



Slaithwaite Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior and Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107711
LEA Kirklees
Inspection number 277817
Inspection dates 3 July 2006 to 4 July 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Lesley Clark CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Holme Lane
School category	Voluntary controlled		Slaithwaite
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD7 5UG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01484 222586
Number on roll	110	Fax number	01484 222586
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Ros Batley
Date of previous inspection	4 October 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Elaine Bradley

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small village Church of England primary school with extensive grounds including a woodland area and allotments. It is a National Trust Guardianship school which means that the Trust works with the school to develop learning outdoors. Most children are of White British heritage; an average proportion have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or have statements of special need. There have been considerable developments in the Foundation Stage as well as many staffing changes in the last three years. The school numbers are increasing rapidly.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding features which help children to become happy learners and socially confident people. Children's personal development and well-being are outstanding and children have a real say in what goes on at school. The school has developed apace in the last three years as a result of effective leadership and management, with some inspiring ideas. The provision and quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage are now outstanding and give children an excellent start to their education. The use of the school's extensive grounds and woodland as learning spaces gives young children immense scope and freedom to learn through exploration and imaginative play. The fruits of this outstanding start are emerging in Year 1. Standards are above average by the end of Year 6 because children are well taught and they follow a good curriculum. Standards are higher in mathematics and science than in English. Although children read a lot they do not always use what they read to help them with their writing and so their written vocabulary is fairly narrow. Children are given outstanding care and support in terms of their personal development but academic guidance, whilst good, is less strong. Much-improved assessment procedures have enabled teachers to target more precisely areas which need further improvement. The next step is to involve children in checking whether they have met small achievable targets so they learn from their mistakes. The school hesitated to say that any area of its work is outstanding because its long term aims have yet to be fully realised. It has made good improvements since the last inspection and gives good value for money. It is well placed to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Give children more opportunities to read and talk about books so they develop a more extensive vocabulary which they can use in their writing.
- Involve children in checking their work against small, achievable targets so that they understand what they have to do to improve its quality.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children's achievement is good. From an average starting point, children reach above average standards by the end of Year 6. Standards are highest in science, with well over half the children reaching the higher Level 5. This is because work is practical and challenging and more able children flourish because they have to work things out for themselves. Comparatively fewer children reach the higher levels in English. This is because they do not have as many opportunities as they might to read or discuss what they have read and so their vocabulary is not extensive. This in turn affects their writing. Children explained that it is important to be neat and accurate in mathematics otherwise they make mistakes. They take less care with their writing, however, which is more careless in terms of spelling and presentation. The trend in the school's results is upwards, with noticeable improvements recently. The school's assessments show

that the improved provision in the Foundation Stage over the past three years is having a marked impact on children's early literacy skills and their creative and personal development. The school is well set to meet its increasingly challenging targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The personal development and well-being of children are outstanding. Behaviour is exemplary, as are children's attitudes to work. Bullying is not an issue and children work and play happily together. Attendance is above average because children like coming to school. Best of all, they like their teachers: relationships between adults and children are certainly relaxed and friendly. The school council fully represents children's views and some of their most successful initiatives, such as the school's allotments, contribute significantly to children's economic awareness as they organise selling their produce to raise money. Children are well aware of the importance of leading healthy lives. Recently, the school council ran a sponsored 'wheelie day' when all children brought wheeled vehicles to school. They raised almost half the amount required for the climbing wall all children agree they needed. Because children feel their views matter they take immense pride in their school and behave very responsibly. Thoughtful assemblies and discussion times in class foster outstanding understanding of spiritual, moral and social values. Children have a good appreciation of the diversity of multicultural Britain through a broad religious education and links with schools with a different racial mix. Through drama, children effectively explore social and racial issues, an example being when Year 6 children presented plausible scenarios as newcomers at high school. They concluded, 'you must share and trust', which is what they do at this school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall; it is outstanding in the Foundation Stage and in Years 5 and 6. A very good feature throughout the school is the sensitive partnership between teachers and teaching assistants to ensure that the needs of children of different abilities, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are met. Where teaching is least effective, unclear instructions and questioning which is too general slow the pace of learning. In more successful lessons, the interactive whiteboard is used most effectively by teachers and children to demonstrate and explain. Questions challenge more able learners to think ahead while slower learners are given opportunities to go over basic points again. In outstanding lessons, imaginative ideas give an edge to learning, as when children calculated numerical values of letters on a sliding scale with the additional challenge of doubling the value of vowels. Foundation Stage children learn almost without realising it from imaginative activities that give a real purpose for reading and writing accurately. For

example, children were urgently engaged in writing kind messages in response to the dragon's angry ones which he had left in the woods, 'to make him feel happier'.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school makes good provision for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) and outstanding provision for personal development. ICT is used effectively in other subjects. There is a need to extend the provision for reading to enhance children's use and understanding of vocabulary. The Foundation Stage curriculum is outstanding, with the outdoor curriculum an integral part of their learning. As a National Trust Guardianship school, the school works closely with the local warden to develop the outdoor learning environment for all children. The use of the allotments, woodland and wildlife areas are important factors in children's good achievement in science at the end of Year 6. The school offers a good range of extra-curricular activities at lunchtimes, including different sporting activities to promote health and specialist clubs such as model making. Educational visits to other schools, organised by letters and e-mails from the school council, further extend children's learning experiences.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

There is a high level of commitment to promoting children's health and safety. Child protection arrangements are robust and risk assessments carefully attended to. The school works well with parents and outside agencies to ensure that children, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make good progress. Children's individual personalities are very well known. Adults are always prepared to offer a cheery greeting or to have a quiet word in the ear. Children therefore grow in confidence and maturity because they feel secure. Academic guidance, while good, is less strong. Although the improved assessment procedures have sharpened children's progress, children do not always understand what they have to do to improve the quality of their work as they do not make a connection between the level they are aiming for and what they have to do to reach it. Individual education plans are well thought out to develop small steps of learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership, management and governance are good. The leadership of the headteacher is inspiring and is the driving force behind the rapid changes and improvements over the last three years. The school accurately identified what needed to be improved and approached change systematically. Good management systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the work of the school and standards have risen in the last two years because of consequent improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. Staffing changes have been used to alter fundamentally the way the school operates, as in the

Foundation Stage, where the innovative outdoor curriculum provides a model of outstanding practice recognised throughout the county. Plans to extend a similar outdoor curriculum to all classes are under way. Assessment procedures have been tightened up considerably and are now used effectively to monitor children's progress. With high standards as its main aim, the school improvement plan effectively charts the school's ambitious progress towards excellence, taking children's needs fully into account. Children clearly matter and their views, via the school council and questionnaires, are considered as seriously as those of adults. Plans to develop more personalised learning are in place as a result. Governors have a good knowledge of the school and ask the right questions. Financial management is extremely good and the school uses its resources prudently. There is a strong sense of teamwork from all staff, including the caretaker, and the result is a thriving school. It has excellent potential for further improvement.

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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?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	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	2	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	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	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 for welcoming me to your school and for being so friendly and helpful. I really enjoyed my visit and want to share my findings with you. I think you go to a good school and there are some outstanding features.

The best things about your school:

- you all learn well because you are well taught and your teachers make lessons interesting and fun, especially with the interactive whiteboards
- the Foundation Stage is outstanding because children can learn both indoors and outdoors and make excellent use of the woodland and all the different learning spaces
- I think that your school helps you grow up into mature and responsible people
- I was impressed by how much the school council does and at how involved you all are in what goes on at your school
- displays on the walls give you a lot of information to help you to learn
- I think your headteacher and all adults in school run the school well.

What I have asked your school to do now:

- I believe you need more opportunities to read and talk about books so you can build up a much wider vocabulary to use in your writing
- it would help you to improve your work if you were more involved in checking your work against small targets so you could see the progress you are making.

I really enjoyed talking to you and think you are lucky to have such lovely grounds and interesting things to do at your school. I wish you well for the future.