



Conisbrough Ivanhoe Junior and Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106700
Local Authority Doncaster
Inspection number 287591
Inspection dates 11–12 October 2006
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 address	Old Road
School category	Community		Conisbrough, Doncaster
Age range of pupils	3–11		South Yorkshire DN12 3LR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01709 862307
Number on roll (school)	203	Fax number	01709 861633
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Alan Bucknell
		Headteacher	Mr Joe Brian
Date of previous school inspection	13 January 2003		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Most pupils are of White British heritage. Eligibility for free school meals is twice the national average and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than average. About half of the pupils attend from beyond the school's immediate area because of family choice. A new headteacher was appointed in April 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

'I only want the best education for my child and she is receiving it at Conisbrough Ivanhoe.' This comment reflects parents' high regard for the school. It meets its aim well to provide a calm, caring environment in which all pupils can reach their potential. Pupils achieve well because the school promotes all aspects of their personal development very effectively – this pleases parents. As a result, pupils' behaviour is excellent. Their attitudes are good and they come to school eager to learn and make good progress. They understand the importance of contributing to their school and wider community and do this well. Pupils know how essential it is to keep fit and healthy so that they can enjoy life.

Central to the school's practice is a determination to include all pupils equally so that all achieve well. The school is an oasis of endeavour and pupils learn quickly. Given their below average starting points, pupils achieve well to attain broadly average standards by Year 6. Nonetheless, standards in writing and problem solving in mathematics are not as strong as in other basic skills. A contributory factor is that when children enter the nursery they have particularly limited skills and experience in these areas.

Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage where arrangements for learning are mainly good because speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy are taught methodically. The curriculum at this stage is good overall. It is at its best when there are plenty of opportunities to promote the children's skills of enquiry, as in the Nursery. Provision in the Reception class is somewhat less consistent, being formal in the mornings, although less so in the afternoons. The opportunities children have to play outside are not as well structured as those inside. These aspects at times restrict the smoothness of children's learning.

Across the school, pupils make good progress because the quality of teaching and learning is very effective. Teachers manage their classes well and have excellent relationships with pupils. A broad curriculum serves the pupils well and provides them with much enjoyment.

The school has a modest view of its success. The inspection judgements are higher than the school's evaluations in most aspects. This is because the impact of the school's work on pupils' achievement is good. Importantly, the school clearly understands its strengths and areas to develop. A very strong partnership with parents and the community enhances pupils' learning. Leadership is passionate and innovative and the headteacher is held in high regard. Management is very effective. As a result, improvement since the last inspection, the school's capacity to continue its success and the value for money it provides are good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing so that standards rise to above average.
- Improve pupils' skills in solving mathematical problems so that standards in mathematics also rise to above average.

- Link the outside play, morning and afternoon activities more meaningfully in the Foundation Stage to enable children to learn even more quickly.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

As a result of the very effective support they receive, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress towards their individual targets. All children make a good start to their school life. They achieve well and standards improve from the low levels on entry to below average on entry to Year 1. Recent fluctuations in the school's results in the national tests reflect past inconsistencies in teaching due to staff absence. This has been tackled and there is a marked improvement in pupils' attainment at Year 2 and Year 6. Standards have picked up and pupils reach broadly average standards by Years 2 and 6 in reading, mathematics and science. They achieve well. In writing and mathematical problem solving, standards are relatively lower than in speaking, reading and numeracy. This is because on entry to school pupils have much catching up to do in these areas.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are outstandingly well behaved, welcoming to visitors and positive about school. They enjoy learning, developing new skills and taking part in all that the school provides. The school council makes a valuable contribution to the school's work, such as by helping to establish a school garden and raising funds for charities. There is very little bullying or harassment, but when they occur they are dealt with swiftly and effectively. Attendance so far this term is average and much better than it was at the same time last year because the school works hard to promote it. Powerful assemblies led by the headteacher significantly promote pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Staff provide good role models and, as a result, pupils learn to value and respect others. This sets them up well for the future. Pupils develop heaps of self-esteem and confidence because their efforts and achievements are valued and rewarded, such as through the use of credits and 'Stars of the Week'. Pupils understand the importance of keeping safe and having a healthy lifestyle. The high quality healthy lunches contribute well to pupils' health.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils say that they learn new things every day - the good quality teaching makes sure that this happens. The extra help pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive enables them, as one parent said, 'to come on in leaps and bounds'. Classrooms are stimulating and resources made readily available. This encourages pupils'

independence and interest in learning. Teachers use assessment well to provide work at the right level and help pupils understand what they need to do in order to improve their work. Marking helps pupils move forward and provides them with 'a star and a wish' - praise for something well done and a target for improvement. Homework is organised extremely productively to promote pupils' learning. It successfully encourages partnership between home and school. Pupils and parents look forward to homework and gain much enjoyment from the time spent on it together. On occasions, lessons lose momentum because time is not used well enough and when this happens the pace of learning slows.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is diverse, creative and inclusive. Pupils of all abilities steadily develop knowledge and understanding year on year. Pupils' skills in information and communication technology (ICT), mathematics and literacy are used to support work in other subjects, but not as well as they could be because this is not yet part of a planned programme. Personal and social development are given a strong emphasis and lie at the heart of the school's work. Visits and visitors, such as Asian musicians and African artists, help to broaden pupils' horizons, bring learning to life and help develop awareness of other cultures. Experiences such as a Book Week stimulate pupils' interest and link subjects together to promote learning. Pupils enjoy and benefit from a good range of clubs and activities which, 'widen pupils' minds and make learning fun and enjoyable'. These rich experiences also help pupils develop healthy and varied lifestyles. The overall curriculum in the Foundation Stage helps to bring about pupils' good progress. The curricular arrangements are still developing at this stage to provide continuity and consistency in the way the curriculum is organised between the Nursery and Reception classes so that children learn even faster.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral care is good with many successful initiatives established to keep pupils safe and happy. As one parent commented, 'the child's welfare is always paramount'. Systems for ensuring health and safety are good and are embedded in the school's work. It does all it can to ensure a smooth transition when pupils join and leave the school. Parents express confidence in the school and are pleased with the links between home and school. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well organised and helps these pupils meet their targets. Systems for monitoring pupils' academic achievement are good. Pupils play an increasingly active role in setting and reviewing their own targets. For example, the 'Ivanhoe Goal Getters' provide an innovative approach to the setting of targets, which give pupils a secure understanding and ownership of what they must do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher drives school improvement well and this contributes substantially to the improving standards and pupils' good achievement. The school's self-evaluation is well founded even though rather modestly interpreted. The school strives to do the best it can for its pupils and underestimates its success. The headteacher is inspirational and has created a unity of purpose and a strong senior leadership team. As a result, staff are willing to embrace new ideas to raise standards. The outcome of this is that pupils achieve well. The governing body is increasingly active in the evaluation of the school's performance. As a result, it is better able to direct its future. Governors support the school well with frequent visits and hold it to account by asking searching questions. The headteacher has a high profile around the school which helps to set high expectations among staff, pupils and parents. The views of parents are sought and acted upon well. Parents speak highly of the school: many families choose to travel some distance so that their children can benefit from the good education the school provides.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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

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?	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.

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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently and for talking to us about your school. You and your parents and carers think that Conisbrough Ivanhoe is a good place to learn and we agree with them.

The way that teachers mark your English using 'a star and a wish' works really well. Here are the stars and a few wishes for the whole school!

- Your behaviour is excellent.
- You have good attitudes to learning.
- You have a good understanding about being healthy and keeping safe.
- Staff look after you well and treat you all equally.
- You learn quickly because the teaching is of good quality.
- You are given fun things to do.
- Your headteacher knows just what to do to make things even better for you.

- Improve children's writing so that it is better than in most schools.
- Help children to use their skills at numeracy to work out mathematical problems.
- In the Foundation Stage, strengthen the links between outside play, morning and afternoon activities to enable children to learn even more quickly.