

Keresforth Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106582
Local Authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	287552
Inspection dates	27–28 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Linda Murphy

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	295
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr S Davies
Headteacher	Mrs K Mitchell
Date of previous school inspection	11 February 2002
School address	Keresforth Road Dodworth Barnsley South Yorkshire S75 3NU
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Age group	5–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger than average school has a declining roll. Most pupils are White British. A minority are from Japanese or minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportions of pupils at an early stage of English acquisition and those eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The school is an Investor in People and has gained the Healthy Schools Silver Award.

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 ensures that 'The well-being of pupils is at the heart of all that it does.' Pupils' care is given high priority and the headteacher promotes good relationships throughout. This means that pupils enjoy the friendships they make and always have someone to turn to for help. A strong partnership with other agencies and the local community supports the pupils' personal development well. For example, fruitful relationships with the local Japanese community enrich the life of the school. In response to these strengths, pupils' attendance is above average and reflects their enjoyment of school. Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to work and play. For example, pupils sing cheerily in assembly 'You are a star. just the way you are' which acknowledges the school's approach to developing their self-esteem. They grow into mature and friendly individuals with a positive outlook. Pupils have high levels of respect for others initiated by excellent role models from staff. They understand the importance of healthy lifestyles and make well informed choices about keeping fit, healthy and safe, as reflected in the achievement of the Healthy Schools Silver Award.

The school is held in high regard by parents. It has a purposeful ethos and there are certainly good features to its work. There are also aspects to be developed. On balance, the school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Children enter Nursery with attainment somewhat lower than typically expected for their age. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage because of good quality teaching and an exciting curriculum. Standards by the time they join Year 1 are at the expected level for their age.

In Years 1 to 6 the progress that pupils make is satisfactory. As a result, standards are average in English, mathematics and science at the end of Years 2 and 6. The senior leadership team has introduced a number of changes to improve pupils' achievement. Some, such as setting targets for year groups and tracking pupils' progress, are at an early stage and not yet fully impacting on the pace of pupils' learning. Others, such as the introduction of new resources to meet the needs of boys and the extra classes to boost pupils' attainment, are beginning to pay dividends. The satisfactory quality of teaching and learning shows strengths in classroom management, the use of discussion including clear objectives for learning, and very beneficial relationships. Nonetheless, the teaching does not yet fully challenge all pupils. This is because at times the pace is not quick enough and tasks are not always matched well enough to pupils' needs.

The guidance pupils are given about how to improve their work is insufficiently well tailored to the needs of individuals. Class targets are quite broad and not all pupils are clear about them. Marking of work is inconsistent and does not generally tell pupils how well they have done or identify the next steps for them to achieve.

Leadership and management are satisfactory at all levels. The contribution of subject leaders has improved since the last inspection so that tasks can more easily be delegated and checked. This leaves more time for the headteacher to tackle strategic issues. Governance is supportive. It has an oversight of the school's work and contributes increasingly to self-evaluation and in holding the school to account. The school understands its strengths and areas to develop. Even so, it over-optimistically evaluates its effectiveness as good rather than satisfactory with good features as the inspectors find. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory and the leadership shows that it has the capacity to continue to improve. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use the information from tracking pupils' progress to match targets to pupils' needs so that all achieve well.
- Build on existing strengths to bring the quality of teaching and learning to a good or better level.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Many pupils join Nursery with skills lower than expected in speech, communication and personal development. During their time in the Foundation Stage they make good progress, so that by the end of the Reception year they are mostly working at the levels expected for their age group. At the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and in 2006 the school's test results were broadly in line with national averages. Although in Years 3 to 6 some pupils did less well in mathematics than expected, pupils mostly met their targets, and exceeded them at the higher level. The use of intervention arrangements to provide extra support for small groups of pupils is beginning to impact positively on pupil's progress. In mathematics, for example, extra classes to boost the attainment of those capable of learning quickly is enabling more pupils to work towards achieving higher levels. The 'Mega multiplication mission' is challenging pupils to improve their skills at calculation. Other recently introduced strategies provide pupils with greater opportunities to extend their interest and skills at writing.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The school's mission statement reflects the way that pupils 'learn, share and make friends'. Pupils behave well and are very positive about school. They enjoy learning and taking part in all that the school provides. Attendance is above average and punctuality good because the school promotes and monitors these aspects well. The school council and befriending arrangements such as playground buddies help pupils develop responsibility and make a positive contribution to the school community. Pupils have a good sense of right and wrong and relate well to each other and to adults. Any very rare incidents of bullying or racism are dealt with swiftly and effectively and pupils say they feel safe. A wide range of opportunities contribute to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Cultural education is emphasised well, such as through the Picnic in the Park, which was a result of themed work on Africa inspired by visitors. Pupils contribute greatly to the wider community, such as by taking part in the Young Voices charity event. They develop confidence because their efforts and achievements are valued and rewarded. They are proud of their 'Star of the Week' and the 'Golden Time' that they earn. Pupils enjoy the opportunities for sport and parents take great delight in joining their children for a healthy lunch.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Pupils are given lots of opportunities to work with partners and this helps them to try out their ideas, share their thoughts and make a positive contribution to lessons. This works well because pupils' behaviour is gently yet rigorously managed and relationships are good. Classrooms are

bright with informative displays and provide calm and welcoming areas to learn. Pupils understand the aim of their lessons because teachers share it with their classes. The speed at which pupils learn is set by teaching which at times is overly directive, and this results in the use of time being skewed to accommodate over-long explanations or a generally pedantic style. The match of tasks to pupils' needs is not always carefully enough planned or delivered to make sure that each pupil are challenged to do their best. This results in some marking time while others struggle to finish.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum underpins the satisfactory teaching and learning of basic skills. As a result, pupils' achievement prepares them soundly for their future economic well-being. Parents appreciate the efforts the school makes to provide additional support for pupils who require it so that they learn at the same rate as others. Pupils learning English as an additional language do well in acquiring English and make satisfactory progress in other subjects. Where there are very successful links between subjects learning is more interesting and meaningful for pupils. Themed learning in design and technology, for example, helps pupils to become immersed in their project. In the Foundation Stage children's independence and basic skills develop quickly as they enjoy motivating tasks, often in the fresh air. Enrichment is good and develops pupils' talents. Visitors enable pupils to widen their perceptions of the world around them. Pupils make good use of their local community, such as in the sculpture park and art gallery. Their regular visits further afield include a beneficial residential visit for older pupils. A good range of extra-curricular activities helps pupils develop their interests and healthy lifestyles.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents express confidence in the good pastoral care given to their children. Staff have a high concern for pupils' welfare, and arrangements for health and safety including child protection are embedded. Much is done to ensure a smooth transition when pupils move to and from school. Support for vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is effective. Systems for monitoring progress are developing, to enable the school to better identify where additional help is needed. This is at an early stage in its impact on pupils' individual progress. The use of targets to provide an effective steer for pupils' learning is embryonic. Not all pupils understand their targets because they have not been fully involved in setting them. Marking acknowledges effort and provides praise but rarely indicates what pupils must do to improve. Pupils do not therefore play a big enough role in fully understanding the importance of what they need to do next to learn faster.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management are satisfactory with some important strengths in the way in which pupils' personal development is encouraged and in the pastoral care which underpins this. This contributes well to ensuring that pupils have equal opportunity. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors are determined to raise standards: efforts to improve pupils' learning by the end of Year 6 are having some success as standards slowly rise. Monitoring of the school's work is increasingly apposite. Governance is satisfactory and improving as governors

receive training and become better equipped to provide not only support but challenge to help the school improve. Links between governors and class teachers through a buddy system help to forge good professional relationships and to deepen the governors' understanding of how well the school is doing. Training and development are well catered for, as demonstrated in the school's status as an Investor in People.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

When we visited your school to find out how well you are doing you made us very welcome. We found that Keresforth Primary School is good at some things and has other areas to develop: it provides you with a satisfactory education.

Importantly, the staff care for you well, you all get on together and the school is good at helping you understand the importance of keeping safe and staying healthy. Your parents agree with this. Did you know that your attendance is higher than in a lot of other schools? This shows that you enjoy school and all it has to offer. You behave well and this helps you to learn. Your headteacher makes sure you are all treated equally and that there are plenty of visits, visitors and clubs for you to enjoy.

We found that children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage and do well. This led us to consider how children in Years 1 to 6 could learn even faster. After talking it over with your headteacher we judge that two things will help in particular: first to develop the arrangements to track your progress and to use the information to better match your targets to your individual needs; and second to keep on improving the strengths in the teaching and learning.

We wish you all well in making even faster progress. You can help, by continuing to 'learn, share and make friends'. Remember you have lots to be proud of, and as your song says about each of you: 'You are a star. just the way you are'.