

High Greave Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106842
Local Authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	287623
Inspection dates	13–14 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Ross Parker

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	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr G Jackson
Headteacher	Mrs J Hitchcock
Date of previous school inspection	4 March 2002
School address	High Greave Road East Herringthorpe Rotherham South Yorkshire S65 3LZ
Telephone number	01709 850201
Fax number	01709 853253

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is slightly smaller than average and serves an area of Rotherham which has high levels of social, educational and economic disadvantage. A high proportion of pupils are entitled to free school meals. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also high. There are fewer pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds than in most schools. A small number of pupils are learning English as an additional language, but none are at the early stages of doing so. The school is part of an Excellence in Cities Action Zone, and has National Healthy School status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The overall effectiveness of the school is good. Parents are very supportive of the school and describe how their children are treated as individuals and each child is given the chance to perform academically to the best of his or her ability. They feel that the school looks after pupils well and say that their children enjoy coming to school and find learning fun.

Pupils feel safe and know how to be healthy because the school encourages them to eat a well balanced diet and take part in lots of physical activities. Physical activities within the school day are supported by a good range of after-school clubs.

Although standards are below average, achievement is good. Children enter the Nursery with skills and levels of development well below those expected for their age group. By the time they are ready to move on to the junior school they reach standards which are below the national averages. This shows that they are making good progress overall. Standards in reading are consistently weaker than in writing or mathematics, and boys generally attain lower standards than girls. Progress is less rapid in Year 1 as some children find it difficult to make the transition from the Foundation Stage to the more formal curriculum in Key Stage 1. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language are well supported by teachers and support staff in achieving their individual potential.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils. They know their pupils very well, and are particularly good at managing behaviour and developing pupils' communication skills. This means that pupils contribute increasingly well in class discussions and show good attitudes to learning. They move sensibly between one activity and the next and develop the ability to work independently and to look after their own materials. This prepares them well for their future working lives and contributes to their good personal and social development. Most lessons are good, and the result of this is that pupils are well motivated and eager to learn new things. The good care, guidance and support the school provides are at the heart of all its activities, because the adults understand how crucial these four years are for pupils' future well-being. Pupils feel safe at school and know that their teachers are always willing to listen and offer help when they need it. In spite of this, attendance is inadequate because too many parents do not bring their children to school regularly.

The headteacher has developed a collaborative approach to the leadership and management of the school. This has established a dedicated team of staff who share her vision for high levels of achievement in a warm and caring environment. They have recently improved the school's systems for tracking pupils' progress, and developed more rigorous and consistent assessment approaches. School leaders are developing a curriculum that focuses on skills to support learning rather than knowledge in different subjects. They have also introduced numerous additional activities that effectively involve parents more closely in their children's learning. The school has good capacity to improve and provides good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Good provision in the Foundation Stage enables children to make a good start to their education. Children's skills in communication and language, social development and number are particularly weak when they first come to school. They make good progress in these areas and, by the time they move into Key Stage 1, most pupils are working within the expected levels. Children also

make good progress in their attitudes to learning and their behaviour, and in reading and writing. This provides a strong foundation for later learning. Effective leadership ensures that the school offers a high standard of care and support for individual needs. The good range of outdoor learning opportunities are well managed to complement children's indoor learning. This gives effective support for children's physical and creative development, and encourages their curiosity about the world around them.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve attendance.
- Raise standards in reading, particularly for boys.
- Improve transition arrangements for children moving from the Foundation Stage to Year 1.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children enter the Foundation stage with knowledge, understanding and skills that are well below those found in most schools. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 2, most have made good progress, although standards are still below average, especially in reading for boys. Children leave the Foundation Stage with quickly improving skills in language and numeracy, as a result of a careful and systematic programme designed to boost their progress in these areas. Progress across Key Stage 1 is good but less consistent. Some pupils entering Year 1 struggle initially to make the change from the Foundation Stage to the full Key Stage 1 curriculum, and the school's arrangements to support these pupils require improvement. The newly developed school tracking system shows that the current Year 2 pupils are in line to achieve, and in some cases exceed, the very challenging targets set by the school for this year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Personal development and well-being is satisfactory overall. Most elements are good, but pupils' attendance is inadequate. This is because a small minority of families do not bring their children to school regularly. Behaviour is good. Expectations are clear and the great majority of pupils do their best to be considerate and helpful towards other people. Some pupils need very clear guidance before they are able to behave well, but adults give consistent guidance and enable them to do it. A very small number of pupils are at times extremely challenging. When this happens other pupils ignore them, and adults manage the situation very well so that learning can continue. Pupils have a good understanding of what a healthy lifestyle involves, and take good advantage of opportunities for physical activity. Pupils say there is little bullying because the adults deal with such incidents well. Pupils like the variety of activities that make their lessons interesting, and the outdoor learning and play opportunities. Parents describe younger siblings who cannot wait to come to school. Pupils make good use of opportunities to contribute to the school community through the school council, and by taking responsibility for classroom and playtime equipment. They are proud of the way they have collected funds for people in need, or to adopt a penguin, for example. They are learning to communicate more effectively, to listen and share. They are also making good progress in improving their basic skills and using information and communication technology (ICT). All of this provides a good foundation for success in later years. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They learn to think about the impact of their behaviour on others, and begin to explore

their place in the world around them, exemplified by one girl's question in a history lesson, 'Why do things change?'

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning is good. Classroom routines are well established and learning progresses briskly. Teachers' planning is thorough and provides interesting activities with a strong emphasis on first-hand experience. For example, during the inspection pupils were engrossed as they watched caterpillars transforming into butterflies. In most lessons, teachers use assessment data to adjust the work to match different pupils' abilities, although there remains more to be done to ease pupils' transition from Foundation Stage into Year 1. Teachers use questioning well, to encourage thinking, check on understanding and to build on pupils' previous knowledge. They provide good opportunities for pupils to talk and to listen to each other in response to identified weaknesses in language and communication skills. Teachers are well supported by teaching assistants who work constructively alongside them ensuring that individuals remain focused and challenged. Teachers draw the learning together very effectively at the end of each lesson, giving boys in particular the opportunity to refocus and consolidate their understanding. Feedback to pupils is clear so they know how well they are doing and what they need to improve. Teachers are good at finding ways of making learning accessible to children - involving them in using interactive whiteboards, using a film that children are familiar with, such as 'Shrek', to illustrate how a writer puts a story together.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is increasingly focused on developing pupils' key skills, and this is used to make meaningful links between subjects. Recently established curriculum development teams, involving all staff, regularly monitor and review curricular areas to ensure that they are appropriate to pupils. Visits out of school are regularly used to widen pupils' experience of the world around them, and these are carefully planned to link with curricular themes. Pupils, staff and parents have enjoyed whole-school themes such as 'Super Learning Day'. A wide range of visitors to the school including musicians, African dancers and a falconer provides further enrichment. Many pupils take advantage of a range of additional extra-curricular activities including multi-skills, music club and gymnastics. Projects centred around the 'Enterprise Award' help foster pupils' skills for future life. Many opportunities are taken to involve parents in the curriculum, including the 'Lego and Laptops' and 'Rowdy Robots' projects. A weekly chance for parents of children in the Foundation Stage to work alongside their children in the classroom, 'Stay and Play', is an outstanding example of parental involvement, and helps foster positive parenting skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Statutory procedures for safeguarding pupils are in place and all adults are trained in child protection. Health and safety checks are rigorous and risk assessments are regularly updated. The clear policies on equal opportunities are very effective in supporting inclusion. The small number of pupils whose behaviour is challenging is very effectively supported by an additional

behaviour specialist. Other good links with the neighbouring junior school support pupils' transition to the next phase of education. Teachers' well organised marking of pupils' work is helping pupils to improve their skills. Parents feel that they are well informed about their children's progress and targets for improvement. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported. Their progress is carefully tracked and appropriate additional support is put in place, including good support from external agencies. Measures to improve attendance have been extensive and imaginative, and have frequently led to short-term improvements that some parents have been unable to sustain.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management is good. The headteacher has established a strong and determined leadership style, and is ably supported by her recently formed senior leadership team. They have a clear picture of the school's strengths and areas for development, and have put into place well chosen changes to bring about the improvements required. Parents have been supported to improve their children's behaviour. There is now a very effective range of activities which help parents to understand how they can help their children to learn, and how to provide strong role models for learning. Subject leaders are now monitoring their subjects more rigorously and are beginning to contribute to the vision and ethos of the school because they have gained confidence. The whole-school tracking system is giving the senior leadership team an accurate picture of individual pupils' progress and identifies areas of underachievement so that they can be addressed quickly. Governors know the school well, give support and provide challenge appropriately. The areas for improvement identified in the previous report have been tackled with vigour, though work still remains to be done in tackling poor attendance.

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Annex A

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	4
The behaviour of learners	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.

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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 being so helpful when Mr Wilson and I visited your school. We really enjoyed meeting you and hearing about the fun you have in school.

We think you go to a good school. The adults are all kind and helpful. They make the lessons interesting and give you lots of exciting activities to help you learn. Most of you try hard and this makes you do well. We were particularly impressed by the way that you treat each other when you work and play together.

Too many children do not come to school regularly. This means that they cannot learn as well as they could. This will make it harder for them in junior and secondary school. It will also make life more difficult when they are grown up. We have asked the teachers to work with parents to make this better. You can help by making sure your parents know how much you want to come to school.

We have also asked the teachers to help you to reach higher standards in reading. You can help by continuing to work hard. Finally, we have asked the school to make it easier for some of you to cope with the work in Year 1 when you move up from the Foundation Stage.

Thank you again for showing us your school and letting us watch you learn. We both wish you the best of luck for the future. We hope that you will always enjoy playing and learning together.