

Gleadless Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106991
Local Authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	287671
Inspection date	18 April 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	599
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Wren
Headteacher	Mrs Valerie Fowles
Date of previous school inspection	22 April 2002
School address	Hollinsend Road Sheffield South Yorkshire S12 2EJ
Telephone number	0114 2399705
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Almost half of the pupils attend this large primary school from outside the immediate area. Most are White British; a few are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average; the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than average. In the autumn term 2006 the recently appointed deputy headteacher became acting headteacher for one term. In January 2007 a new headteacher was appointed.

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 because of the well led and very effective teamwork which focuses on the needs of every pupil. It provides pupils with great opportunities to develop their independence, to grow in maturity and to become responsible, very well behaved members of the school community. Pupils feel valued, enjoy their days at school and take delight in their learning. The school prayer sums up pupils' enjoyment of school: 'Thank you for each happy day, for fun, for friends for work and play'. The school has a good reputation within the community and the great majority of parents are pleased with what the school does to help their children learn quickly and to enjoy the wider benefits of attending a successful school. Indeed, many parents pass other schools in order for their children to attend Gleadless Primary School because of the well deserved good reputation it has. Good care and guidance promote pupils' happiness and this is reflected in their above average attendance. Pupils understand the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle and the school promotes this well. Pupils also have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe because the school gives high priority to this. It is of particular importance because the school works on two sites separated by a busy main road.

Children's attainment on entry to Nursery is lower than typically expected of children at this age. They make good progress and achieve well in the Nursery and Reception classes because the good teaching and curriculum serve their needs well. They have plenty of opportunity to learn and play outside and because this is well planned it enhances their development very effectively. By the end of Year 2 pupils continue to make good progress so that standards are usually slightly above average. This is an improvement since the last inspection when they were much lower. At Year 6 standards are average. Even though pupils achieve well they have had a lot of catching up to do from the legacy of lower standards when they were younger.

The good quality of teaching and learning in Year 1 to Year 6 is supported well by the team approach of staff in planning and sharing their skills. It is further enhanced by the very effective deployment of teaching assistants who provide extra, well organised help to many pupils. Nonetheless, there is some inconsistency in the quality of teaching at Years 3 to 6 in terms of pace, marking and the range of styles of teaching. Consequently, this holds back the pace at which some pupils learn. Within each of the year group teams, although there is support, challenge and training, not all teaching is the very best it can be.

In addition, the accommodation is not always conducive to good teaching and learning - it is cramped, and lacks sufficient discrete teaching areas. For example, one class has to work in the dining room. This limits the amount of practical work that can be done and this is something about which older pupils feel particularly strongly. They say they learn best when their tasks are practical, but this is not always the case. The satisfactory curriculum in Year 1 to 6 is improving as links are forged between subjects so that pupils have increasing opportunities to apply skills learned in one subject to others. Strengths are in the variety and good take-up of many extra-curricular activities, including residential opportunities which in particular promote pupils' healthy lifestyles. One weakness is the use of information and communication technology (ICT). In this, the school has had a setback in its resources which has in turn had an adverse impact on pupils' access to computers and consequently their achievement in ICT. This includes the use of the Internet for research.

Significant recent changes in leadership have been smoothly organised. The headteacher and deputy headteacher, together with support from other senior leaders, set a clear agenda for improvement. This is because their aims are shared well with all those interested in the school, professional relationships are good and the arrangements for checking the school's progress are robust. This means that the senior leaders, including governors, have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas to develop. They are able to focus on the needs of the pupils because the school receives good administrative support from the business manager. Good progress has been made since the last inspection and the school has a strong capacity to continue to improve. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the proportion of consistently good teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 so that pupils' progress is even more rapid.
- Explore options for improving accommodation and resources in support of the curriculum, in particular the opportunities for practical work and for the use of ICT

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

All groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language, make good progress. This is because of the good quality teaching and because pupils develop good attitudes to learning and are persistent in tackling their work. Targets are challenging and are usually met because they are monitored well; at times they are exceeded. Pupils' good achievement in English and mathematics set them up well for their further learning. Families play an important part in helping children with their homework, adding much to pupils' basic skills. In ICT pupils have some gaps in their learning due to the lack of access to computers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development, is good. Pupils really enjoy school and are keen to do well. Relationships are open and trusting and pupils always have someone they can turn to for help and advice. As a result, respect for themselves and each other is high. These factors contribute very well to pupils' readiness to learn and work together, and help to ensure that pupils from minority ethnic heritages have equal opportunities and do as well as others. Pupils behave very well and have good attitudes to their work despite the limitations caused by the accommodation. The staff work particularly hard to ensure cohesion in the school community, and pupils respond well. Pupils rise to their varied responsibilities within the community, whether as a member of the school orchestra, a playground leader or part of the technical team which lends support in assemblies. Pupils understand well how to live a healthy and fulfilling life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The good quality teaching and learning include really good relationships which form the basis of the pupils' developing independence. Pupils' behaviour is managed very well so that lessons

are mostly taught at a good pace. Staff use humour to help pupils learn and this is much appreciated by older pupils. Learning objectives are clear so that all pupils work towards the same goal. Teaching assistants add much to the teaching and learning because they are well trained and deployed. Generally high expectations enable pupils to work to full capacity, although on occasion this is let down by some inconsistency in Years 3 to 6 where in some classes the style of teaching is somewhat narrow. This slows the learning of some pupils. The grouping of older pupils by attainment in English and mathematics is helpful for most, and clear explanations and questioning help staff assess pupils' day-to-day understanding well. Nonetheless, at times work is not matched precisely enough to the needs of a particular group and at these times pupils' learning slows.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Teachers plan work that is interesting and enjoyable, and increasingly link different subjects together to broaden pupils' understanding of the world. A good range of well thought through extra strategies supports different groups of learners well. Extra-curricular clubs and activities are fully subscribed and add much to pupils' enjoyment, in particular in music and sports. Such satisfying activities improve pupils self-esteem and sense of community. The accommodation is difficult to work in and has an adverse effect on what the school can provide despite the staff's determination to do their best for the pupils. For example, practical activities are often limited by lack of space. Despite the school's efforts, resources for ICT are insufficient to fully promote pupils' development in the subject.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

All staff, including the learning mentor, play a pivotal role in pupils' care; the majority of parents agree. The school's arrangements for health and safety including child protection are part and parcel of the very effective everyday care. The school works well with many outside agencies to benefit pupil's development. Assessment and target setting are well embedded and mostly used very effectively to support pupils' learning. Marking of pupils' work is at its best when pupils have time to respond to the written comments but practice varies in this.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, with the support of a strong leadership team, has a clear focus on raising standards and promoting pupils' personal development. Senior leaders track pupils' progress well and have a flexible approach to ensuring that the changing needs of all pupils are met. Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation are well established and information from these activities provides the school with an accurate appreciation of its strengths and areas for development. Teamwork is used well to raise standards. For example, curricular teams which include representatives from across the key stages work well together to do their best for the pupils. The Foundation Stage is well led and this helps children get off to a good start in their education. Arrangements to train and develop staff are good and impact well on pupils' achievement. The governing body is well informed, in close contact with the school and well placed to provide a good degree of support and challenge. Resources are generally used well, although the use of ICT across the curriculum is underdeveloped.

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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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
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?	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?	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

Inspection of Gleadless Primary School, Sheffield, S12 2EJ

Thank you for helping with the inspection of your school by talking about your work and play. It is a good school - your parents agree which is why they have chosen for you to attend Gleadless Primary School. It is good because it is well led.

In assembly you explained the meaning of 'relationships' as a 'special connection'. The special connection that you have with the teachers is really helping you all to learn at a good pace. Teaching is good and moves you on quickly. You behave very well and have good attitudes to your work. Most of you attend school regularly and this helps you to make good use of your time at school because you don't miss out on anything. You have a good understanding about how to live a healthy and safe life because the school takes good care of you.

You told me that you would like to use the computers more and we all agree that this would help to improve your learning so the school is going to make sure that everything is in place for you to quickly catch up. Another way to help you achieve faster is to keep on improving the teaching and learning, including setting more practical tasks for you.

You can help by always doing your best and then doing that little bit more.