



Nields Junior Infant and Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107646
Local Authority Kirklees
Inspection number 287880
Inspection date 21 September 2006
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 address	Nields Road
School category	Community		Slaithwaite, Huddersfield
Age range of pupils	3-11		West Yorkshire HD7 5HT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01484 222584
Number on roll (school)	215	Fax number	01484 222584
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs C Shepherd
		Headteacher	Mrs Mulligan
Date of previous school inspection	30 April 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school serves the large village of Slaithwaite in West Yorkshire. The pupils are mostly White British although there is a small number from minority ethnic heritages: a few pupils are at the early stage of learning English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is broadly average. Although the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also broadly average the number with statements of special educational need is high.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

well and provide good value for money. One parent who attended the school as a child says, 'It just gets better and better.' This school is a happy and successful one in which pupils make outstanding gains in their personal development. This is because they respond exceedingly well to the wealth of opportunities the school gives to help them keep safe and healthy and grow into well rounded individuals. As one pupil said, 'It is a good place to be.' Parents are pleased that the school does such an excellent job in caring for their children. Parents say that staff listen carefully to what the children have to say and take good account of parental views. The school meets its aim to 'provide children with a stimulating learning environment where they feel secure, happy and motivated to achieve'. This promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceedingly well. It means that pupils are ready to learn and soak up new ideas quickly.

The pupils are purposeful in their play and work: relationships are outstanding. These attributes stand pupils in good stead to work at a good pace. The quality of teaching is good and on the whole meets pupils' needs so that most pupils can do their best. As a result, pupils, including those learning English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities learn well overall. Nonetheless, those capable of very fast learning in Year 1 and Year 2 are not yet fully reaching their potential.

Pupils enter school with standards below those typically expected for their age.

They get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage because it is well led. This results in teaching and learning of good quality and a lively and practical curriculum with a great focus on developing pupils' skills at speaking and listening. This means that standards rise to the expected level by the end of the Reception Year. In Year 1 and Year 2 pupils make steady progress. Progress is good in Years 3 to 6 due to good teaching. Pupils' achievement is good overall. They make the best progress in reading, mathematics and science and least progress in writing.

The headteacher's leadership is very strong. A great skill is in the way in which changes are managed so that the staff work together to improve pupils' achievements. Good support is given by all levels of leadership including governance. The outcome of this 'pulling together' is that there has been good improvement since the last inspection. For example, standards have risen to the expected level in information and communication technology for most pupils. This is because resources for learning are much improved and the subject knowledge of staff has come on in leaps and bounds: the school provides a lot of training for the staff and it is received well. In addition, pupils are now spoilt for choice of extra-curricular clubs. These nurture pupils' interests exceedingly well in a wide variety of sport and art. Very popular clubs include Japanese and computers. The school has a good capacity to build on its success. It knows itself well, although is at times too modest about its achievement because it is always striving to improve. Self-evaluation helps the school prioritise its work

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in writing so that they are higher than average in Years 3 to 6.
- Ensure that those capable of learning very quickly are offered a greater challenge in Year 1 and Year 2.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage because of the good teaching. Most achieve well to reach the goals set for them by the end of the Reception Year. Pupils' achievement in Year 1 and Year 2 is satisfactory. At this stage standards tend to fluctuate. This is in part because of the differing proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in each class and is also due to recent staff changes in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to Year 6 the pupils make more rapid progress so that they achieve well: standards are usually above average. An exception was in 2006 when standards were broadly average because the year group had a large proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities: importantly the pupils made good progress.

The headteacher drives school improvement well. This contributes greatly to the school's overall improving standards and achievement although the school has some way to go to bring writing up to scratch. Too few pupils attain highly in writing and they say that it is the least enjoyable aspect to their work. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language make the same progress as others because they are given extra help to meet their targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils respond amazingly well to the outstanding arrangements to nurture their personal development and well-being. They fully enjoy school as reflected in their above average attendance and take great delight in the many activities provided. They are proud to belong to this school and are able to contribute to its success through the school council and through the very strong relationships they have with each other and with staff. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Spirituality shines through pupils' daily life at school. For example, their eyes light up in great appreciation of their gardening plots in the school garden. They experience joy in their outdoor play when they only have to glance up to appreciate the rolling hills in which the school is set. In lessons such as drama pupils' empathy for others is palpable.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good and built upon excellent relationships. It is best in the Foundation Stage and Years 3 to 6. Here day-to-day assessment is used especially well and linked to homework. Lesson plans identify different levels of work and support to meet the needs of most groups of pupils. In Year 1 and Year 2 the quality of teaching and consequent learning is satisfactory. This is because the new teaching team is developing its planning and this does not yet give enough challenge to those pupils who can learn quickly. Information from assessment is not as carefully considered as in the older years and lessons do not always have sufficient pace. Modern technology is used well across the school. It adds interest to pupils' learning and means that teaching can be adapted to suit different styles of learning. Those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language do as well as others in their class because of the extra help they are given. The policy for marking is clear but in practice the marking of pupils' work and the follow up is inconsistent which means that opportunities for accelerating learning are sometimes missed.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy the developing curriculum: it is broad and mostly matches their needs well. The use of literacy across most subjects has improved well so that pupils have more opportunities to write in a range of styles and for different reasons. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is being linked more closely and effectively to Year 1 and Year 2. As it develops in Years 1 and 2 the link between activities is becoming more meaningful and sets the scene for further curriculum development in the school. A week set aside for the arts last year helped to sow the seed for curricular planning to be extended so that subjects are not taught in isolation. The pupils have vivid memories of their personal achievements and very much enjoyed the 'pirate week' when their work was based on a treasure hunt around the village. Parents and pupils appreciate these 'extraordinary events' and the time staff put into the planning of them. The curriculum is enhanced through visits and visitors to bring more meaning to the pupils' learning. Many pupils take advantage of the sporting, musical and creative activities outside of lessons and are particularly successful at rugby.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides outstanding care for its pupils. Arrangements for their health and safety are taken very seriously and upheld through a great deal of training and development for staff and governors. Vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well. Individual plans to educate them

are very focused and reflected in good progress. Good relationships with external agencies give further support. Academic guidance is helpful to pupils. The older pupils in particular know what it is they need to do next to improve. They are keen and work hard toward their targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The good leadership has a clear focus on raising standards. The successful way that developments are managed brings about the strong outcomes described above. The headteacher is outward looking and this together with very effective and honest self-evaluation helps the school to meet the needs of most pupils well. Priorities are systematically addressed: staff are given clear guidance in implementing change in line with the school's aims. Training and development for staff is another success story. For example, staff's expertise in helping pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is certainly paying off. Staff are ably helped by the governing body which lends support and constructive and honest evaluation to help the school continue to forge forward.

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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	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	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	1
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	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?	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.

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 the very friendly welcome you gave me when I inspected your school. You will be pleased to know that I judge your school to be a good school with some outstanding aspects. All concerned with the school are rightly proud of this.

The strongest things are that the staff look after you well, are always there for you and treat you fairly. You are exceedingly well behaved and have great attitudes to your work and play. This is not surprising because the school makes sure that the teaching is good overall and the curriculum is just about right for you. Because of this you learn new things quickly. Your headteacher knows how to make your school even better and is helped by all the adults in school.

The next step for the school is to help you enjoy writing more and get better at it in Years 3 to 6. Also, your teachers can offer greater challenge for you in Years 1 and 2.

You can all help by working hard. Your families can help by reading with you so that you are helped to learn how other writers tell stories and present information.