



Wakefield Snapethorpe Primary School

Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 133758
LEA Wakefield
Inspection number 282370
Inspection dates 16 November 2005 to 17 November 2005
Reporting inspector Mr Anthony Painter CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	St George's Road
School category	Community		Lupset
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Wakefield WF2 8AA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01924 302750
Number on roll	392	Fax number	01924 302750
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Keith Earnshaw
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mrs Marion Smith

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Introduction

Three additional inspectors carried out the inspection.

Description of the school

An infant and a junior school were amalgamated in September 2003 to form this larger than average school. Children come from the surrounding residential areas, which have high levels of social and economic deprivation. The proportion of children eligible for free schools meals, for example, is very high. Attainment on entry to school is well below average. Few children come from minority ethnic groups although increasing numbers are from refugee backgrounds and are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Inspectors confirm the school's evaluation that overall provision and value for money are satisfactory. Despite many challenges, much good progress has been made since amalgamation. For example, significantly better discipline strategies have created a positive ethos with good behaviour and personal development. Many strong aspects of pastoral care ensure children are happy, safe and secure. More extra-curricular activities are adding to children's satisfactory opportunities to learn. Recent moves have rapidly raised attendance to average levels, although past attendance has been consistently well below average.

The headteacher's view of the school is very clear. She knows that attainment remains too low. However, she is establishing an effective team to tackle weaknesses. Planning identifies the right measures to raise standards, particularly in English and mathematics. Leaders in these subjects have played a strong role in improvements but leadership of other subjects is less developed.

Newly revised provision in the Foundation Stage helps children make good progress from a low start, particularly in their personal and social development. However, overall standards remain well below average on beginning Year 1. Greater use of assessment information in Key Stages 1 and 2 identifies areas to improve and helps to set more challenging targets. Teachers often use the information well in English and mathematics lessons to match work to children's needs. It is less effectively used in other subjects, with some lessons lacking sufficient challenge to maintain a good pace of learning. As a result, children achieve soundly overall. Teachers do not give children enough opportunities to plan and carry out investigations, particularly in science lessons. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified and supported to make satisfactory progress.

What the school should do to improve further

The school has a carefully staged approach to improvement. The following are the most important areas for development.

- Improve teaching through better and more consistent use of assessment information to match work to children's needs and improve the level of challenge.
- Pay greater attention to giving children opportunities to carry out investigations, particularly in science lessons.
- Widen leadership roles in subjects beyond English and mathematics to support school development.
- Maintain current improvements in attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children start school with low attainment and make good progress in the Foundation Stage classes, particularly in personal and social development. However, overall

attainment by Year 1 remains well below average, restricted by children's weak knowledge of linking sounds and letters, reading, writing and calculating. Additionally, local authority admission policies limit some children to only one term in the Reception class and this restricts their development.

Progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory, although it is good in some lessons, where work is more carefully matched to children's needs. National test results in Years 2 and 6 confirm current well below average standards and represent satisfactory achievement at best. However, children's recent progress had been disrupted by many changes beyond the school's control. New strategies to assess and set targets show better overall progress and improving standards in current work. Inspection observations suggest these challenging targets are achievable and standards are rising.

Good analysis and response to weak results has led to effective measures to improve calculation skills and these are showing a positive impact. Current actions, such as new resources to help boys to enjoy reading, seem successful although it is too soon to identify clear improvements. Children with different backgrounds or home languages and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve equally well overall.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree that this aspect is good. The school effectively promotes good attitudes to learning and encourages children to believe that successes are within their grasp. Children enjoy lessons and are happy to work hard. The school's positive action, consistent strategies and strong relationships have reduced incidents of troubled behaviour. Children learn strategies to deal with anger and stress, and behaviour in and around the school is good. Children feel safe in school and are confident that any bullying and harassment incidents are speedily dealt with.

Attendance is below average but substantial improvements have come from recent strategies. The learning mentor has quickly established strong links with parents to help them see the value of good attendance.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, although their understanding of different cultures is limited. The school is introducing effective measures to improve this and children reflect on the rights and responsibilities of community living. Healthy eating and lifestyles are actively promoted, including encouraging participation in a range of sports, such as rugby and street dancing. The development of children's speaking and reasoning skills is a high priority and prepares the children well for life after school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory and reflects the school's evaluation. Teachers establish good relationships and most lessons have positive atmospheres. Teachers' consistent classroom management ensures children's good behaviour. They use a wide range of strategies to ensure children focus attention, are interested in their work and enjoy learning. Increasing opportunities for children to ask and answer questions and take part in discussions are helping to improve speaking and listening skills.

Good teamwork and effective planning ensures work in the Foundation Stage classes securely addresses children's needs. New approaches to teaching phonics, for example, are having a very positive impact in redressing children's substantial weaknesses.

Teachers use assessment systems increasingly well to track children's progress and establish targets. In the best lessons, mostly in literacy and numeracy, they match work well to children's different abilities and ensure good learning. However, in other lessons this not so effectively done, the challenge of tasks is reduced and the pace of learning falls. This was apparent in some science lessons, where there was also insufficient attention to developing children's investigative skills. At present there is only limited use of children's individual targets to promote learning.

Systems to help teachers identify and support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are sound. Effective teaching assistants make a positive contribution to ensuring children's progress by supporting individuals and groups.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum meets statutory requirements with the strongest provision in English and mathematics. The curriculum is generally well matched to the needs of the children.

Discussion sessions, such as 'Circle Time' are used effectively to help children to talk about issues that concern them. Such opportunities contribute well to provision for personal, social and health education. Visitors to school make valuable contributions, for example the nurse talks to children about staying healthy and keeping safe.

There is a satisfactory range of enrichment activities. Children particularly enjoy working with artists in school, visits from theatre companies and going on educational visits. The school provides a varied range of activities after school and these are designed to promote children's self esteem. Children enjoy these opportunities and talk positively about their clubs for drama, street dance and numerous sporting activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Overall provision is satisfactory, as evaluated by the school. Many aspects of health, safety and personal care are strong and ensure support for all children, including the most vulnerable. However, assessment and guidance systems are not yet raising standards sufficiently.

Parents believe that their children are well cared for at school. Children feel they can talk to someone if they have a problem and recognise the emphasis on developing their personal and social skills, 'In this school we all look after each other' said one child.

Positive relationships between staff and children ensure that every child is made to feel important. The school is becoming increasingly successful in its aim to create 'pride in achievement amongst the children'. For example, the school building has been developed into a stimulating, safe and orderly working environment, which can be accessed by all children. There are effective arrangements in place to help children identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Child protection procedures follow requirements.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The inspection confirms the school's own evaluation that leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher is a very effective leader and much has been achieved in two years. Parents are positive about recent improvements, comments included, 'the school is much more organised and safer' and 'the headteacher is interested in the children and what they want and need'.

The headteacher is now well supported by two assistant headteachers. They are effectively building a team of committed staff where subject leaders, such as those for English and mathematics, can contribute. Many teachers have recently changed their areas of subject leadership. They are enthusiastic but are only just beginning to develop their roles to have a greater impact on raising standards.

The school recognises that standards are still too low but the headteacher has a clear view of how to improve. Initiatives are beginning to raise children's achievement, for example in mathematics and, recently, in moves to support reading. Key priorities have been correctly identified in the clear school improvement plan.

The school has a positive, hardworking atmosphere. Effective partnerships have been developed with external agencies, for example through the local authority's 'Behaviour Improvement Project', that are aiding the positive ethos.

Governors successfully support, question and challenge the school as they work towards future school improvement. The governors work hard as a team and have a good understanding of their role, but their monitoring and evaluation of the school's work remains at an informal level.

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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?	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	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	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

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	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	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	3	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	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

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 being so polite and welcoming when we recently visited your school. All of us were impressed by your good behaviour and how you were all so friendly. You all get on very well together and that's a big help in your lessons.

We were pleased with the way your teachers are working together to improve the school. A lot of good things have been introduced since the new school was formed. All adults in school make sure you are safe and well cared for. You told us that you were happy and enjoyed your lessons.

To help you do even better, we have asked teachers to make even more use of what the staff know about you when planning lessons. That way, the staff can make sure that all the work each of you is given is not too hard or too easy. We would like them to give you more chances to investigate, such as in science lessons. We have also asked teachers to take more responsibility for planning new ways to help you learn and for checking how successful these are in all subjects. You and your parents will need to make sure that you all keep attending well to make the best use of the opportunities.

I am sure they will make a good job of it and ensure the school carries on improving. We very much enjoyed talking with you and your teachers and wish you and the school the very best for the future.