



St John's Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior and Infant School, Golcar

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107739
LEA Kirklees
Inspection number 277827
Inspection dates 19 September 2005 to 20 September 2005
Reporting inspector Mr Adrian Simm CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Fieldhead (off Leymoor Road)
School category	Voluntary aided		Golcar
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD7 4QQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01484 222212
Number on roll	245	Fax number	01484 222212
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Revd Crompton
Date of previous inspection	5 April 2000	Headteacher	Mrs K Benford

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is popular and over-subscribed. It is set in a residential area of mainly white British families. It is a stable community with few families moving in or out of the area. A very small percentage of families do not speak English at home. The attainment of pupils on entry is around national expectations. Increasingly, parents of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are opting to send their children to the school. A growing number of pupils with autistic tendencies now attend. The school is involved in a number of initiatives to ensure high standards such as the Department for Education and Skills Primary Learning Network and the Primary National Strategy Sustaining Success.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The leadership team and governors accurately evaluate the school as good. It has a strong history of achieving high standards and good personal development within a caring, Christian, family-orientated school community. This matches the view of parents and pupils. During the inspection, parents praised pupils for 'showing loyalty, friendliness and compassion for others' and applauded the way staff value diversity and individuality. The school has made good progress since the last inspection. It is forward-looking and open to new initiatives for improving pupils' standards and personal development. Standards in the Foundation Stage are good and accommodation, resources and management are real strengths. In three of the last four years, pupils' standards were significantly higher than national expectations. Overall, pupils progress well throughout the school because of good teaching and learning, but standards and progress in information and communication technology (ICT) could still be stronger. The school is well led and managed and has the building blocks in place to improve even more effectively. The progress the school has made in a short time in developing ways of identifying pupils who are meeting, exceeding or falling short of expectations, is outstanding. However, monitoring the quality of teaching and learning just as rigorously has not yet been put in place to the same extent. The school has the enthusiasm, skills and vision to succeed and gives good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' progress in ICT by ensuring resources and staff training are focused on pupils' skills in the strands of 'control, monitoring and finding things out'.
- Use the wealth of data that is available in school about pupils' standards and progress for each class, to focus rigorously on how to achieve a consistently high quality of teaching throughout the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' progress is good throughout the school and starts the moment they enter the reception class. Standards by Year 2 improved considerably in the last 12 months and are generally above average. This was as a result of a concerted and successful effort to improve the quality of teaching and learning with pupils in Years 1 and 2. Pupils' standards by Year 6 in 2005 were close to average but lower than in previous years. This was mainly because of the high number of pupils in the class with learning difficulties. However, pupils still progressed well relative to their previous levels. Current Year 6 pupils are on track to meet the challenging targets set for them indicating a return to the strengths in standards in English, mathematics and science over the previous three years. Whilst they have also improved since the last inspection, standards and progress in ICT could be stronger still, particularly in the strands of 'control, monitoring and finding things out'.

Pupils with learning difficulties progress well. Pupils whose first language is not English and the very small number of pupils with a range of different cultural backgrounds progress equally as well as others. The school ensures that boys and girls and those of different abilities do equally as well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. They make good progress in developing independence and responsibility, and taking initiative. Their enthusiasm, for example, in organising and benefiting from 'the fruit shop', eating healthy lunches and enjoying a very wide range of physical education activities is praiseworthy. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils are mature responsible individuals, well able to work together harmoniously.

Parents are very supportive of the school's values and this in turn has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes to school. The consistently high levels of attendance reflect this. The school council enables pupils to learn about democratic decision taking and contribute to school improvement. Pupils commented on how their ideas of introducing play equipment at playtimes led to improved behaviour and more purposeful play. Pupils do not consider bullying to be an issue and express confidence in adults in school to quickly sort out any problems should they arise. They feel safe in school because they say everyone is here to look after them. Pupils speak highly of the Year 6 'Befrienders' who sort out minor conflicts should they arise.

Pupils are polite and friendly, in part due to the good role models set by staff. This results in positive relationships, which, in turn, create an environment where pupils are prepared to have a go and try their best. For example, in the Green class the agreed target of 'Great Greens get better everyday' is already spurring them into improving their writing.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Overall, teaching and learning are good and stem from effective ways of assessing pupils' work. One of the strengths is how carefully most teachers ensure that pupils understand exactly what they should learn, how they can do this and check with them their levels of success both during and at the end of lessons. However, monitoring of teaching and taking action, particularly in sharing good practice, is not rigorous enough to ensure consistency across all classes. Setting targets for individual pupils to achieve is good and strengthening. All pupils, such as those with learning difficulties or higher attaining pupils, receive the effective support they deserve in lessons, in specially arranged booster groups and in focused support for those with learning difficulties. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is a particular strength; teachers organise a wide

range of experiences for children, all of which encourage their achievement and personal development.

Pupils enjoy their learning and want to do well. This was very obvious in an outstanding Year 6 mathematics lesson, where children's excitement was tangible when they discovered easy methods of multiplication by doubling and halving. Staff strive very hard and are generally effective in overcoming the drawbacks of the small size of classrooms for the number of pupils on roll resulting from the school being so popular and oversubscribed. In the current Year 3 and 5 classes, pupils' personal development in particular, is cramped due to high numbers in classrooms originally designed for far fewer children.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is well matched to the needs of children of all abilities. The school's practice in helping pupils to adopt approaches to healthy living is outstanding in lessons, at break times, and in the good range of after school clubs. Work in classrooms is enriched with additional opportunities to take part in educational visits, for example, in pupils' work with local councillors to increase their understanding of local democratic processes. The school strives continuously towards excellence and enjoyment for the pupils in everything they do. Developing pupils' thinking skills, linking learning through different subjects and promoting active learning are current targets. This is preparing pupils well for the future.

The school is careful to ensure that all children are involved. The Reception class curriculum is well planned across all areas of learning. The school has worked successfully in ensuring continuity in planning between the Reception class and Year 1. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is good and there is clear and early identification of their precise needs and quick action to address these. Effective liaison with external agencies produces a strong team approach. This is working well, as is the developing support for gifted and talented pupils such as the mathematics 'master classes' for pupils in Year 5.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

A strong ethos of care pervades all aspects of school life. Staff are sympathetic to the needs of all pupils regardless of ability, gender or ethnic background. Good behaviour is promoted effectively and pupils are made aware of how to deal with bullying should it arise. Child protection and health and safety routines are in place and known by all staff apart from those recently appointed, whose training is taking place shortly. Staff want all pupils to succeed in their work and to be safe and content. Systems to track pupils' progress are good and developing at a pace. Induction procedures for children in the Reception class are good and welcomed by parents. There are good systems also to support pupils joining the school later on.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's enthusiasm is infectious. A strong senior team has a real commitment to raising the achievement of all pupils and to promoting pupils' personal development and embracing their different home backgrounds. Governors ensure that the school is well resourced. This has had effective impact on provision and achievement, for example in ICT. They are involved well in school life but minutes of meetings of their sub-committees are not always kept. This means that, for example, whilst pupils are well cared for and safe, the governors' role in this is not as clear as it should be

Self-evaluation is comprehensive, honest and generally accurate. Steps to improve the school take parents and pupils' views seriously into account. The only differences between the school's evaluation and that of inspectors were in the judgements on pupils' personal development and progress in improvement since the last inspection. Inspectors judged these two areas to be good rather than outstanding, partly because the overcrowding in some classrooms and other areas of the school restrict opportunities for independent learning, small group sessions and practical work. Also, whilst ICT has improved well since the last inspection, pupils are still not quite achieving as well as they could be.

Good monitoring systems have identified areas where improvements can be made in the school's drive to ensure consistently high quality teaching for all pupils. Very detailed information is increasingly becoming available to show more precisely which pupils are on line, behind or ahead in meeting targets set for them. This has yet to be taken fully into account in checking out the quality of teaching and learning.

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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	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?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	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	2	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?	2	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	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	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

As you know, three inspectors visited your school recently to find out how well your teachers are helping you with your learning.

Thank you for being so friendly and willing to talk to us. It was really useful to listen to what you had to say about what you enjoy doing. One of you told an inspector that you 'always try your best and know that if you make mistakes, it doesn't matter because your teacher will help you'. You are absolutely right. Also, thank you to those of you who explained so clearly how your 'Befriender' system works. We could tell that you are really proud of your school. Well done.

The things we think are really good about your school are:

- The impressive start you are given to school life in the Reception class.
- The way your headteacher and other grown ups look after all of you and help you to work hard and do well.
- Those of you who need an extra bit of help in your work and relationships always have someone to turn to.
- How well you all look out for each other and want to be helpful in everything you do.

We have asked your teachers to improve a couple of things to make your school even better. These are:

- To help you learn even more about how to use your computers and other ICT equipment. This should really be fun!! I know you will do your best to help your teachers with this.
- For your headteacher and staff to check very carefully just how well you are doing so they can make sure that all the teaching helps you to do even better.

We hope you carry on enjoying school.