

# Birley Spa Community Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107067
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sheffield
<b>Inspection number</b>	287702
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mrs Ann Sharpe

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	514
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Richard Couldwell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dr Geoffrey Mawson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19–22 November 2001
<b>School address</b>	Jermyn Crescent Hackenthorpe Sheffield S12 4QE
<b>Telephone number</b>	0114 2399106
<b>Fax number</b>	0114 2531236

---

<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	7 June 2007
<b>Inspection number</b>	287702

---

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Almost all the pupils attending this large primary school are White British. Many pupils come from the two surrounding housing estates, where there is a great deal of turbulence because homes are being demolished and rebuilt. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is above average. When children start Nursery, their skills are well below average, and even lower in communication, language and literacy. In 2004, the school opened a learning centre for pupils with speech, language and communication needs. Although the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average, there are more pupils with statements of special educational need than in most other schools. The school provides placements for trainee teachers from Hallam University. It holds the Investors in People award, the Gold ArtsMark and the Gold KiteMark.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

**Grade: 1**

Birley Spa is an outstanding school providing a very high quality of education. This confirms the views of staff and governors. The school sets itself high standards and has refused to stand still, following a glowing inspection report in 2001. It is because of the dedicated and inspirational leadership of the headteacher that no stone is left unturned when it comes to pupils' learning and their welfare. The school's motto 'Children First' is seen in the whole life of the school and in every new step that it takes. Staff are united in their determination to do the very best they can to help pupils to overcome a range of difficulties that some of them face. As a result, the care, guidance and support given to all pupils are extremely good. Pupils feel safe and are well looked after at school. It is not surprising, therefore, that parents and carers see the school as a vital part of their community, and say how much it means to them that they can approach staff for help and support whenever they need it. This has a beneficial effect on the pupils' learning and contributes greatly to their 'life chances' – a term used frequently by staff and governors to explain their approach to managing the school.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school and the behaviour observed was exemplary. They talk with enthusiasm about everything they do. Although attendance is broadly average, the school strives to encourage pupils to attend more regularly. The disruption caused by the housing rebuilding scheme, however, has prevented attendance from improving since the previous inspection. Nevertheless, the school puts a lot of emphasis upon pupils' personal development and well-being. This includes work as part of the curriculum as well as many other opportunities, such as the extensive range of responsibilities that pupils undertake eagerly. The school council gives pupils a genuine say in how their school is run. Pupils in Year 6 relish this opportunity, and are extremely confident, mature and sensible when explaining their involvement. They talk very knowledgeably about keeping healthy and safe and enjoy taking part in activities within the community, such as the Lord Mayor's parade. Pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being is one of the reasons why they make such good academic progress, and why they are so well placed to do well at secondary school and to become responsible citizens.

Pupils of all ages and capabilities make excellent progress from their low starting points and, as a result of a consistently high quality of teaching and learning, standards are above average by Year 6. This means that pupils have a head start on other pupils when they transfer to secondary schools. Although standards are not as high in writing as they are in reading and mathematics, pupils are making increasingly good progress because of the efforts of teachers to find the best ways to improve pupils' learning. Staff say how much they love their jobs, and there is a sense of excitement about making their school even better, for example, improving pupils' writing skills. The school's work as a training school and its links with many other educational establishments have enabled staff to keep in touch with national developments. Consequently, continual professional development is high on the agenda and influences how successfully the school uses its resources to raise pupils' achievement.

This is a school that values the skills of staff and provides opportunities for them to blossom and to contribute to its leadership and management. The school is very keen to ensure that nothing, but nothing, gets in the way of pupils' learning, for example when staff changes are unavoidable. Consequently, the school is very well placed to continue to improve in the future. Although the school collects extensive information about pupils' progress and attainment, senior staff and governors do not make fullest use of it to demonstrate just how good the school is, or to pinpoint tightly what they want to concentrate greatest efforts on improving next.

Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards and pupils' personal development and well-being. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation, national published assessment data, the school's own records of pupils' progress over time, pupils' previous work in writing and the school's plans for further improvement. Discussions with staff, pupils and parents were held, and the parents' questionnaires were looked at. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Use existing information about pupils' progress and standards more effectively in order to demonstrate clearly how well the school is performing and to pinpoint tightly the most important priorities.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Annex B

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.	School Overall
--	----------------

### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	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
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	1

### The quality of provision

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

### Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
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

<sup>1</sup> 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.



8 June 2007

Dear Children

### **Inspection of Birley Spa Community Primary School, Sheffield, S12 4QE**

Thank you for making me feel so welcome when I visited your school. I thoroughly enjoyed my day, especially talking to school council members. I enjoyed finding out about all the exciting things that you do and how involved you already are with helping to make your school even better.

Your school is an excellent school because all the adults make sure that every one of you has all the help you need to do as well as you possibly can. Your parents and carers are right to feel very pleased with the school, and I understand why you enjoy coming so much. I was very impressed with your polite and friendly behaviour, and with how you all play your part in making the school such a busy and happy place.

You learn very quickly indeed because your teachers and other adults make lessons interesting and make sure that you reach your learning targets. You often find writing more difficult than reading and mathematics, but your writing is getting better because the school is doing everything it can to make sure that it does. I was very impressed with how much older children know about keeping healthy and safe, and am pleased that you enjoy getting involved in activities in the community.

Although your headteacher, staff and governors are the people who have made your school so good, they know how much you have helped them. This is why it is so important that you continue to try hard, especially to improve your writing and your attendance.

Teachers keep a lot of records to show how quickly each one of you is learning, and I have asked the school to use this information to find a way of showing how well the whole school is doing.

Yours sincerely

Ann Sharpe  
Lead Inspector