

Dunsville Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106680
Local Authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	287585
Inspection dates	11–12 June 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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	275
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr James Higham
Headteacher	Mr Kevin Flint
Date of previous school inspection	16 September 2002
School address	Broadway Dunsville Doncaster South Yorkshire DN7 4HX
Telephone number	01302 882958
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is situated in a former coal mining community and serves an area of mixed housing. It is larger than most primary schools and admits about a quarter of its pupils from outside the local neighbourhood. Most pupils are White British. Very few are from minority ethnic groups and of these, a below average proportion is learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average, although in Years 1 to 3 it is much higher reflecting changing circumstances locally. There are average numbers of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities but a higher than usual proportion with a statement of special educational need. Since the last inspection, there is a high proportion of new teaching staff including a new deputy headteacher. The school holds the following awards: Quality Mark in Basic Skills, Healthy Schools, ArtsMark Gold, ActiveMark and Intermediary International Schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This good school with outstanding features has the overwhelming support of its parents.

Pupils' personal development is excellent because of the tremendous care and support from adults in the school. This successfully helps pupils to become confident and mature youngsters who relish fun and friendship, discussion and challenge. The friendly atmosphere is welcoming and founded on high aspirations for pupils. The maxim 'I can because I think I can' helps the pupils to believe in themselves and find success. Pupils' attitudes are very good and reflect their zest for life. Relationships are excellent and pupils' behaviour is outstanding, which adds much to their learning. Pupils have a first-rate understanding of how to keep safe and healthy - the school holds awards for encouraging healthy eating and exercise. Pupils have plentiful opportunities to contribute to their school and local communities, which helps them develop the skills to be good citizens.

Most parents agree that 'lessons are designed to challenge children of all abilities'. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning because teachers make it pleasurable and mostly demanding. Within the overall positive picture of good teaching there is some variability, ranging from satisfactory to outstanding. In the main, pupils learn at a good rate. The underlying factors which affect the pace of learning are the match of work to pupils' needs and the degree of independence that is given to pupils to take some responsibility for their learning.

'My children are excited every day at the prospect of going to school,' sums up the views of many parents and pupils. It reflects the good attendance and rich curriculum and its many awards, including an accreditation for curricular-based international work. This acknowledges the school's partnership with a school in Madrid, its teaching of Spanish and the very good contribution to pupils' cultural development as pupils learn about the worldwide community and the lives of others.

Achievement is good. Attainment on entry to the Nursery is well below that which is typical of three-year-olds. Pupils make good progress in the Foundation Stage because the teaching is good. Exciting, well-planned activities whet their appetites for discovery. By Year 1, standards are below average. The initial good progress is built upon so that by Year 2, standards are usually about average.

Because older pupils have some ground to make up from pockets of slower learning in the past, standards by the end of Year 6 are average. However, because of the good rate of progress in most year groups, pupils between Years 3 and 6 achieve well. They attain increasingly higher standards and challenging targets. Across the school, within the generally average standards, pupils do better in mathematics, science and reading than in writing. This is because pupils still have some way to go in using writing in different ways.

'Steps to success' targets are negotiated with pupils and progress towards them checked regularly. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to discuss how well they are doing and what they need to do next. Within this programme, timely intervention for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities helps this group make as much progress as others. Indeed the school's approach to ensuring all pupils' success has led to fewer pupils than average needing extra help to boost their progress. Pupils from minority ethnic groups, including those at an early stage of learning English as an additional language, do well because great care is taken to ensure the needs of all pupils are met well. Pupils are treated equally.

The school is well led by a very well respected and experienced headteacher and governing body. Even so, it underestimates just how well it is doing because in its view there is always room for more improvement. Teamwork is a mark of the school's success and senior leaders work well with passion and determination to raise standards and ensure pupils' outstanding personal development and care. Good support is given by the subject leaders, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The school is well placed to continue its success because it is well managed, has very effective systems and very carefully monitors and evaluates its work. It provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing throughout the school to at least match those in reading.
- Build on existing strengths to make sure all teaching and learning is the best it can be.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well across the school, although they make more progress in some classes than they do in others. Children make good progress from the particularly low standards on entry to the Nursery in language and social skills. They achieve well and attain standards below average as they enter Year 1. By Year 6, pupils have overcome past dips in progress, and standards are broadly in line with the national average in reading, mathematics and science. In writing there are relative weaknesses in handwriting, spelling and in pupils' understanding of different types of writing.

Boys and girls achieve similarly, as do those who speak English as an additional language. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve as well as their classmates. Pupils reach the challenging targets set for them and share their teachers' high aspirations. The school's careful tracking of progress shows that standards are improving, with clear links to the good improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development underpins their enthusiasm and excellent behaviour. Through thoughtful assemblies and much discussion they develop a clear sense of right and wrong and of their own worth. Pupils love their time in school, recognising that they are valued as individuals. Parents say that the school 'always puts the children's needs first': pupils appreciate the wealth of opportunities they are given. Children in the Foundation Stage make very good progress in learning how to take turns and to cooperate.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of personal safety and the importance of a healthy lifestyle, partly through the very good opportunities to participate in sports and games and to enjoy the healthy school meals. Pupils happily take on much responsibility around school, which is a joyful place to be. School councillors take their role very seriously and have a strong impact on their community, and pupils contribute very well to the local and wider communities. The pupils' outstanding personal and social skills, together with their improving basic skills, mean they are well prepared for the next stage of education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The pupils' good progress across the school and their enjoyment in learning is the result of the overall good teaching they receive. Excellent relationships underpin the teaching and learning, giving the pupils very positive attitudes. Teachers make very good use of information and communication technology (ICT) to enliven pupils' learning. They monitor the achievements of pupils carefully and use the information well to plan the next steps in learning. In some lessons, the teaching is outstanding. These lessons have pace, and the pupils are managed very skilfully and respond very well to the high expectations made of them. They cooperate very well and know that often 'two heads are better than one'. In these lessons pupils make exceptional progress. In a minority of lessons, pupils are given insufficient opportunities to learn independently and are not challenged sufficiently and, as a consequence, they make less progress than they could. Positive marking provides pupils with clear guidance on how they can improve their work, often linked to their individual targets. Teaching assistants play a very important role in supporting all pupils, often helping those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to achieve as well as their classmates.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The enriched and well-balanced curriculum promotes pupils' all round achievement because it is well adapted to meet the needs of all learners. It prepares pupils well for their future life and, together with the good teaching, helps them take initiative and make sensible decisions. Children in the Foundation Stage have a good balance of self-chosen tasks and those directed by adults. This approach is starting to take hold in Years 1 and 2 to develop a smooth transition. In most years, activities are stimulating, carefully planned and build very effectively on pupils' experience. Personal and health education, ICT, art, music and sports permeate pupils' learning and help them make good links between their learning in different subjects. Good attention is given to literacy and numeracy, as shown in the school's achievement of the Basic Skills Quality Mark. An extensive range of extra-curricular activities, together with visits and visitors, further enhance pupils' learning. Good links with a local secondary school augment the science curriculum for pupils with special gifts and talents.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

As a result of the outstanding care, guidance and support, pupils are extremely happy in school and very well cared for. They say that staff value them as 'young people' and know that they will be listened to and any problems quickly resolved. Arrangements for safeguarding children are robust. Very effective induction includes home visits which help children quickly settle in the nursery. Pupils are very well prepared for their move to secondary school and look forward to it with confidence. Very good arrangements for setting individual targets for pupils gives them clear insights into how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides very high quality leadership and sets a clear lead and high expectations for all. This is helping the recently formed senior leadership team to begin to make its mark. Other key staff and the governing body give good support. As a result, the school community is forward-looking and successful. Parents and pupils are fully involved in its work. For example, all contributed very well indeed to the refurbished library, the use of which enhances enjoyment and standards in reading. Good links with outside agencies help the school to ensure that all pupils have the best possible attention. Good systems for monitoring lead to positive actions to improve standards and the quality of teaching and learning. Self-evaluation is good in that it identifies the areas for improvement - it is overcautious in its overview of success. Very effective administrative support means that senior leaders can concentrate on pupils' achievement.

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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?	2
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	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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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?	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	2
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**

Thank you for the great welcome you gave to the inspectors. Yours is a good school. Not only is it good but the care and help you are given by staff are the very best they can be. As a result, your behaviour is excellent and you are very grown up. These things, together with the good teaching and exciting activities, help you to learn quickly and achieve well. You have a first-rate understanding of how to keep safe and healthy and how to be good citizens.

Your 'steps to success' targets are spot on and guide your learning really well. To make things even better, your school now has its own steps to success. First, to help you get even better at spelling and writing and second, to make sure that it builds on the existing strengths to make all the teaching and learning the very best it can be. Your headteacher knows how to make the difference.

You can help by continuing to enjoy school and working hard at your writing. All the best for the future.