



# Athersley South Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 131160  
**LEA** Barnsley  
**Inspection number** 282176  
**Inspection dates** 11 January 2006 to 12 January 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Ms Joan McKenna CfBT Lead Inspector

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Wakefield Road Smithies
<b>School category</b>	Community		
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		Barnsley, South Yorkshire S71 3TP
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01226 284223
<b>Number on roll</b>	297	<b>Fax number</b>	01226 733039
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs K Bostwick
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25 September 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr S Iredale

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 11 January 2006 - 12 January 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 282176
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is average in size. It serves a deprived area where almost a third of pupils are entitled to free school meals. Children enter the school with standards that are well below expectations for their age. Most pupils are of white British heritage. Just under a tenth are from minority ethnic groups, with around two fifths of these being at early stages of speaking English. There are a small number of pupils from refugee, asylum seeker and Traveller families. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school is satisfactory overall, with some good features. It is most successful in ensuring children's personal development and well-being which are of a good standard. High quality care and support result in pupils feeling secure and well looked after. They enjoy school, behave well and have positive qualities. They benefit from a rich curriculum and an attractive environment in which to learn. However some practice relating to pupils' learning is not yet strong enough. Teaching is satisfactory. Some is better, but it is not consistent. Although the assessment of pupils' progress has improved recently, arrangements are not yet effective enough. As a result pupils' achievement is satisfactory, although it is good for children in the Foundation Stage due to good provision for them. Pupils enter school with standards well below expectations for their age. At the end of Year 6, although pupils reach average standards in mathematics and science, standards are below average in English because of weak writing and speaking skills. There has been sound improvement since the last inspection and value for money is satisfactory. Leadership and management are satisfactory, stronger in the pastoral areas than the academic. The school's view of itself is generally accurate, although it focussed on pastoral strengths rather than achievement when judging itself good. There is capacity for further improvement. Senior leaders are aware of what needs to be improved and are already taking a stronger lead in pupils' learning. Recent initiatives to improve standards are having a positive impact. The headteacher, staff and key governors work well together and are determined to improve achievement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards and achievement, especially in writing and speaking.
- Improve arrangements for assessment and tracking pupils' progress, and ensure that information gained is used to inform teaching and learning.
- Clarify leadership and management roles to ensure that all aspects of pupils' learning are led effectively.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Children enter the school with standards that are well below expectations for their age. They settle in well, and they make good progress while in the Foundation Stage. Special action taken recently has resulted in them making particularly good progress in speech and language development. Nevertheless, standards are still below average overall by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils make satisfactory progress during their time in Key Stage 1, although standards remain below the national average by the time they finish Year 2. By the end of Year 6, standards are in line with the national average in mathematics and science. Targets set for mathematics in 2005 were exceeded. Progress in science is particularly positive because scientific facts and knowledge are taught clearly. Standards in English have been significantly below

average for several years, especially in writing, and pupils' speaking skills are also weak. The English targets set for 2005 were not met. Progress in the subject has been slower than it should have been as specific action to improve writing has only recently been taken. However current initiatives to improve writing and speaking are beginning to have a positive effect, although they have yet to show in improved test results. Pupils' achievement overall is satisfactory. There is no significant difference in the achievement of different groups of pupils, and those with additional learning needs make similar progress to their classmates due to the good support they receive.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. The success of the school's emphasis on ensuring that pupils feel safe, well-cared for, well supported and happy is seen in their clear enjoyment of school, good behaviour and relationships and their hard work and concentration in lessons. Attendance is satisfactory, better than at the last inspection. Pupils are motivated to attend with special rewards. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, and some aspects of their moral and social development are outstanding. Pupils readily take on positions of responsibility. They are very effective school councillors and peer mentors, and have highly developed skills of listening to others and problem solving. Pupils correctly feel their views are taken seriously and are of the opinion that 'the school council is very powerful'. Pupils understand about other faiths and cultures and they contribute to the wider community through fund raising events as 'run a mile day'. Pupils understand how to stay fit and healthy. They run the healthy tuckshop, for which they sought advice from the dietician at the local hospital, and they enjoy participating in activities run by the lunchtime sports co-ordinator. Through such activities they are developing useful skills for the future.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, although in some classes they are good. Positive features include the high quality of relationships between teachers and pupils, resulting in a pleasant and productive climate which promotes learning well. Lessons are usually thoroughly planned, and in the best, sequences of short activities build progressively on what pupils already know to help them understand what is being taught. Tasks are generally planned to cater for the range of different needs within the class, although sometimes they do not provide the right amount of challenge for pupils. Most teachers are good at involving pupils through targeted questions, although occasionally they respond most to those who are keen to answer rather than drawing others in. Pupils are keen to please their teachers and they try hard with their work. When teachers make lessons fun, pupils respond with particular enthusiasm and interest and learn better as a result. Not all teaching is of this quality. Furthermore, although

teachers assess what pupils know and use the information to promote progress, this is not done as thoroughly or as systematically as it should be. Some marking shows pupils what they are doing well and how they can improve their work, but this is not always the case.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good although, modestly, the school judged it simply satisfactory. It is regularly reviewed and developed, for instance to provide more opportunities for outdoor education in the Foundation Stage. Teams of teachers plan together carefully, ensuring that all necessary subjects are planned in detail. There is specific planning to meet the needs of pupils with particular barriers to learning, such as learning difficulties and/or disabilities or unsettled home circumstances. Although English and mathematics receive suitable priority, imaginative timetabling provides plenty of time for the creative arts, information and communication technology and physical education. The school building and site provides a stimulating environment and the sports hall and art room are excellent. The many and varied lunchtime and after school clubs are regularly over-subscribed and provide good opportunities for pupils to enjoy and achieve. Annual residential holidays offer new and exciting experiences for those in Years 5 and 6 and contribute to the good arrangements to promote pupils' personal development.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support for pupils are good and some aspects are outstanding. In particular, staff make great efforts to ensure pupils' personal needs are met effectively and pupils feel very confident that adults will help them with any problems. The school's strong partnerships with external agencies have a positive influence on pupils' well-being. Pupils joining the school settle happily and their 'graduation' from nursery is a very nice feature. Pupils requiring extra support, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are identified early. Highly committed staff use many different strategies to engage such pupils and boost their self-esteem. One child involved in a support group said 'I thought it was good because we worked as a team. I feel good about myself now'. Child protection arrangements are robust and reviewed regularly and health and safety procedures are secure. Systematic procedures for tracking and promoting pupils' progress and target setting are being developed, but are too new to be fully effective and are not yet extensive enough.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory with a range of good features. Aspects relating to pupils' personal development, the curriculum and finance are well led. The headteacher's enterprising approach to gaining grants has significantly enhanced the

building and grounds, and the office manager ensures that spending for the benefit of pupils is maximised. However some management processes, such as those relating to assessment, are not well enough developed to ensure good achievement. The role of subject leaders is in a state of transition, and the relative roles of senior and middle leaders are currently being clarified. The senior team is prioritising taking more of a lead in relation to pupils' learning, and recent initiatives, such as those of improving the speaking skills of younger children, are having a positive impact. There is the capacity to build on the sound improvement since the last inspection. The school's view of itself is generally accurate, although a focus on pastoral strengths means that leadership and management have been viewed over- generously. Senior leaders are aware of areas that need to be improved and, along with other staff, work well together and are determined to bring this about. Key governors are passionately committed to the pupils and work hard on their behalf, although not all governors are as involved and there is not a full complement. Parents think highly of the school and their views are sought and valued. This provides a positive basis for future developments.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	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	3	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

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	2	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	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	3	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	3	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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 being so friendly and making us feel welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and watching you learn very much.

What we liked most about your school

- You like school, and your parents like it too.
- Your teachers and other adults care for you very well and make sure that you feel safe and happy.
- You behave well and play nicely together.
- You enjoy your work and try hard to do what your teachers ask. This helps you learn.
- The school arranges interesting activities and trips for you to enjoy, like the residential trips for those of you in Years 5 and 6.
- You help to make the school better for everyone, for example, through the school council. We were very impressed with the meeting we saw.

What we have asked the school to do now:

- help you do even better in your work, especially in writing and speaking
- check how well you are doing carefully, so teachers can make sure you are all learning as fast as you can
- make sure that the leaders of your school try to make all areas of school life as good as the best.

We hope that you continue to be happy at school.