



# Darfield Upperwood Primary School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 106600  
**Local Authority** Barnsley  
**Inspection number** 287559  
**Inspection dates** 15–16 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Clive Petts

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Dartree Walk
<b>School category</b>	Community		Darfield, Barnsley
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		South Yorkshire S73 9NL
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01226 754336
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	242	<b>Fax number</b>	01226 702755
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Allan Dyson
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr D Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 December 2002		

<b>Age group</b> 4–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 15–16 November 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 287559
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Darfield is an average size primary school situated in an old mining community with changing patterns of employment. The vast majority of pupils are White British with a small number of settled Gypsy/ Roma pupils. Although the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is close to average, the proportion of statemented pupils is well below average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is now well below average, having fallen by half in the last three years. This reflects the changing patterns of employment in the local community. The pupil population is very settled and has benefited from stable, committed staffing since before the previous inspection. The school has achieved the Healthy School Award standard.

## 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 a number of outstanding features. It provides a warm, safe, welcoming and stimulating environment in which pupils of all abilities make good progress and achieve well. It gives good value for money. Staff commitment to a common sense of purpose to drive up standards is exceptional. The school works particularly well with all its partners and agencies to ensure the well-being of pupils.

Pupils enter Reception with low skills but attain expected learning goals before entry into Year 1. This swift start to their learning represents outstanding achievement. By the end of Year 2, pupils' standards are marginally above average and by the end of Year 6, clearly above average. Pupils make best progress in the Foundation Stage and in Years 5 and 6 as a result of strong teaching. The range of well thought out teaching strategies to improve writing skills are being successfully used, but the drive to improve listening and speaking skills has been slower to have a positive impact.

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils show a desire to learn, take pride in their work and the majority enjoy coming to school. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. However, despite the school actively promoting good attendance, a few pupils miss school for holidays or for little valid reason. Pupils respond well to opportunities provided to take responsibility and are really well behaved. They take their involvement with the school council seriously and make positive contributions to the work of the school. Pupils are safety conscious both in lessons and at social times. Increasingly they are adopting a healthier lifestyle.

Teaching is good with some that is outstanding. Lessons are well prepared and capitalise on the pupils' keenness to learn. Good attention is paid to meeting the learning needs of all pupils. Improved writing skills are successfully contributing to the drive to advance standards. However, listening and speaking skills are not well developed in all years and restrict even higher achievement. The curriculum is good and successfully engages pupils of all abilities and makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. Assessment is efficiently used and in the best lessons helpful guidance for improvement is given. Targets are set and tracking procedures are in place but their effectiveness is not sufficiently robust. Parents recognise and praise the high quality of care and support provided for pupils and families. They particularly appreciate the efforts of the school to ensure new pupils settle quickly.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher ensure that the school runs smoothly on a day to day basis. The process of self-evaluation is accurate and is firmly established as part of the routine work of staff. It is strengthened by effective collaboration with the local authority. Governors have a good grasp of issues and some work closely with senior managers to move the school forward. Improved recruitment is leading to more governor involvement in the life of the school. Leaders ensure that there is good capacity for further improvement.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve the rigour and effectiveness of pupils' target-setting and tracking to ensure achievement is as high as possible for all pupils.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enter Reception with low skills and with significant weaknesses in writing, listening and speaking. By the time pupils enter Year 1, expected learning goals have been reached. This represents outstanding achievement for this stage of their education. Standards at the end of Year 2 are just above average. Writing skills remain weaker though improving. By the end of Year 6, standards are securely above average. Overall, this represents good achievement in Years 3 to 6 for all pupils. The rate of progress in Year 5 and 6 is higher than in Year 3 and 4 because teachers provide extra challenge and pace in lessons. Writing skills are also much improved and reach average standards. Though improved, listening and speaking are not as strong as writing. The 2006 provisional test results and inspection evidence consolidates this position.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They get on really well with each other, both in class and during playtimes. All pupils behave very well and are cheerful and polite when talking to visitors. Pupils have a good understanding of how to work safely and recognise the benefits of adopting a healthy lifestyle. Attendance matches the national average. Unauthorised absence is higher than national averages but the school is working hard to improve this. Pupils are developing into good citizens with older pupils accepting responsibilities and carrying out duties sensibly. They understand that they are part of the whole-school community and value having a voice through the school council. The distribution of the school magazine to the wider community and links with local business has developed pupils' enterprise skill. They are developing positive attitudes that will help to ensure they grow into responsible adults.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Staff are highly motivated, enjoy what they are doing and work very capably together. This was reflected in the number of good and sometimes outstanding lessons seen during the inspection. In the Foundation Stage, pupils make excellent progress because lessons 'buzz' with opportunities for children to learn in exciting and stimulating environments. All lessons are delivered at a good pace often brisk in Years 5 and 6.

Planning focuses on pupils' needs and so pupils learn and achieve well. Marking is good and contributes to pupils' understanding of how they can improve their work. In all classes, very good relationships are evident and behaviour is very well managed. Pupils feel they are valued and consequently they want to do well. Learning support assistants make a positive contribution and aid pupils' learning.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum, including enrichment activities and experiences, is good. It reflects a strong ethos of inclusion engaging all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It captures interest and encourages good achievement and standards. Personal development is well promoted through personal, health and social education programmes. This includes valuable residential experiences for pupils in Year 5 and 6. Provision for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) is good. In the Foundation Stage, exceptional ICT provision leads to early confidence and skill. Cross-curricular teamwork is consistently good and plays a key role in the improvement of writing skills. Attention is also paid to the development of environment awareness taking advantage of the school woodland and landscaped areas. The curriculum provides a firm basis for the acquisition of the knowledge and skills required in the workplace in later years.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school has a welcoming environment in which all pupils are valued and their achievements celebrated. Procedures for child protection are effective and understood by all adults. Vetting procedures for adults working in school are in place. Pupils feel very safe and know there are people they can go to for support. There are good induction arrangements for pupils starting in the Foundation Stage. Similarly, Year 6 pupils are helped to make the transfer to the next stage of their education as smooth as possible. Pupils are given good help in lessons and the marking of their work is effective. Pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve and how to make better progress. The information to track pupils' progress is comprehensive. However, it is not used with sufficient rigor to measure clearly what else needs to be done.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher provides a strong focus on raising achievement and standards, fostering quality care and ensuring that the school meets the needs of pupils of all abilities. Parents, pupils and all staff are all involved in the process of self-evaluation. The governing body are increasingly involved in the running of the school. All are committed to providing a quality service to the local community. As a consequence, the sense of common purpose is exceptional and self-evaluation is reliable and accurate. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work very effectively to ensure

the school runs well. The local network of schools is extremely well used to improve approaches to teaching and share good practice. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection.

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## Inspection judgements

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

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	2

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
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	2
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

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for your warm welcome to your school and for being so polite, helpful and friendly when you met us. We enjoyed talking to you about your work, speaking with your staff and joining you in lessons and assembly.

What we most liked about the school is:

- the way you enjoy school and your keenness to learn
- the way your headteacher and all the staff work together and encourage you to work hard
- the care and attention of your teachers and support staff to help you settle quickly when you first arrive, particularly in the Reception class
- the speed with which you learn new skills
- the way your headteacher and others who are responsible for running the school take advice and make sure the school money is spent well.

We have asked your teachers to provide you with regular targets and to check your progress carefully so that you can make even more improvements to your work.

We hope that you will continue to attend school regularly, work hard and remember to listen carefully to all of the advice from staff and discuss with them any difficulties you have.

We wish you well in the future.