



Headfield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107707
LEA Kirklees
Inspection number 277815
Inspection dates 27 February 2006 to 28 February 2006
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	Vicarage Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Thornhill Lees
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		Dewsbury, West Yorkshire WF12 9PD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01924 325293
Number on roll	546	Fax number	01924 325296
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs A Whitworth
Date of previous inspection	9 October 2000	Headteacher	Mr G Smith

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This very large junior school takes children mainly from three infant and nursery schools in the locality. It operates on two sites, in five separate buildings. Most of the children are of Pakistani or Indian heritage, and a few are from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds, including white British. The first languages spoken by most children are Panjabi, Gujarati and Urdu, and many children are still learning to speak English. The number of children claiming free school meals is above average. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. Most difficulties are related to speech and communication problems. In the last three years, there have been considerable staff changes, including a new headteacher and deputy headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Inspectors do not agree with the school's view that it is a satisfactory school. It is an inadequate school, providing unsatisfactory value for money. Significant improvement is required in relation to the inadequate standards of achievement reached by children and their slow progress over time.

The school is a happy, friendly and welcoming place, where children enjoy a wide range of activities. Satisfactory leadership and management ensure good personal development and well-being, improving attendance and good parental satisfaction. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have kept the school running smoothly through extremely challenging times, and relationships are good. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and improving, so that children's rate of progress is speeding up. There are still not enough good lessons, however, to raise standards of achievement as quickly as required. Children's speaking skills are poor and this holds them back in most aspects of their work. Measuring children's progress over time and checking how well the school is performing presents problems. This is because teachers' assessments of children's achievements, when they join the school in Year 3, do not paint as good a picture as that indicated by their results in the Year 2 national assessments in reading, writing and mathematics. Consequently, the school thinks that children make better progress than official figures suggest. Improvement in performance since the previous inspection has been inadequate. Now that the school has a more settled and strong team of enthusiastic teachers, with a shared determination to raise standards of achievement, there is satisfactory capacity to improve in the future.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards of achievement for all groups of children quickly by ensuring that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good or outstanding across the school.
- Improve children's speaking skills by planning more opportunities across the subjects for them to talk about their work and to practise using new words.
- Gain an accurate knowledge of attainment on entry to Year 3 from which to measure children's progress over time and to check how well the school is performing.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

The school's view of inadequate achievement and standards is correct. When children transfer from infant schools, their attainment is slightly above average, although the school's assessments show that children's speaking and listening is below average.

This weakness, especially in spoken English, holds children of all ages back in most aspects of their work. Year 6 national test results in English, mathematics and science have been very low for the last three years. The school failed to meet its targets in 2005, because of exceptional staffing difficulties, including in Year 6. Test results indicate that girls and boys of all ages underachieve, and that progress has declined over time. Owing to recent improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, however, the school's records show that children's rate of progress is now improving, particularly in Year 6. Children are on track to meet the challenging targets that teachers have set them. The school anticipates building on the small improvements already seen, in the proportion of children reaching the standard expected by the age of 11 in English, mathematics and science, as well as having more children reaching higher levels. Nevertheless, many children still have a significant amount of catching up to do. Although children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those at an early stage of learning to speak English, achieve satisfactorily in lessons when they work in small groups with adults, test results indicate that the most capable children of all ethnic groups underachieve.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school that children's personal development and well-being, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Children have organised charitable fund-raising events, for example, and raised large sums of money for national overseas appeals. Children say that they like coming to school because it is a friendly and happy place. Attendance has improved rapidly in recent years, because of the school's determined efforts, and it is now satisfactory. Children are caring, polite and welcoming towards visitors. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy, such as taking part in energetic sports, eating a healthy diet and drinking plenty of water. Children move confidently and sensibly around the extensive school buildings. Behaviour is good, and children know that staff will deal quickly with the rare incidents of bullying. Most children enjoy lessons and are pleased when they succeed and get things right. Children apply for, and are interviewed for, specific responsibilities, such as being librarians and helping in the office. They carry duties out in a very mature way. The school council makes a very good contribution to helping children to learn how to get along with other people in a community. Year 6 school council members, for example, attend meetings at a local science college, to gain an understanding of how large organisations are governed. Through working towards the Investors in Pupils award, children gain knowledge of how the school is financed. Although the school prepares children very well for their future economic well-being by taking part in these activities, a lack of strong, basic literacy and numeracy skills lets them down.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Following significant staff changes, the school is putting a new policy for teaching and learning into practice. The school's main priority is to increase the proportion of good or outstanding lessons, and there are some early signs of success, especially in Year 6. Although no inadequate lessons were seen during the inspection, the school agrees that even more good teaching is needed if all groups of children are to achieve as well as they can. Teachers plan lessons carefully and with a clear purpose, so that children understand why they are doing things. Teachers work closely with support staff to make sure that children have access to an adult for help if they need it. They use interactive boards well to focus children's learning and to make best use of teaching time. Good relationships with children and high expectations of behaviour ensure that teaching time is not lost dealing with problems. Teachers are collecting a lot of information about children's attainment. There are inconsistencies between classes, however, in how they use the information to set short-term learning targets for children, and in the extent to which they involve children in their own learning. Some children know exactly what they have to do to reach a higher level of attainment, but others are unsure. In recognition of children's poor speaking skills, teachers are making determined efforts to plan opportunities for children to practise using the new vocabulary they have learned and to express their ideas more confidently through speech. They could do more, however, to draw the few disinterested children into conversations, and to provide a better balance between time for listening and time for speaking.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The broad and balanced curriculum meets requirements. It meets the needs of all children satisfactorily, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those speaking English as an additional language. The curriculum is enriched very well, for example, by many opportunities to take part in music, sport, environmental projects and much more. As one Year 5 child said, 'There is something for everyone'. The school works hard to widen children's experiences of the world beyond home and school. The purchase of a minibus has enabled children to go on more visits out of school. The school also makes good use of financial grants to invite specialist visitors into the school. Good provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education helps children to learn how to stay safe and healthy. By discussing topics, such as bullying and litter, children increase their understanding of how their actions affect the lives of others. The school has extended the range of ways in which children practise their speaking skills, but some good opportunities are missed. Standards have risen in science and children are making better progress as a result of an increased emphasis upon practical investigations. Similarly, children's mathematical understanding is improving, because they link their work in mathematics to work in science.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

All adults show care and concern for the welfare of the children. They are quick to notice when children need help, and teachers work closely with support staff and outside agencies to provide it. Bi-lingual support assistants step in when children who are still learning to speak English need explanations in their home language. Likewise, children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have the help they need to meet the targets in their individual education plans. Learning mentors, the neighbourhood officer and behaviour improvement workers support children well by dealing with problems affecting their learning and by getting parents involved. Child protection arrangements are secure and arrangements for health and safety are satisfactory. Provision is not as good as the school thinks that it is, however, because children do not achieve as well as they should over time. The school has started to set challenging targets for individual children, and track how well they are doing. It is too early, however, to see the full impact of this action on the children's overall achievement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Since the change of headteacher and deputy headteacher in 2002, the school has faced and overcome significant challenges. These include several difficult staffing issues, many staff changes, building works, problems associated with a school on two sites, an old and inadequate building, a changing and mobile school population and poor attendance. The headteacher is a determined and respected leader, with a passion to move this school forward. A capable and enthusiastic deputy headteacher and four senior teachers share the vision for a better school. Consequently, there is now a strong sense of teamwork, good relationships at all levels and a fairer distribution of responsibilities. Now that previous staffing difficulties are resolved, the school is heading in the right direction, with satisfactory capacity to bring about the significant improvements needed in the future. The school has appropriate plans to raise standards of achievement, with new subject co-ordinators working alongside more experienced staff. Success is already evident, for example, in the improved teaching and learning of the investigative aspects of science. All of the key issues from the previous inspection have been put right, and the school has introduced successfully many very good initiatives to improve the quality of children's education. The school's performance in national tests, however, remains in the lowest 5% in the country. This means that overall improvement since the previous inspection has been inadequate. Governance is satisfactory. The school has yet to identify clearly children's attainment on entry to Year 3. As a result, it is difficult for staff and governors to measure the school's performance. Nevertheless, evaluation of the school's work is largely accurate, and priorities for improvement are the right ones for the school. Although financial management is effective, inadequate standards and achievement mean that value for money is unsatisfactory.

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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?	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	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?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	4	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	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 for making us feel so welcome when we visited your very large school, and for helping us to find our way around it. We enjoyed our short time with you, especially talking to you and finding out about all the interesting things that you do.

What we liked most about your school

- You are very polite, friendly and well behaved.
- Everyone gets along very well together.
- Your attendance has improved a lot and you usually get to school on time.
- Teachers and other adults work hard together to help you to learn.
- There are a lot of extra activities for you to attend.
- Your headteacher and deputy headteacher are very keen to keep on improving your school.
- You are getting much better at investigating in science lessons.
- Your parents and carers are pleased with the way that adults look after you.

What we have asked the school to do now

- Make sure that all of your lessons help you to learn as much as you can.
- Give you even more chances to practise using new words by talking to other people.
- Find out for certain what you can do when you first join the school in Year 3.

We hope that you continue to be a happy school.