



Fieldhead Junior Infant and Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107679
Local Authority Kirklees
Inspection number 287886
Inspection dates 12–13 October 2006
Reporting inspector Peter Howard

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Charlotte Close
School category	Community		Birstall, Batley
Age range of pupils	3–11		West Yorkshire WF17 9BX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01924 326382
Number on roll (school)	154	Fax number	01924 326772
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr I McCarthy
		Headteacher	Mrs Deborah North
Date of previous school inspection	14 January 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school serves a community of mainly council owned properties in an area of well above average social and economic deprivation. A much higher than average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The school is smaller than average and, as a result of housing issues in the local area, the number of pupils attending has been falling. The proportion of pupils in school with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is low and very few are in the early stages of learning English. The majority of teachers have been appointed within the last eighteen months.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school rightly judges its own effectiveness to be good. By helping pupils to develop personal skills and achieve well in their work, the school meets the challenging needs of pupils from this economically disadvantaged community effectively. It makes good use of display to create a caring, supportive and stimulating environment that supports learning and makes parents welcome.

The school is particularly successful in promoting pupils' personal development and well-being, which are good. Pupils feel safe in school and their behaviour is good. They enjoy school, have a positive attitude to learning and they want to do well. Children make an effective start in the Foundation Stage and make good progress in Nursery and Reception. Standards are below the national average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. However, given children's low starting points when they enter school, this represents good progress.

The quality of teaching, the curriculum and the care given to pupils are good. The school is working successfully in all of these areas to secure improvement and this is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement. Teachers manage their classrooms well and other adults make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers involve pupils successfully in their learning of English by setting targets and marking their work in relation to what they are expected to learn. Such strategies are raising achievement in English. However, these approaches are not used as effectively in the teaching of mathematics. As a result, some opportunities to accelerate pupils' progress are missed. Extending the breadth and richness of the curriculum is increasing pupils' motivation to learn. Staff are very caring and arrangements for the support and protection of pupils are good. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well catered for.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides very effective leadership. Key leaders check and raise the quality of teaching. This has contributed to good improvement since the last inspection. However, insufficient use is made of pupils' assessment results. As a result, strategies for improvement are not focused on raising pupils' achievement as much as they could be. Governors are supportive of the school and have made a good contribution to the recent improvements in provision. The development of extended services for families and pre-school children is a strength of the school that is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement. Effective partnerships with a range of children's services are helping to safeguard and support the more vulnerable pupils. The effective management of the improvements to provision and the well considered plans to take the school forward indicate that the school's capacity to improve is good. The school gives good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make more effective use of assessment information to identify more clearly what needs to be done to raise standards.

- Involve pupils more consistently in assessing their own work and setting targets in mathematics to ensure that they know what they need to do to improve their achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Overall, pupils achieve well as they move up the school. Children enter school in the Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills that are well below those expected for their age; a great many have communication difficulties and weak numeracy skills. They make good progress in the Nursery and Reception, even though many of them do not reach the goals expected before moving into Year 1. Standards by the end of Key Stage 1 are below average in reading, writing and mathematics, although pupils achieve well, given their starting points. Standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 2 are also below average but results in Year 6 have improved significantly since 2003. Pupils' progress through Key Stage 2 is gathering momentum; not least because of the impact new teachers are having on pupils' learning. Although the impact of these changes has not yet been fully reflected in performance in the national tests, it is evident in the good teaching taking place in school and the higher standards to which pupils are working in class. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well provided for and are also making good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are very proud of their school and speak of their teachers with affection. Attendance is good and pupils go to school wanting to learn. A parent wrote, 'My child never stops talking about school when he is at home, telling us what he has done.' Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school provides many opportunities to help pupils make informed choices. As a result, pupils are learning the difference between right and wrong and their behaviour is good. They work with increasing concentration in class and, on visits, pupils are a credit to the school. Pupils understand the benefits of leading a healthy lifestyle and Year 6 pupils run a healthy school tuck shop. Pupils are developing strategies to keep themselves safe; for example, they are beginning to understand the dangers posed by drugs. They value the opportunities provided by school to take responsibility and contribute to school life. For example, the effective school council has organised additional playground equipment and raised funds for good causes. Improving basic skills and increasingly positive attitudes to school indicate that pupils' preparation for the next stage of learning is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers successfully match the work provided to pupils' different learning needs. As a result, pupils make good progress. Recently appointed staff are having a very effective impact on the quality of teaching. Staff work well together in implementing a good range of teaching styles and strategies. Pupils enjoy their learning and they respond well to teachers' high expectations. Teachers set fun activities that inspire and motivate pupils. One pupil said, 'Teachers are always thinking of things to help us learn.' This can be seen for example in English, where lessons providing opportunities to write at length are enjoyed by all pupils. Teachers make good use of group and individual work to encourage both teamwork and independence. Teaching assistants give very effective support to all learners, particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and meets the needs of all pupils well. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage has been much enhanced by improved outdoor provision. The focus on practical activities is increasingly effective in meeting the challenging needs of children entering school. Good provision in English and mathematics, supported by intervention programmes to help pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are reinforcing basic skills, enabling pupils to make good progress. There is very good provision for information and communication technology, which is used well in many subject areas. Developments to improve pupils' skills by making links between subjects are having a good impact. Strong emphasis is given to personal, social, health, emotional and citizenship education and this has a significant impact on behaviour and attitudes to learning in the school. Pupils enjoy the wide range of enrichment opportunities and extra-curricular activities, including residential trips for Key Stage 2 pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support is good and reflects the strong commitment of staff to their pupils. The school recognises that in order to meet pupils' needs it must extend its work to support their families and this it does very well. This is evident in the 'birth to three' provision, courses for parents and the effective work with parents that support pupils' attendance. This support is contributing to pupils' personal development and helping to raise achievement. Parents are very positive about the way the school relates to their children and pupils say they feel safe in school. A good range of strategies to involve pupils more in their own learning have been introduced, including setting targets for individuals and linking marking to learning objectives. These have been implemented very effectively in English, but not so consistently in

mathematics. Arrangements for health and safety and child protection are thorough and well managed. There are good routines to ensure that pupils move from one phase of their education to the next as smoothly as possible.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides very effective leadership in the context of the school's challenging circumstances. Following major changes to staffing that have seen the majority of teachers, including the deputy headteacher, appointed in the last eighteen months, the headteacher has created a committed staff team, which displays a strong sense of shared purpose. She has a powerful vision of the school as a caring community devoted to achieving high standards in all areas of school life. The school places great importance on pupils' personal development and well-being and its work in this area is very successful. The staff team has worked effectively to improve provision to ensure that pupils make good progress and there is a strong commitment to raising standards. As a result, the school has improved in many areas since the last inspection and all issues raised at that time have been dealt with well. The school's judgements of its strengths and areas for development are generally accurate. Within this positive picture, the school recognises that it does not make the best use of performance data when evaluating the impact of provision and planning improvement. Governance of the school is good. Governors are highly supportive of school and are effective in helping it to move forward. Many initiatives to support parents and involve them in school life have resulted in an increasingly strong partnership with parents, who give the school their overwhelming support.

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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	3
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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
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	2
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?	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?	2

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	3
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 welcoming us to your school and being so polite and friendly. We enjoyed our visit very much.

Yours is a good school. The best things are:

- how well you behave and that you work so hard
- how much you enjoy your work, for example in the 'Big Write' sessions we saw
- the good range of activities the teachers plan to help you learn
- how hard all the staff in school work, how well they look after you and keep you safe and how much they want you to do well in school
- that Mrs North and the staff know what to do to make sure that your school is successful.

We know everyone wants to do even better and we have suggested some things that we think will help. We have asked your teachers to make more use of your test results when they plan how to make school better, so that they can go on helping you to learn even more. Teachers are already setting targets and linking their marking of your work to those targets in English. They have made a start in mathematics, but we think they could use these ideas more in that subject.

You can help your teachers by continuing to work hard and by taking advantage of all the opportunities offered by school.

We wish you all the very best for your future at Fieldhead Junior, Infant and Nursery School.