

Fixby Junior and Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107634
Local Authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	287877
Inspection dates	18–19 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Andrew Swallow

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	314
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr J James
Headteacher	Mrs Jenny Chamberlain
Date of previous school inspection	16 September 2002
School address	Lightridge Road Fixby Huddersfield West Yorkshire HD2 2HB
Telephone number	01484 226650
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Age group	5–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Fixby Junior and Infant is an above average sized school which serves a rich ethnic school population where less than half the pupils are of White British origin, and where about one third live in homes where English is not the first language. Most of these pupils are bilingual and understand and use English well. Most pupils come from the immediate area of largely privately owned accommodation. A small but increasing number travel from neighbouring villages because of the school's growing reputation. Many of these children have significant additional writing and mathematical needs. The overall proportion eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average, as is the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has Investors in People, Investors in Pupils and National Healthy School awards.

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 where pupils work happily together and enjoy their learning. Some aspects of the school's work are outstanding and highly valued by parents. They feel that it is a 'fully inclusive school that wholly deserves its strong reputation in the local community'. Staff work hard to provide a secure and stimulating environment in which pupils are encouraged to express themselves and become confident learners. As a result, attendance is above average and misbehaviour rare.

Standards reached by the end of Year 6 have recently increased and are now well above average in English, mathematics and science, from above average starting points at the end of Year 2. This represents good achievement. Traditionally, children enter the school with broadly average starting points. They make good overall progress through the Reception year and across Years 1 and 2. In recent Years, standards on entry have declined to slightly below average. Nevertheless, overall standards attained in Reception have been maintained, which means children now make outstanding progress in the Foundation Stage.

The good quality of teaching is characterised by a thoughtful approach which brings learning alive while not neglecting the basic skills. Pupils say that 'Lessons are interesting and fun.' They believe that their teachers really want them to do well and are always there for them. 'Our teachers are the best because they want the best for us' is a commonly shared view. As a result, pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. The school recognises that a small proportion of lessons are not of the same quality as the rest, and is sharing expertise to raise expectations and outcomes here. The Foundation Stage makes excellent provision for the teaching of early reading skills and constructive outdoor play. The overall outstanding curriculum is tailored carefully to provide for pupils' different interests and needs, offering a wide range of cultural, musical and sporting opportunities. Special theme days provide creative backdrops for further development of key skills and competences.

Parents are warmly appreciative of the school and the outstanding care, guidance and support it gives to their children. They say that they are 'constantly amazed at the commitment of all staff' and praise the way in which 'all children are treated with equality and encouraged to do the best that they can'. Because of the stimulating environment in which they work and play, pupils take a keen interest in their school's achievements. Their mature and responsible behaviour means that they act safely and show respect for the world around them. Their enthusiasm for sport and their strong awareness of how food and exercise affect their bodies gives them an excellent understanding of the importance of living healthily. Teamwork is held in great esteem and, from seeing adults working well together, pupils develop a sense of pleasure to be gained from contributing to a community. Good collaborative skills, well above average academic standards and an understanding that work can be enjoyable prepare them well for their future lives.

Good leadership and management by the headteacher and key staff have ensured continuous improvement since the last inspection. Governance is good. The school evaluates itself well, although plans for development lack sufficient detail about intended outcomes. The school is in a position to ensure more rigour here. Current educational outcomes confirm that the school provides good value for money and there is good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good or better throughout the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

For many years children have entered the Foundation Stage with levels of attainment which are broadly average for their age. However, in recent years, standards on entry have declined, as an increasing proportion have joined the school with much lower aptitudes in writing and calculation. Historically, most children make good progress by the end of the Reception year, because teaching is lively and imaginative. Current rates of progress are excellent, because teachers have adjusted very well to children's changing needs, developing very effectively levels of independence and important social and behavioural skills. In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve well, particularly in reading. Recent strategies to improve pupils' attainment in writing have been successful. Current standards in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 are above average, and are broadly average in mathematics. Pupils' progress across Years 3 to 6 is also good. Standards in English and mathematics are well above average, and are significantly above average in science. More importantly for these pupils, this represents good achievement from their starting points. Higher-attaining pupils perform well, especially in science. Pupils with learning disabilities and/or difficulties achieve well, because they are supported and challenged to good effect. Consequently, all pupils achieve well throughout the school. The school sets ambitious performance targets and has a good record of attaining and often exceeding them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding, is outstanding. They thoroughly enjoy school with its warm and welcoming atmosphere and this is reflected in their above average attendance. Pupils are proud to belong to a multicultural school which celebrates diversity, and they value the many opportunities to explore different faiths and cultures. 'We respect each other here,' they say. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay healthy, as a result of the school's strong emphasis on the importance of regular exercise and healthy eating. They talk enthusiastically about being treated with respect by adults and respecting each other. Pupils behave well, and are confident, polite and sensitive to the needs of others. They believe bullying is not an issue at their school and say 'There is always someone to talk to if you have a problem.' They know that their views matter and see their school cabinet as a forum for change. They talk proudly of introducing the 'Friendship Stop' at lunchtimes. 'It really works. You always have a friend to talk to.' Pupils make valuable contributions to the community by raising funds for charities. They feel trusted to take on responsibilities and that it is important 'to set a good example'. They have a very thorough awareness of keeping safe in and out of school. Their good literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills mean they are well prepared for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good, with examples of outstanding practice. Lessons are interesting and provide many opportunities for pupils to think for themselves and to engage in purposeful activities. Pupils say that they find lessons 'fun', and that they enjoy being allowed to work with their friends. Good relationships underpin learning. The excellent teaching in the Foundation Stage leads to many children developing good learning habits from an early age, with clear gains in social skills. Teaching assistants are a real strength and work exceptionally well with teachers to support all pupils' needs. Teachers have clear expectations of what pupils need to learn and increasingly plan for different learning approaches and experiences. For the most part, activities are well matched to pupils' needs so that most are suitably engaged and learn effectively. New technology is used thoughtfully to engage pupils' interest. In a small proportion of lessons, teaching is satisfactory rather than good. Here, activities are not as engaging as elsewhere in the school. This results in a slower pace to learning and in some pupils finding it difficult to maintain concentration.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. It enables pupils to achieve well and makes a very strong contribution to their personal development. The school has adjusted the curriculum very well to meet pupils' particular needs. For example, teachers have successfully placed greater emphasis on speaking, listening and role play to improve writing. Similarly, standards in mathematics have risen, partly due to successful grouping according to ability. Links with a local football club have helped to interest boys in reading, and new initiatives have made science more relevant and engaging, particularly for minority ethnic pupils. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 study French, and there are plans to extend this across the whole school. Extra challenges are provided at lunchtime for pupils who are gifted and talented. Pupils appreciate the outstanding range of extra-curricular activities, including sport, art, music and drama, which broaden their learning. Visits and residential experiences are particularly memorable. Pupils speak of the fun they have, but also, for example, of 'impressive viaducts and the difficulties that must have been experienced in building them'. The school's gardening club provides vegetables for school lunches and a strong encouragement for healthy eating.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding and this view is shared by parents, who speak of the 'fantastic atmosphere' of the school. They are 'proud and impressed' by the behaviour of pupils and overwhelmingly agree that their children are well cared for, safe and secure. Pupils, too, value the commitment and hard work of all staff in caring for them and in guiding their learning. Pupils say 'They really keep you on track.' The inclusive, caring ethos of the school is reflected in the value that pupils place on caring and supporting each other. Child protection procedures are securely in place and arrangements for health and safety are robust. Close working relationships with a range of agencies provide pupils with the support they need to overcome their barriers to learning. Teachers know their pupils' needs very well and each pupil's progress is carefully monitored and tracked to ensure successful steps in their

learning. Personal targets are also effective in motivating pupils' positive attitudes. The very high standard of care is a significant factor in pupils' enjoyment of school, their sense of well-being and the good progress they make.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher leads by example and has created a stimulating environment where everyone works well together to develop the talents of each pupil. Staff speak very highly of her leadership. They have confidence in her expertise and understanding of the curriculum, and feel both empowered and supported to ensure that pupils learn effectively. Her genuine care for all those who work around her has brought about good improvements since the last inspection. Fixby Junior and Infant School enjoys an increasingly positive reputation within the local community and beneficial links with local schools and universities. These enhance pupils' learning and well-being.

Staff are encouraged to reflect on and share good practice. They feel appropriately challenged to monitor and evaluate the quality of their work. The school's tracking procedures are used with increasing confidence to pinpoint individual pupils who may not be achieving as well as they can, and to trigger suitable support. Leaders have an accurate view of strengths and areas for development. Action plans are having a beneficial impact, although they do not always describe intended outcomes with enough precision to allow the impact of major actions to be rigorously assessed. Governors are very supportive and ambitious for the future of the school. They are increasingly confident in understanding what the school does well and how it needs to improve.

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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	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	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
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
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	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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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

Thank you very much for your warm welcome when we visited your school. We very much enjoyed meeting you all, and learning about all the special visitors to your school and the visits that you make to places of interest. In particular, we enjoyed being in your lessons, seeing how hard you work, talking to you and finding out about all the exciting things that you do in and around school. We thought that the vegetable plot was very well cared for and enjoyed the new potatoes and fresh carrots for lunch! The discussions we had with the Year 6 cabinet members and wider representatives of the school council were really good. You speak and act in a very mature manner, and show really caring attitudes to each other in lessons and at playtimes.

We agree with you that your school gives you a good education. We saw how much you enjoy your lessons and how much fun you have working in teams and on practical tasks. You all seem to get on very well with one another. Most of you are achieving well and reaching standards in English, mathematics and science, by the time you leave school, that are well above schools nationally.

Your teachers are generally good at making lessons enjoyable, as well as making sure that you learn. Your school prepares you well for your future lives. This is because your school is well led and managed. All the staff care about you and they clearly enjoy working in such a friendly and stimulating environment.

It is part of our job to point out what schools should do to improve their work. Your headteacher and all the other adults want you to do well so we have asked them to ensure that all your lessons are as good as the best. You can help by always trying your best and concentrating hard on your work.

We very much hope that you continue to enjoy your time at school and wish you every success in the future.