

Porter Croft Sheffield Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107121
Local Authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	287719
Inspection dates	27–28 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Philip Cole

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	168
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Bentley
Headteacher	Mrs Linda West
Date of previous school inspection	12 February 2001
School address	Pomona Street Sheffield South Yorkshire S11 8JN
Telephone number	0114 2662132
Fax number	0114 2661094

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This small school mainly serves an inner city area with a mixture of owner occupied and rented housing but also admits pupils from many other parts of Sheffield. The school has a very diverse population with pupils from 15 different ethnic heritages and many speak English as an additional language. More pupils enter and leave the school between Reception and Year 6 than in most other schools. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above average as is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school currently has an acting headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school, which provides satisfactory value for money. Parents are very supportive and really appreciate the way the school ensures that their children, who come from many different backgrounds and cultures, get on so well together. Pupils' personal development is good. They celebrate each others' cultures, and happily work and play together. They enjoy their lessons because they feel that learning is fun. Pupils feel safe, free from harassment and know that any problems they have will be sorted out. They are well aware of how to lead a healthy life and what they need to do to take care of themselves. Their good personal and social skills and positive attitudes help them to face the future with confidence.

Standards and achievement are satisfactory. Children are well provided for in Reception and get off to a good start. This good rate of learning, however, is not as successfully sustained in the rest of the school. Pupils' progress is slower in Years 1 and 2, and standards are below average in reading and writing, and broadly average in mathematics in Year 2. In Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in English and science, and good progress in mathematics, where standards are beginning to rise. Standards remain below average overall by Year 6.

Teaching is generally satisfactory. It is better in Reception where children make good progress because activities are focused and purposeful, and there is a good balance between those led by adults and ones that children choose independently. Teaching in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory but improving as teachers become more skilled in using their assessments of pupils' progress to plan challenging work. This is the case in mathematics, for example, where teaching and consequently pupils' progress is generally good. Progress has been partly boosted by additional mathematics teaching programmes. In English and science, however, teaching is more variable and not as strong. The exception is pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who receive effective support and make good progress.

The curriculum is satisfactory. There is a good partnership with other schools and the community to provide specialist teaching of modern foreign languages, music and physical education which enhances pupils' learning. There is adequate provision for pupils learning English as an additional language, enabling them to make similar progress to their peers. Pupils are very well looked after. The school has a warm and caring atmosphere and robust systems ensure pupils' well-being. However, pupils are not yet provided with enough guidance on how to improve their work.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The acting headteacher and the recently appointed deputy headteacher are providing good leadership. They have identified key areas of weakness and are making good progress in tackling them. There is still some way to go, however, in developing the leadership and management skills of other teachers. For example, monitoring and evaluation is still too reliant on the acting headteacher and deputy headteacher. Governors are effective in providing support and challenge. Progress since the last inspection has been limited. Standards remain below average and self-evaluation is underdeveloped. Given that the leadership arrangements are in a state of flux, many improvements are recent and so are not yet having full impact, the school's capacity for improvement is satisfactory rather than good as the school judged it to be.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English and mathematics across the school.
- Ensure that teaching is consistently good.
- Ensure pupils know how to improve their work.
- Develop the management roles of the staff, involving them in the monitoring and evaluation of provision.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The exception being children in the Foundation Stage who enter with below average skills and consistently make good progress. By the end of Reception, many exceed the expected learning goals. In recent years, progress in Key Stage 1 has not been good enough and by the end of Year 2, standards have been below average. Over this year, progress has improved as teaching has become more focused on what pupils need to learn. Consequently, it is now satisfactory in reading and writing, and good in mathematics. This results in broadly average standards in mathematics. Standards are below average in reading and writing. Good progress in mathematics is continued throughout Years 3 to 6, where successfully implemented strategies have tackled weaknesses and strengthened pupils' achievement. However, standards remain below average, particularly in English and mathematics in Year 6. In English and science, pupils are on track to achieve the realistic targets that have been set for them. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from effective support and make good progress. Those who speak English as an additional language quickly learn English, receive overall satisfactory support and achieve as well as other pupils in school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils clearly enjoy lessons and each others' company. Attendance is satisfactory, although a few sometimes arrive a little late for lessons in the morning. Pupils behave very well throughout school and this contributes to their readiness to learn. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils develop good self-esteem and confidence because their different achievements are celebrated and they have a good understanding of each others' faiths and cultures which ensures everyone gets on well together. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles, the dangers of drugs and the need to take care because the school places a good emphasis on their health and well-being. They make a satisfactory contribution to the school community through the school council and by raising money themselves for various charities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching in Reception is good because adults work effectively together to provide well thought-out and stimulating activities, such as the recent visit to a supermarket caf, that pupils enjoy and which provide a firm basis for learning. Teaching in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. A particular strength is the effective work of the special needs coordinator and teaching assistants to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This underpins the good and

sometimes very good progress that these pupils make and enables them to be fully involved in lessons. Teachers' support is generally adequate for those learning English as an additional language, although they successfully encourage pupils to work together in a common mother tongue. This clearly helps those who are less confident in their use of English. Many of the features that are helping to improve teaching are recent. Some teachers make more effective use of them than others and this shows in the different rates of progress made by pupils across classes. Good teaching includes, making the purposes of activities clear to pupils, encouraging them to evaluate how well they are learning and helping them to understand how to improve through the marking of their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

An appropriate emphasis is placed on literacy and numeracy. Some good examples of work seen in music, physical education and art enrich pupils' learning. Pupils benefit from specialist teaching and coaching in some of these subjects, including French. Those learning English as an additional language receive satisfactory and sometimes good support. The provision made for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. Until recently, however, little extra was done to meet the needs of pupils whose performance had dipped or required boosting. This is improving but there are some pupils, particularly in Key Stage 1 who are not yet benefiting from the additional help they need from appropriate intervention programmes.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Adults work hard to make sure pupils feel at ease and happy in school. Any problems are quickly identified and pupils are effectively helped. This often involves the learning mentor, and parents and outside agencies, whenever this is appropriate. The policies and procedures to ensure pupils' welfare and safety are robust and up to date. Academic guidance is satisfactory but improving. Where teaching is good, informative and encouraging marking as well as discussion helps pupils to assess their learning, correct mistakes and know what they need to learn next. However, this is not consistently the case, which results in some pupils getting insufficient guidance to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school has been through a difficult period resulting from the headteacher's long-term illness and related absences. The governors took robust action to appoint an acting headteacher from outside the school to work alongside a newly appointed deputy headteacher. They have forged an effective team that is moving the school forward. There is a shared understanding of what needs to be done to raise standards and improve the school's effectiveness evident in well thought out plans to improve provision. Teachers now feel much more involved and valued. They are now actively engaged in improving the school, but their skills and involvement in monitoring and evaluating its effectiveness are underdeveloped. Governors have a good understanding of the school and have the confidence and skills to hold it to account and to work effectively with the local authority to ensure the interests of the pupils are safeguarded.

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?	3
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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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	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	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
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?	3

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?	3
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	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

We really enjoyed our visit to your school. We think that your school is satisfactory at present but that it is improving. For example, your teachers and their assistants have worked hard to help you to do better in mathematics and as a result, most of you are now making faster progress than you did.

You behaviour is very good and you all get on very well with each other. We were impressed with how you helped each other in class and particularly those of you who are learning English. You are lucky to come to school with children from so many different countries and cultures. This is helping you to have a good understanding of the traditions and beliefs of people from around the world. Many of you told us how much you enjoyed school because you have fun and 'learn things you need in the future'. We think that everyone in the school looks after you well and wants you to be happy and to feel safe.

All the grown-ups in school want you to have the best education possible and they are working hard to make this happen. At present, lessons are mostly satisfactory, although some of them are good. Your teachers are working to make lessons better and your headteacher and deputy headteacher are giving them lots of help and encouragement to do this.

We think that the school can improve further by:

- helping you to do better in literacy and numeracy across the school
- making sure that teaching is equally good in all classes
- helping you to understand more clearly what you can do to make your work better
- making sure that all teachers look more carefully at how well the school is doing so they can help make it even better.

We think that some of you can help your teachers by always arriving at school on time so you do not miss any of your lessons.

I would like to thank you being so friendly and welcoming.