



Hinchliffe Mill Junior and Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107658
Local Authority Kirklees
Inspection number 287882
Inspection date 31 January 2007
Reporting inspector Roger Gill

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Waterside Lane
School category	Community		Holmbridge, Holmfirth
Age range of pupils	5-11		West Yorkshire HD9 2PF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01484 222476
Number on roll (school)	102	Fax number	01484 222476
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Angie Rumney
		Headteacher	Mrs L Noble
Date of previous school inspection	8 May 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This small school is situated in a relatively advantaged semi-rural area, but it admits children from a wide social spectrum. Therefore, it contains an average mix of children overall. The vast majority of them are from White British families; a very few are from minority ethnic groups. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are broadly typical in number. The headteacher and assistant headteacher have been appointed since the last inspection in 2001. Moreover, since then, the school's accommodation has been transformed internally and externally. The school possesses a variety of awards including Investor in People, Basic Skills Quality Mark, Healthy Schools, ActiveMark and the Football Charter Mark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

'I think this is a wonderful school and I couldn't imagine a better start for my child.' This is how one parent describes Hincliffe Mill. The vast majority of parents and children hold similar views. This is an outstanding school that has a powerful influence over academic performance and children as people.

Achievement by the end of Year 6 is exemplary. Standards by the time pupils leave are consistently above average and sometimes exceptionally high as was the case in 2006. Results in English and mathematics were way above the national average. Children make swift progress in Reception from a typically average starting point. Progress was slower in 2001 at the time of the last inspection. Then the accommodation and curriculum in Reception restricted children's opportunities for educational play. These matters have been resolved extremely well and now children shoot ahead. So much so that standards have improved well in Year 2. They are consistently above average and sometimes exceptionally high as in 2006. Children were nearly a year above the expected level for their age in writing, which was a remarkable feat. This was the result of very skilful teaching that helped children produce accurate, thoughtful and imaginative pieces. Standards in Year 2 are maintained well by the end of Year 6, despite the significant movement of children in and out of school, which occurs in some years.

The radical improvement of the school's accommodation, in recent years, provided a springboard for the outstanding teaching, first-rate curriculum and higher standards, which are now apparent. For example, the well equipped new room for computers has enabled children to make up for lost ground in their knowledge and skills. Standards in information and communication technology have improved rapidly and are already above average. However, it is the drive and determination of the headteacher which really lie behind the school's current successes. Excellent leadership from the top has utilised the accommodation very well, inspired staff in their teaching and developed their own capacity to lead. Moreover, the school's links within the community and further afield provided a wonderful resource for its accomplishments. The entire team, expertly led, has created a superb climate of care and support, which has resulted in outstanding personal development among children. They feel very closely involved in the school's decision making process. When asked how the school might be developed further, they look amazed. This is because, as they said, 'All our ideas are taken on board, except the one about a swimming pool in the playground!'

The school's family culture is a major asset. This is evident in assemblies, for example. Children contribute to the discussions with such assurance because the atmosphere is so encouraging. Younger ones share ideas easily with older children owing to the trust and respect that exists between them. Throughout the school, children are confident and clearly enjoy everything on offer. They all feel safe and appreciate the lengths to which the school goes to keep them fit and healthy. Playtimes are social events with a plethora of equipment to keep them active. There is a system of forum groups, in which about ten children of all ages meet regularly with an adult. They

discuss points of topical interest or concern. This adds a robust structure to the schools' underlying feeling of community.

The school's self-evaluation has an excellent effect on future plans and their fulfilment. However, the school is too self-critical to be complacent about its strengths. Everyone knows, correctly, that there is always something more to do. For example, children are very well informed about their targets for learning, but not involved enough yet in discussing how well they succeed in them. Nevertheless, what has been accomplished to date is outstanding. The progress made from 2001 is first-rate, as is the capacity to progress even further. In relation to the costs involved and the standards achieved, value for money is excellent.

What the school should do to improve further

Devise and implement methods that appeal to children, which would help them to evaluate their own progress in lessons and over time.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Outstanding achievement is present throughout the school. The broadly average start in Reception is often characterised by better levels in personal development than in the early stages of reading, writing and arithmetic. This makes the eventual progress pupils make in English and mathematics even more impressive. The children who possess a learning difficulty and/or disability make similar progress to the rest because the teaching and additional support they receive is so effective. For example, the small group with behavioural difficulties benefit greatly from the coordinated assistance they are offered. Equally, higher attainers do very well. In 2006, for example, over 80% of children in Year 6 reached the higher level for their age. Four years earlier, in Year 2, only about a third was in a similar position. Beyond English, mathematics and science, children do particularly well in ICT and physical education owing to improved resources and extensive links with other schools.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

What parents describe as a 'wonderful ethos' within the school results in superb behaviour and attitudes from the vast majority of children. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. This is because lessons and assemblies often contain the 'wow factor', children are very aware of what constitutes correct behaviour, and the curriculum introduces them to a wide variety of cultural issues. Children are most confident because they are frequently asked to contribute to school life and join groups to receive an extra boost if they lack self-esteem. Older children feel proud to run the healthy tuck shop. Everyone patronises it because it keeps them healthy. They all feel loyal to it because the idea came from them in the first place. The friendship

bench symbolises their flourishing personal development. The fact that it is used infrequently shows, as one child said, 'how friendly we all are together'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Children declare that learning is fun. Teaching guarantees enjoyment because lessons are so well prepared and presented. Teachers are crystal clear about the purpose of lessons, but also what various groups of children will do. All children are catered for as individuals. Discussion, often at quite a high level, forms the backbone of many lessons. This is because children have practised the art of debate in philosophy lessons produced for the primary age group. So, Year 3 and 4 children discussed in some depth the idea that our knowledge of Queen Boudicca is largely influenced by Roman historians who possessed a particular bias. Children's work is assessed in an exact and thorough way. Learning in English, mathematics and science develops quickly because teachers use information from assessment exceedingly well to plan new work and set ambitious targets for children to reach. Targets for personal development run alongside the academic ones.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The very appealing curriculum has a formidable influence on children's academic learning and a remarkable one on their personal development. The influence of the Basic Skills Quality Mark results in very well designed tasks in lessons. Children love the chance to learn French as part of the timetable, but also speak enthusiastically about clubs for yoga, music and gardening. Physical education is a strong feature of the curriculum owing to the effect of the local Sports Partnership. There are also valuable club activities for recorders and choir, which are greatly enjoyed. The way in which children are encouraged to work so well together in groups, learn valuable lessons about health and safety and participate in running the school equips them wonderfully for their next school and the world of work. Philosophy lessons add depth to the provision as does the school's involvement in community activities such as drama, art and sharing memories with older citizens.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

This exemplary aspect has a marked influence on children's personal development. Very productive links with local playgroups and child minders means that children receive high quality after-school care. This work has gained the school national recognition. Child protection arrangements and risk assessment procedures are in place and working well. Support for healthy living is very well established, not least because governors have introduced an annual 'big breakfast', which reinforces the message

about sensible eating. Moreover, 60% of the food served in the school kitchen is sourced locally. Parents are involved very closely in children's learning. There is also a marvellous programme of induction and preparation for next stages. For example, the bridge between Reception and Year 1 is very effective. Local expertise is harnessed tremendously well for any child with a difficulty. Throughout the school, children receive good guidance about their targets, but lack time to discuss how well they are doing in them.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Outstanding leadership and management have created a school in which children, staff and governors feel part of a large team. The energy behind the developments in recent years flows from the headteacher. However, each member of the team has played a crucial role. The new assistant headteacher, for example, provides a model of outstanding practice in the classroom and is fast gaining a valuable overview of the school. Governance is good. Governors fulfil their duties well by being very closely involved in everything that goes on. Their programme of school evaluation is very well considered, but not yet complete. Nevertheless, the processes of monitoring and evaluation overall are first-class. The headteacher demonstrates expert skills in examining children's progress and the quality of teaching. This work, which is shared very well with other key staff, keeps teaching and learning up to the mark. Plans for development are clear, simple and effective.

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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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
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?	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	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 the 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

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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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 for your help when I inspected your school. I thoroughly enjoyed my visit because everyone was so friendly.

You go to an outstanding school. I know that you are truly proud of it. These are some of the things that I found to be particularly impressive. I appreciate the way that all staff think of you as individuals when they plan lessons. I got the feeling that I was in a big family in which everybody mattered. Your headteacher is highly skilful at leading the school; it has changed a lot in the last few years when you think of the building, in particular. I loved the idea of the forums. The one to which I spoke provided me with some super examples to prove that yours is a fabulous school with great teachers. You all made me very welcome. The children that I sat with at lunchtime chatted away in a very friendly way. I learnt from them how important the rules, rewards and stickers are. I even got a sticker for eating every bit of my lunch.

I know everyone wants to do even better and I have suggested something that I think will help. Your headteacher needs to see that you all get a chance to talk about how your lessons have gone in relation to your WALTs, WILFs and personal targets. You cannot all speak everyday after every lesson. However, there will be a way to include you more in this work, since you are all so thoughtful in many other ways, for example, in the forums and in philosophy lessons.

You can all help by thinking hard about how you are getting on with your targets. I know you can do it.