

Headlands Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior, Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107723
Local Authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	287896
Inspection dates	4–5 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Stephen Wall

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	391
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms N Dixon
Headteacher	Mrs Jill Womersley
Date of previous school inspection	25 November 2002
School address	Headlands Road Liversedge West Yorkshire WF15 6PR
Telephone number	01924 325707
Fax number	01924 325736

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger than average school serves an area of broadly average social and economic circumstances. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. However, the number with statements of special educational needs is above average because the school has resourced provision for up to six autistic pupils. An acting headteacher has been in post since January 2007.

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 in which pupils make good progress because good teaching enables them to achieve well. It gives good value for money as a result. The school is being very effectively led and managed by the acting headteacher who is ably supported by other acting senior managers. Parents are supportive of the school although a small minority have some concerns about the behaviour of some older pupils. This has been effectively tackled by the acting headteacher. Behaviour is now good in lessons and around school. Outstanding procedures for self-evaluation have been introduced enabling the school to have a highly accurate understanding of its own effectiveness. It knows its strengths and what it needs to do to improve further. This is giving the school good capacity for further improvement. It has made good progress since the last inspection.

This is a happy school in which pupils' personal development and well-being are good. So too is the quality of care, guidance and support the school provides. Assemblies are used particularly effectively to provide excellent opportunities for spiritual reflection. Strong Christian values underpin the school's work. They give the pupils a firm understanding of right and wrong and respect and tolerance for others. They are particularly caring towards those who have severe learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors. They understand the importance of healthy lifestyles. Large numbers participate enthusiastically in the wide range of sporting enrichment activities. Pupils feel safe in school. Relationships are strong with much mutual respect between pupils and adults. By the time they leave school most pupils are articulate, confident and ready to take on the challenges of the next stages in their education.

A good range of stimulating activities in the Nursery and Reception enable children to develop good social skills and inquisitive minds. From broadly average starting points they make satisfactory progress by the end of Key Stage 1 to attain broadly average standards overall. However, standards in writing are consistently below average and are not yet high enough. During Key Stage 2 pupils achieve consistently well in mathematics and science where standards are high. Standards in English, although never less than average and sometimes above average, have not been as high because weaker writing skills have been a barrier to success. The school is tackling this rigorously. The recent introduction of extended writing strategies is starting to have positive impact as seen in the improvement in the most recent test results in English, especially in the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels.

Teaching is good overall because it enables pupils to make good progress. However, there is considerable variation in the quality of teaching from one class to another. 'This year has been ace because our teacher has really pushed us and we've learned loads. In other years it's been O.K. but sometimes I think it wasn't so interesting and we didn't learn as much as we could have', was one older pupil's perceptive comment. The good curriculum meets the learners' needs. It is especially effective in catering for the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with severe difficulties, so that they too make progress in line with their peers.

The acting headteacher is inspiring very strong teamwork and bringing about a strong focus on raising standards and achievement further by tackling identified areas robustly such as pupils' writing skills. The governing body is becoming more actively involved in the agenda for improvement. It is learning to take a more active role in supporting the school and is starting

to ask questions and seek information to enable governors to get an accurate view of how well the school is doing.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing, especially in Key Stage 1.
- Iron out the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning so that it is at least good in all classes.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children join the Nursery and Reception with broadly expected levels of attainment for their age. A good range of activities lays a firm foundation for their development in Years 1 and 2 where they make satisfactory progress in reading and good progress in mathematics to achieve average and above average standards respectively. Standards in writing are consistently below average, however. In Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress overall. Standards in mathematics are above average. In science standards are well above average. In both these areas targets are met and often exceeded. Standards in English have not been as high but are starting to improve as new writing strategies start to have an impact. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve as well as others because teaching provides effectively for their needs.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy being at school as seen in their above average attendance. 'I enjoy coming through the school gates because I know I'm going to be happy and have a good time,' was the expressed opinion of most pupils. They feel safe in school and say that adults working in the school listen to any concerns they may have and 'sort them out quickly'.

Older pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities such as acting as play leaders at break times. All are involved in raising money for a variety of charities. The school council is coming to life again after a period of dormancy, much to the pupils' approval. School council representatives were involved in interviews for the appointment of the new headteacher, for example. Pupils' good levels of competence in basic skills and their good levels of confidence and self-esteem mean they are well prepared for future success.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good although there is considerable variation in quality. Good teaching in the Foundation Stage gets children off to a good start particularly in developing their social skills and eagerness to learn. In Key Stages 1 and 2 most teaching is good. Some is outstanding. It is demanding, entertaining and makes excellent use of information and communication technology (ICT) to engage pupils' interest fully. In some classes, however, satisfactory teaching lacks the necessary pace and variety to engage pupils fully in their learning. As a result, the pace of learning drops and some pupils become restless. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly. Their comments tell pupils what they have done well but there is some inconsistency in how clearly they indicate to pupils what they should do to make their work better. The school is reviewing its marking policy and procedures to tackle this.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The varied curriculum meets the needs and interests of the pupils. Some exciting links are being developed between subjects through special theme days and weeks, such as environment week. Pupils really enjoy these. The school has developed good links with other schools and organisations to develop skills and talents in modern foreign languages and sports, for example. Good quality art work has led to the school receiving the Artsmark award for visual arts. Good emphasis on numeracy and improving provision for literacy enable pupils to use these skills successfully in a range of other subjects. Provision for ICT is only satisfactory because it is not used regularly enough to support learning in some classes. The range of sporting enrichment activities is outstanding and large numbers join in with great enthusiasm. This makes a positive impact on their adoption of healthy lifestyles. However, enrichment activities for pupils who are not sporty are limited.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are well cared for in a friendly, supportive learning environment. Adults know the pupils well and relationships are good. As a result, pupils feel safe and secure. Procedures for safeguarding pupils' health, safety and well-being are well established. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified early. Good quality support from skilled teaching assistants ensures that these pupils are included in all that the school has to offer and make the same progress as their peers. The very good links with outside agencies and the sensitive specialist support for pupils with more severe needs provide them with any extra specialist help that they require. Academic guidance is good. Targets are set for literacy and numeracy and so pupils know the levels at which they are working.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Senior leaders, most in an acting capacity, are providing highly effective leadership and promoting very good team work. In a short time procedures have been introduced and tightened to give greater cohesion to the school's work. For example, the role of subject managers has been redefined so that they now have better understanding of what is expected of them and how to carry out their responsibilities. Thorough self-evaluation now includes the views of a wide range of stakeholders, including the parents and pupils. This gives the school an accurate picture of its strengths and the areas which need to be tackled to effect improvement. Planning is of high quality and identifies clearly priorities for action and criteria by which to judge success.

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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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
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?	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	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?	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.

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	3
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

Inspection of Headlands Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior, Infant and Nursery School, Liversedge, WF15 6PR

Thank you for making us welcome when we came to visit your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you and talking to you about your school.

You will be pleased to know that you go to a good school. You make good progress in your learning as you move up through the school, especially in mathematics and science. We think you could do better in your writing, however, especially in Years 1 and 2, so we are asking your teachers to make sure they concentrate on this. We think you behave well and get along with each other very well. We were pleased to hear that most of you enjoy school, feel safe and well cared for. Your teachers work hard to provide you with good and interesting things to do in lessons. However, the progress you make in some lessons slows because they are not really varied enough. We are asking the school to make sure that all your lessons are equally enjoyable and encourage you to make good progress. Your acting headteacher and all the adults working in the school are doing a really good job in making sure that your school is in a strong position to improve even further. We are sure you will continue to work hard and help your school go from strength to strength in the future.