Chapel Hill
School category	Community		Linthwaite
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD7 5NJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01484 222576
Number on roll	297	Fax number	-
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Triggs Ruth
Date of previous inspection	25 September 2000	Headteacher	G Newton

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This average sized primary school is situated in the Colne Valley, a few miles from Huddersfield. The number of children claiming free school meals is average, as is the proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The majority of children are white and, although there are a few children from minority ethnic heritages, none speak English as an additional language. Attainment on entry to nursery is a little below what is typical at the age of three. The school has gained several national awards for children's achievements in the physical, artistic and health education aspects of their work. The Victorian building has been refurbished, and the basement has been converted to provide an early years unit, where children of nursery and reception age are taught together (Foundation Stage). The headteacher is seconded to the local authority for three days each week to promote best practice in Foundation Stage provision. The deputy headteacher takes on the role of headteacher on the remaining days. All of the children are taught in mixed age classes.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This good and improving school has some outstanding features. Its capacity to improve even further is very good. Inspectors agree with school's views on its overall effectiveness. Parents and children, rightly, hold the school in very high regard, and it provides good value for money. The school is very well led and managed, and the headteacher's excellent leadership is the main reason for children's impressive personal and social development and the very high quality of care they receive. Girls and boys are very happy at school and thrive on interesting and exciting work and activities. Children of all ages, abilities and ethnic heritages work and play together in harmony and make good progress. The school's success with improving standards is the result of good teaching and learning, particularly matching work to children's needs so that they reach the goals set for them. Although standards are high, children do not do as well in mathematics as they do in English, science and art and design. The school has started to rectify this, but there is further work to do, especially in getting more children up to the higher levels of attainment. The early years unit is an exemplar for other schools. The high quality of provision and good standards give children an enjoyable and successful start to their education.

What the school should do to improve further

Continue to raise standards in mathematics by:

- providing more opportunities for children to learn to solve problems and understand mathematical graphs, tables and charts;
- getting more children to reach higher levels of attainment than expected for their ages;
- having a stronger focus on children's progress in monitoring teaching and learning in lessons.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children start nursery with below average skills and make good progress in all classes, ensuring good achievement and high standards by Year 6. This confirms the school's view of achievement and standards, as do the very high 2005 national test results for children at the age of 11. Children's attainment in Year 2, although significantly better than the national average in recent years, dipped in 2005 because the children had a much lower starting point than usual. Standards are improving and most girls and boys reach the challenging targets that teachers set for them. The improving picture is set to continue this year and current assessment information indicates continued good progress and achievement in Years 1 and 2.

Children in the early years unit make very good progress in personal, social and emotional development, and this gives them a successful start to their work in Year 1. While children from Year 1 to Year 6 make good progress, overall, their achievement

in reading, writing and science is often better than it is in mathematics. The school has worked hard to raise standards in writing in recent years, and this has paid dividends, as seen in improving test results, especially the results of the more capable children in Year 6. Children's ability to solve mathematical problems and to understand graphs, tables and charts, however, could be better. The school knows that part of the problem is that the more capable children do not always do as well as they can. Action, taken last year to rectify this, improved standards in the Year 6 mathematics tests, but not as successfully as it did in English, where improvement was particularly impressive. The school knows that further effort is needed in bringing standards in mathematics more in line with the high standards in English and science.

Children with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress. This is because of the determination of teachers to help them to succeed as well as all other children, no matter what the obstacles. All children do particularly well in art and design, and the standard of their work on display is much higher than in most other schools.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school's main thrust of helping children to become happy, confident and responsible learners, who are well prepared for their next stage of education and for adult life, is embedded firmly into the whole life of the school. The school's view of outstanding achievement of children in this area is well justified. Visitors immediately feel welcome and see that children take a pride in themselves and their work. Attendance is consistently above national average. In the industrious and purposeful atmosphere, children enjoy thoroughly everything they do and are keen to do their best. Their behaviour is exemplary, and they are polite and friendly at all times. This is because the school fosters a strong sense of respect for everyone, as seen in the way that children show care and consideration for others and relish opportunities to take on responsibilities. The school council, All Children Count, (ACC) is an excellent example of how children learn to take responsibility. Children rise to the school's high expectations of them to play their part in the school community. They know that children's views do matter, and that the school will take them seriously. Children understand very well the importance of keeping safe and healthy.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. This is because close attention to personal development and well-being is at the very heart of this orderly and exciting school community. As a result of children's strong sense of community and responsibility, there is no need for rewards or sanctions. A grateful parent said that, if she had attended a school like this, she would be a much more confident adult now.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good teaching and learning enable children of all abilities to make good progress, overall. Highly professional and hardworking teachers keep abreast of educational changes and developments, while continuing to raise the standard of children's work. Teachers and support staff work together as a strong team to provide a consistently supportive learning environment. Positive relationships ensure that children behave well, listen carefully and make the good progress expected of them. Many children commented that 'teachers are very helpful because they take time to explain things to us'. Teaching mixed-age classes is not a problem, because teachers are very good at assessing children's attainment, setting targets for their future learning and planning work to help them to reach individual goals. Children know what they are good at and how they need to improve. There is an established pattern of working, in which children accept, without question, that they might be learning different things to other children. Teachers' very thorough and detailed assessments and marking of work also mean that children with additional learning needs get the extra help they need from an early stage. Teachers are now working on checking that the more capable children always do as well as they can, especially in mathematics.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

A broad, balanced and very enriching curriculum ensures that children of all ages make good progress and achieve well. It is planned thoughtfully, with the varying needs of children in mind, and with emphasis on enjoyment in learning and achieving. Work in personal, social, health and citizenship education is a strong feature, which serves very well to realise the school's vision for its children. Children in Years 1 to 6 thoroughly enjoy Confidence Creating Learning when they take part in a wide range of activities away from their own classrooms. This is most beneficial for children in Years 1 and 2, because the work builds successfully on what they have learned in previous classes. This initiative shows how keen the school is to respond to national guidance about innovation in the curriculum, but it has still to demonstrate clearly the progress being made by children over time. The school has already started to plan more opportunities for children to do better in mathematics by solving problems and learning to interpret graphs, tables and charts.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school's whole ethos supports children's learning exceptionally well. Children say that the headteacher runs the school for their benefit. Parents are overwhelmingly pleased about the standard of care for their children. Secure child protection and health and safety arrangements are seen in day-to-day practice. Every child has an

adult to turn to for help (staff mentors). Termly interviews with staff mentors ensure that adults know the children very well as individuals and can respond quickly to problems. There is very good support for children with particular educational, personal or social needs. Children recently new to the school, for example, are helped to quickly feel safe and secure. Helpful marking of work and clear learning and personal development targets involve children well in their own progress. When one child said cheerfully, 'I am way ahead now', and another said, 'His writing is better than mine, so our targets are different', there was a sense that children enjoy having something to aim for and take pleasure from reaching their goals.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher values the contribution of everyone in creating a happy and inclusive school, where there are high standards, and where achievement is good.

The main reason that the school is thought of so highly by parents and the community is that the headteacher has a clear view of what she wants for the children. She leads by example in pursuit of realising her vision, involving everyone concerned with the children's education along the way. She is never complacent, and always striving for further improvement, for example, in national test results. The fact that the headteacher works for the local authority for three days each week does not cause any disruption to children's education. This is because the capable and supportive acting headteacher complements the headteacher, and they work exceedingly well as a team, so that there is seamless leadership. A very strong sense of teamwork permeates the whole school. An example is the way in which all staff in the early years unit work together for the good of the children.

The governing body make a strong contribution, and are not afraid to hold the school to account although some governors are fairly new. They share the school's good knowledge of its own strengths and weaknesses, and check progress with the improvements being made. Teaching has improved as a result of regular checks on the quality of lessons. The headteacher knows that the next focus should be checking that all children make the best progress possible in mathematics lessons. The school manages improvements well. The written plans, however, do not always make it clear how everyone will know if there has been enough improvement, and whether spending leads to best value.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for welcoming us to your school last week. We enjoyed talking to you and finding out about all the things you enjoy doing. You were very friendly, and we would have liked to have been able to stay longer.

We are pleased to tell you that we decided that you have a good school, and that you are helping to make it even better all the time. The things that we particularly liked were:

- your headteacher makes sure that you enjoy school and do as well as you can;
- your teachers work very hard and help you to reach your targets;
- your work is of a good standard, and your art and design work is very good;
- your behaviour is very good indeed and you always work hard and help one another;
- the school cares for you all equally and looks after you very well.

We have asked your headteacher and school governors to make your school even better by:

- giving you more chances to learn to solve problems in mathematics and to understand the information in graphs, tables and charts;
- making sure that even more of you reach higher levels in mathematics lessons and tests;
- checking that teachers always help you to learn as much as you can in mathematics lessons.

Thank you for helping us so much with the inspection. We hope that you will carry on enjoying learning and helping teachers to make your school such a happy place to be.