

Cherry Dale Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106621
Local Authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	287565
Inspection dates	27–28 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Andrew Clark

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	277
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Jack Peach
Headteacher	Mrs D Flanagan
Date of previous school inspection	3 March 2003
School address	Royston Road Cudworth Barnsley S72 8AA
Telephone number	01226 719700
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by a team of three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Cherry Dale is an average sized primary school. The majority of pupils are from the immediate vicinity from a mix of privately owned and rented accommodation. The percentage of pupils eligible for a free school meal is above average and the level of social deprivation in the area is high. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average.

The school moved to new premises during the week before the inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and improving school. Since the last inspection there have been considerable staffing difficulties, which have undermined school improvement and this led to pupils' underachievement and low standards after a period of rising standards. The headteacher, working well with the local authority and with support from the governors, has raised the quality of teaching and learning quickly over the last two years and this is now showing in accelerated progress. Achievement and standards are now satisfactory and personal development is good. The school's self-evaluation is largely accurate and helping to drive forward improvement.

The children start Nursery with attainment which is below that typical for their age. They make good progress through the Foundation Stage to reach average levels. The pupils now make satisfactory progress through the rest of the school to reach broadly average standards at Year 2 and Year 6. Throughout the school, pupils have largely made up the gaps in skills and understanding from previous slow progress because of the good use of new assessment systems and improved teaching.

The pupils are well behaved, polite and friendly. They enjoy lessons and hold teachers in high regard. They take a pride in their work and present it very well. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils relish the chance to take on responsibilities through the school council, playground buddies and as play leaders. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and take full advantage of healthy school meals and sporting activities.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory with good features. Teachers manage behaviour very well and all classes are calm and productive. Increasingly accurate use of assessment means that most work is matched well to pupils' needs, but the more able pupils are not always set challenging work soon enough in the lesson. Teaching assistants provide effective well planned support, especially for the less able and those with learning difficulties.

The curriculum is satisfactory with a good range of exciting activities which make learning fun. A major revision of strategies for teaching English, especially at Key Stage 2, has had a significant impact on improving pupils' learning over the last year and this work is being further developed throughout the curriculum. The care, guidance and support for pupils are good. The parents appreciate the very caring ethos of the school. There are good systems to improve pupils' behaviour and keep them safe and healthy. Work is regularly marked, but comments made by teachers do not always provide enough guidance for pupils to be fully involved in improving their work.

Following the protracted period of staffing difficulties, the headteacher has now established a renewed leadership team providing clear direction for improvement. The systematic monitoring and evaluating procedures are leading to good improvements in several areas, particularly in raising standards, although a small percentage of the monitoring of teaching does not clarify areas for improvement sharply enough. The leadership team, supported by the governing body, is fostering a positive staff team with high morale and the capacity to improve is now satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching so it is all consistently good or better.
- Make sure the most able pupils are fully challenged throughout their lessons.
- Improve the quality of marking so that pupils are more aware of how to improve their work.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement and standards are satisfactory. They have improved significantly following a period of significant underachievement during which standards were well below average at both Year 2 and Year 6. The results of externally marked and moderated tests and assessments for all classes from Year 2 to Year 6 confirm the school's own judgement that progress is now accelerating. The standards attained at Year 2 and Year 6 are average for English and mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make at least satisfactory progress towards targets which are challenging. The progress children make through the Foundation Stage is good. Many children start with lower levels of communication and social skills that are typical within the local authority. A strong focus on developing these skills successfully underpins children's progress. The school recognises there is still work to be done to overcome the legacy of low achievement in the past but targets are now providing suitable challenge. There has been a sea change to the pupils' progress evident in almost all aspects of learning seen during the inspection.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils' behaviour and positive attitudes are good and sometimes exemplary. They are polite and considerate towards each other and the adults who care for them. In classes they are very attentive and eager to participate. The school is very orderly and there have been no exclusions this year. The rigorous daily monitoring of attendance and close links with education welfare services have led to improvements. This is a direct response to the high standards of teachers' classroom management. The pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons and have very good attitudes towards their learning. A particular strength of their personal development is their willingness in all classes to tackle responsibilities and contribute to the school community. They feel that being a playground buddy, for example, helps them to grow up and learn to care for others. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a good understanding of equality and tolerance, regardless of background or belief. They respond with thought and reflection to well-planned assemblies helping them understand the nature of good and bad habits and how to manage them. Pupils have a good understanding of what foods are healthy and how to stay fit. Many pupils attend after school sports clubs and inter-school games.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and improving. Many lessons seen on inspection were good. Whilst the very good management of behaviour is a key strength, the most important improvement in recent years has been in the more effective use of detailed assessment to more closely match work to pupils' needs and challenge them to achieve more. However, teachers occasionally set work for the more able which is too easy and does not give them sufficient chance to apply their knowledge and skills soon enough in the lesson. Most

teachers share the purpose of the lesson with the pupils and encourage them to consider how well they have done and how they could improve, although this is not yet consistent practice. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards and computers to bring learning to life and often involve pupils in challenging games. In the Foundation Stage there is a good balance between stimulating activities which pupils select for themselves and teacher-led learning. Throughout school, teachers have high expectations for pupils to work hard and with care.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is developing well with good improvements to the planning for teaching English skills and the programme to enhance pupils' personal development. This includes many exciting features such as the 'Dinosaur school'. There are times when the curriculum does not fully meet the needs of more able pupils. This is beginning to be addressed by developing pupils' thinking and problem-solving skills more effectively, but is not yet embedded throughout school. Specialist skills are used well to raise interest and enjoyment in subjects such as music and sport. There is a wide range of visits and visitors which enrich pupils' cultural and social experiences; for example, workshops on African drumming, Indian dance and a creative arts week. Themed days on Egyptians, Tudors and Romans add to the pupils' enjoyment of school and bring the curriculum to life.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Procedures to ensure high standards of health and safety and to safeguard pupils are robust and closely monitored. The tracking of pupils' academic and personal development is now good. This contributes to the good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and vulnerable pupils generally. However, the marking of pupils' work does not consistently provide good quality guidance. There is good support to promote pupils' personal development. The opportunities for pupils to take responsibility are well managed and good training for such roles is given to pupils. Parents very much appreciate the care shown to pupils and the guidance they are given to help them support their children. The school listens to its pupils and parents.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher's concern for all pupils has a very positive impact on the caring ethos and positive attitudes. She has successfully redeveloped senior leadership so that her clear vision is now being effectively carried through. The governors are well informed and supportive, but have not always held the school to account for the low standards; however, this situation is now improving. They effectively ensure that the school uses its resources prudently. Self-evaluation is satisfactory. The monitoring of teaching has contributed well to recent improvements, but does not always focus clearly enough on how inconsistencies can be eliminated so that all teaching is of at least good quality. The school enjoys good relationships with parents and makes good links with outside agencies to support pupils' learning.

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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	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	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	3
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Inspection of Cherry Dale Primary School, Barnsley, S72 8AA

Thank you for being so helpful when we visited your delightful new school recently. We found many good things whilst we were there which we would like to share with you.

We thought that all of you were very polite, friendly and kind to each other. You told us how much you enjoy school and that you feel that the teachers care for you a lot. You like the games and quizzes that teachers set in lessons and the use of computers makes work interesting. You take a lot of thought over your writing and work hard. You reach satisfactory standards. We thought that your good headteacher and her staff take good care of you, keep you safe and teach you how to stay healthy. You enjoy the responsibilities you are given on the school council, as playground leaders and as buddies. You get a good start in the Foundation Stage.

There some things the school can do to improve:

- The school needs to make sure that all the lessons are as good as the best.
- The work set for a few pupils is sometimes too easy for them, so needs to be more challenging and interesting.
- When teachers mark your work they need to make it very clear, every time, what you should do next to improve it and reach higher standards.

You can help the school by continuing to work hard, listening to your teachers and thinking about how you can make your work even better.