



Wharncliffe Side Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107059
Local Authority Sheffield
Inspection number 287699
Inspection dates 27–28 September 2006
Reporting inspector Joe Peacock

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Brightholmlee Lane
School category	Community		Sheffield
Age range of pupils	3–11		South Yorkshire S35 0DD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0114 2862379
Number on roll (school)	177	Fax number	0114 2862379
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Ms Andrea Swindon
		Headteacher	Ms Marshall
Date of previous school inspection	5 February 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–11	27–28 September 2006	287699

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This smaller than average school is situated in a rural village to the north of Sheffield. Almost all of the children are from White British families and about a quarter travel to the school from outside the normal catchment area. The proportion of children entitled to free school meals is below average. The number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average and the number with a statement of special educational need is well above average. The main reason for this is that there are two Integrated Resource (IR) units at the school, which cater for children with significant and complex learning needs, one in the nursery and the other for children in Years 1 to 6. When they enter the nursery, the attainment of most children is in line with the standards expected nationally for their age but it is much lower for those in the IR unit.

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 with some outstanding features. It has been transformed since it was last inspected owing to the first-rate leadership given by the headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher. Their very effective partnership has created a team of staff that share the commitment and determination to raise standards and to provide the best quality of education possible for the children of Wharnccliffe Side. The school is correct in judging itself to be good, but modesty prevails in relation to children's achievement and the provision in the Foundation Stage; these are good and outstanding respectively. Governors play a key role in supporting the school and ensuring that leadership and management is effective. The school's good reputation is spreading and it is attracting many children from further afield, with the result that there is now a waiting list for places.

Children achieve well and overall standards in English, mathematics and science are above average by the end of Year 6. This is a remarkable achievement as the performance of children in the IR unit is included in the national test results for Year 6. This good level of achievement is due to a combination of factors, which include the support provided for individual children, whatever their ability. The good quality of teaching is another significant factor. Relationships are particularly strong and underpin the quality of learning very well indeed. Teachers manage pupils effectively and create a good atmosphere for learning within their classrooms. They use praise well to motivate and encourage. In most lessons, pupils are appropriately challenged by the tasks set. On a few occasions, work is not quite so closely matched to all the various ability levels, which affects the progress of some pupils. Teachers' marking does not always indicate to pupils how they might improve their work. A current school priority is to further improve teaching in order to raise standards. Writing and mathematics were identified as areas for improvement following the results of the 2005 national tests. The school took appropriate action and consequently, standards in these two areas are now rising.

All children benefit from the very favourable number of school staff but especially those in the two IR units and those in the Foundation Stage. The excellent management of the Foundation Stage and high quality of teaching in the nursery by an especially enthusiastic and energetic teacher ensures that children make outstanding progress in all areas of learning. Reception children, who are in a class with Year 1 children at present, benefit from being with older children and from working separately with a skilled teaching assistant. The progress of children in the nursery IR unit and the IR unit for children in Years 1 to 6 is also outstanding. The policy of fully integrating children in the IR units into classes with children of their own age as much as possible, backed up by regular intensive support by highly skilled staff teaching small groups, is paying dividends and resulting in all the IR unit children making outstanding progress. Other children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also benefit greatly from the abundance of support staff and they too make outstanding progress.

Personal development is good. Children love coming to school and their attendance is consistently above average. A key strength is the relationships between staff and

children. There is a raft of initiatives to help children to gain in confidence and build successful relationships. These are ensuring that behaviour in class and around school is very good and helping to create the right attitudes to learning.

The quality of the curriculum, which includes a wide range of after-school clubs, is good. Not resting on its laurels, the school is reviewing and revising its curriculum at present to make better links between the different subjects. Good use is being made of the new interactive display boards in each of the classes and computers in the suite are regularly used to teach new skills but not enough use is always being made of computers in the classrooms by children either for research or to support their learning.

The overall quality of care, support and guidance is good. Pastoral care is of a high quality ensuring that all aspects of the Every Child Matters agenda are fulfilled most effectively. Academic support and guidance, however, is not quite as strong. There are challenging targets set for each subject but not all children are sufficiently involved in thinking about these; some are not sure of their personal targets at all. Parents are very appreciative of what the school is providing for their children and were overwhelmingly positive in the high return of inspection questionnaires. Taking all the above into account, along with the exceptionally high costs per pupil, the school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers consistently provide children with work that challenges them to achieve and make clear in their marking how children can improve.
- Make children fully aware of their personal learning targets and how these can help them learn best.
- Provide more opportunities for children to use computers to consolidate their learning and research more widely.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement in the Foundation Stage is outstanding, rather than satisfactory as judged by the school. This is because children make very good progress in all their areas of learning due to the very effective management of provision and enthusiastic staff who make learning exciting and fun. Children in the Nursery IR unit are fully integrated into the nursery class and make exceptional progress due to the quality of support from dedicated staff with a high level of specialist knowledge. The expertise of staff and generous staffing levels in the unit for pupils in Years 1 to 6 ensures that they also make outstanding progress.

Children's good progress continues in Years 1 to 6. By the end of Year 6, overall standards are above the national average with all children, including those in the IR unit achieving the challenging targets expected of them in English, mathematics and science. School initiatives designed to improve standards in writing from the Nursery to Year 2 and mathematics throughout are proving to be successful. As a result, the upward trend in standards to 2005 has been continued in 2006. The most recent Year

6 group of pupils did even better in mathematics than in English. The achievement of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is excellent as they benefit from high quality specialist support both in and out of the classroom.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children enjoy school and this is reflected in their higher than average attendance. Overall, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, helping to establish good habits for their future lives. Much emphasis has been given to promoting children's moral and social development from the moment they enter the school with a wide range of initiatives such as peer mediation and conflict resolution which encourage children to sort out problems by themselves. These are proving to be highly effective in building good relationships and giving children in the Foundation Stage confidence. The high quality of relationships between adults and children and the polite way they speak to each other have led to very good behaviour and a positive atmosphere for learning in the IR units and the rest of the school. All children welcome opportunities to show initiative and members of the school council feel valued as they try to make their school better.

The emphasis on promoting children's well-being gives them a good understanding of healthy lifestyle choices and they are safety conscious from an early age. Children are keen to make the most of what their school offers. The school recently achieved a Healthy School award.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

All teachers manage and motivate pupils well. Very good relationships are a strong feature and these help to create a very good atmosphere for learning in all classes. The higher than average number of teaching assistants, many of whom are attached to the IR units, support pupils most effectively. Teaching is especially successful when pupils are given demanding but enjoyable tasks and time is used to good effect to help them achieve well. However, on some occasions, work is not matched as closely as it could be to pupils' precise needs, which slows their progress.

Nursery and Reception teachers strike a very good balance between practical activities and the teaching of important skills. Their energy and enthusiasm ensure that children clearly enjoy their learning. As a result, they are interested and involved and know what they must do to succeed. In the Nursery IR unit, the level of integration with nursery children is a strength, helping children to make outstanding progress. The same high quality of teaching and learning continues in the units with children spending most of their time in class supplemented by regular and intensive individual attention.

Effective procedures are in place for assessing and tracking pupils' progress and the school sets targets for each class. However, teachers' marking does not always make pupils aware of what they need to do next to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school's curriculum is diverse, creative, and challenging for most pupils and provides enjoyment through its variety. As a result, children are well motivated, concentrate hard in lessons and make good progress. The school has successfully begun to break down barriers between subjects to make learning more relevant, interesting and sometimes exciting. Good use is made of the computer suite to teach skills but children do not use computers enough to consolidate their learning or provide opportunities for research.

Links with the wider community provide additional experiences such as visits, visitors and residential experiences that widen pupils' horizons and promote good learning and personal development. A wide range of clubs such as those for different sports, dance, drama and digital animation add to their enjoyment of learning. These rich experiences help them to develop healthy and varied lifestyles.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral care is of high quality with many successful initiatives established to help keep pupils safe and happy. As a result, children attend well and there is a lovely atmosphere for learning in the classrooms. Health and safety systems are good. The school has effective arrangements for ensuring that all staff are appropriately vetted. It does all it can to ensure a smooth transition for pupils to their new school. Parents express confidence in the school. Support for pupils with special educational needs is well organised and highly effective. Provision for children in the two IR units is outstanding with high quality care and support evident. However, academic guidance is not as high in profile as pastoral guidance. Pupils do not yet play an active enough role in setting and reviewing their own targets to make them more aware of what they need to do to work at a higher level.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The good leadership and management of the school are key factors in its continued success. The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, provides outstanding leadership. This has played a pivotal role in the school's continued improvement since the last inspection. The school's evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses is accurate and the views of staff, governors, parents and pupils are taken into account when deciding future priorities for improvement. This is a school that shows no sense of complacency and is not content to rest on its laurels. It rigorously

tackles areas needing attention and this ensures that its capacity for further improvement is good.

There is a whole-school commitment to providing a good quality education for all pupils and a strong sense of team spirit envelops the school. The long established subject coordinators are responding well to the new curriculum structure and are forming new curriculum teams. They are beginning to take on more responsibility for monitoring the school's work and performance. Governors are supportive yet challenging. They play an effective part in holding the school to account and acting as 'critical friends'.

The school makes effective use of its plentiful resources and the different skills of teachers and support staff to ensure that the value for money is good.

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	1
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	2
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	1

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	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
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 so much for helping us when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking to everyone and looking at your work. Wharnccliffe Side is a good school. Here are some of the good things we found.

- How well you all behave in lessons and around school. You all seem to enjoy coming to school so much and this shows in your good attendance.
- How much progress you make as you move through the school. We could see how well you get on with all the teaching staff and how much they help you.
- The excellent start that you all have in the nursery. We thought that some of the things that you had to do like using the puppet theatre to tell the story of the Three Little Pigs were interesting and fun.
- The many after-school clubs that there are for you to enjoy.
- The very hard work that your headteacher does to try and make your school 'the best'. All the staff and governors are supporting her really well.
- How very well you are cared for and supported by all the staff, especially those of you who find learning things difficult.

We are asking your headteacher, staff and governors to concentrate on improving three things in particular.

- We would like your teachers to make sure that they always give you work that will make you really concentrate and think hard and when they mark it to tell you how it can be improved.
- You should have the chance to discuss your learning targets with your teachers so that you know exactly how to learn best.
- You need to have more chance to use the computers in class during lessons.

Thank you again for helping us with the inspection. We can see clearly why you all enjoy coming to such a good school and hope that you will carry on working so hard in class.