



Hunslet Carr Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107950
Local Authority Leeds
Inspection number 287970
Inspection date 4 October 2006
Reporting inspector Roger Hartley HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Woodhouse Hill Road
School category	Community		Hunslet, Leeds
Age range of pupils	3–11		West Yorkshire LS10 2DN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0113 2713804
Number on roll (school)	365	Fax number	0113 2713804
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr N Hampshire
		Headteacher	Mr P Tyson
Date of previous school inspection	19 November 2001		

Age group 3–11	Inspection date 4 October 2006	Inspection number 287970
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Hunslet Carr Primary School is situated close to the centre of Leeds, and is in an area displaying many hallmarks of social and economic disadvantage. The locality is one of the poorest in the city with high levels of unemployment and significant crime levels. Over 40% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Of the 365 pupils on roll, 101 have been identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities, although none has a statement of special educational need. The school has its own Nursery provision, from which most children transfer into the Reception classes.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school is set in a challenging inner-city area. Many of the children come to school with limited skills and where their potential to learn has remained largely untapped. Under these circumstances, the school does well in many ways and a strong feature of its work is the way it responds to the often complex personal and social needs of the pupils whilst also recognising its responsibility to encourage them to make strides in their learning. The school has enlisted various specialist support agencies to work alongside its own specialist teachers, resulting in the needs of various groups of pupils being well met. As a consequence, the pupils are well behaved, enjoy coming to school and feel safe and secure.

The complex business of raising standards and levels of achievement against such a backcloth proves very challenging. In many respects the school has achieved a good measure of success and is not afraid to be innovative or to respond to emerging issues. For example, it successfully promotes the pupils' attitudes to work; has reviewed its curriculum to improve the way in which subjects are taught based on topic themes; and has introduced a new language scheme to boost the pupils' writing and reading skills. However, there are also some aspects of the school's work which require greater consistency and for practical measures to be taken so that progress can be made more consistently and effectively. For example, while the teaching is of satisfactory quality overall with some which is good, with more regular monitoring, these inconsistencies could be ironed out. Although the curriculum initiative is still in its early stages, the lack of sufficient time for senior managers to make detailed assessments of its impact is causing anomalies to arise; for example, copying chunks of text into topic exercise books, while the language scheme is resulting in younger pupils having restricted access to books.

The theme of contrast is seen most clearly in the standards reached and the achievement of pupils which, although satisfactory overall, reveal wide variations between key stages and between standards reached in national tests and those currently reached in lessons. Most children enter school with low levels of attainment and although the staff work hard to accelerate their learning, at the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils struggle to reach expected levels for their age, as they have done over the last five years. However, results at the end of Key Stage 2 have recently taken a sharp upturn and despite many pupils beginning the key stage in Year 3 well behind others nationally, the progress made in the pupils' achievements in 2005 placed the school in the top 22% of schools, in stark contrast to 2003 when it was in the bottom 23%.

Despite these overall contrasts and inconsistencies, there is much to celebrate within the school, and with the combination of hard-working staff and firm leadership, there is no reason to doubt the school's capacity to continue its improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards especially in Key Stage 1 and throughout the school in English.

- Raise the quality of teaching to a consistently good level.
- Involve pupils more in the setting and reviewing of targets.
- The headteacher and senior managers should establish clear ways of monitoring the impact of initiatives on the quality of teaching and learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement and standards are satisfactory overall, but there are wide variations between the key stages both in the standards reached in the national tests and those currently reached in lessons, and the rate of progress made in learning.

Most of the children enter the Foundation Stage with low or very low levels of attainment particularly in their communication and social skills. Although they make some progress towards the early learning goals, standards reached at the end of Key Stage 1, reflected in the 2005 test results, are significantly below national levels and have been so for the past five years. The number of pupils reaching the higher Level 2B+ was at its lowest for three years. Nevertheless, there are fluctuations from year to year, but generally aspects of language fare worse than mathematics.

However, results at the end of Key Stage 2 paint a much brighter picture and for the last two years, standards have not only reached national levels, but those for mathematics and science, have exceeded them. A significant number of pupils who began Year 3 with very low standards, Level 1, not only reached national levels but reached the higher Level 5. This level of progress in 2005 placed the school in the top 22% of schools nationally, in stark contrast to 2003 when it was in the bottom 23%. Standards achieved in lessons, however, were less buoyant, being unsatisfactory in the majority and satisfactory in the remainder, only one of which was at Key Stage 2. Standards in English, even in Key Stage 2, lag behind those in other subjects. The pupils make satisfactory progress in their lessons, although it fluctuates between the key stages according to the quality of teaching, the accuracy of the work to the pupils' needs, and the pace at which learning takes place.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The ways in which the school promotes the pupils' personal development and well-being is a major strength. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, reflected in the pupil's enjoyment of an assembly about the creation. The very effective contribution of the learning mentor to pupils' emotional and social well-being is having a positive impact on the pupils' attitudes to learning and pupils of all abilities and ethnic backgrounds treat each other with consideration and respect. They thoroughly enjoy being in school and when asked could not think of anything they would like to improve. Promoting pupils' understanding of leading healthy lifestyles is thoroughly embedded and there are many opportunities for pupils to be active and

take part in sport, both in curriculum time and through the many extra-curricular activities the school offers.

Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and around the school, and occasional lapses are dealt with in a sensitive and consistent way. Successful initiatives between the school and other agencies have enabled pupils to feel that they make a positive contribution to the community and pupils have high expectations of future life and work opportunities. Attendance is slightly below the national average, although the school has comprehensive procedures for following up absences.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall; none of it is unsatisfactory, and there are examples on which to build in order to raise much of the satisfactory teaching to a higher level. Strong features in the teaching include practical work which challenges the pupils and gives them opportunities to try things out and use their skills to solve problems; teachers asking pertinent questions to check what the pupils have learned; and teaching which is enthusiastic and assured. Nevertheless, there are some things which could be better. Although the principle of planning work to match the learning needs of different groups of pupils has been agreed by the staff, it is not applied successfully in all lessons, leading to some pupils making slow progress; for example, when the more able pupils do the same work as others. There are long and medium term plans which teachers draw up in year group teams, and which form the basis of the daily work. However, weekly plans vary considerably in their length and detail; for example, not showing how the work is organised for different groups of pupils. In one case, there were no lesson plans available since the beginning of term, except for literacy, numeracy and science.

The school recognises the value in having detailed information about how well the pupils are making progress in their learning so that it can be used to help teachers in planning suitable work. The assessment and recording information is of good quality and targets for the pupils are set at the end of one year, for the next. Early in the autumn term checks are made to make sure the targets are accurate, but there are no arrangements yet in place to check regularly how much progress pupils subsequently make so that adjustments can be made.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The pupils enjoy a broad range of subjects which meet the National Curriculum requirements, and the school has worked hard to make as much of the curriculum relevant to the pupils' daily life as possible. This is being achieved in a number of ways: special days when the whole school works on a common theme; for example, bullying, or 'making choices'; a whole week devoted to raising multicultural awareness; and a

recent review of the ways in which as many elements of the curriculum as possible can be taught through topics. The school has also responded to weaknesses in the pupils' language skills by introducing a new programme to promote the use of sounds and letters. All these measures have much potential, although the impact of some has yet to be realised. For example, some of the work completed by pupils in their workbooks appears drab, consisting of copied chunks of text, while the measures taken to improve language work are resulting in pupils, particularly younger ones, having restricted access to books.

These weaknesses could be ironed out through thorough monitoring of how well teachers are responding to the new ideas, although senior managers will need time allocated to carry out reviews.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good quality care, guidance and support for the pupils, and their self-esteem is high. Pupils are encouraged to make a contribution to school life, make decisions and feel that they have a voice; for example, through the School Council. Procedures for safeguarding pupils, including child protection procedures, are in place and teachers and teaching assistants are well trained and sensitive to the needs of all pupils. Pupils know who to go to for help and any acts of bullying are dealt with promptly. The school has put many initiatives in place to combat antisocial behaviour and a member of staff is trained to work with parents to enable them to support their children.

The work of the special needs coordinator ensures that pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are identified quickly and relevant support is given to enable them to reach their potential; for example, those who have social and emotional difficulties. The newly introduced 'Worry Box' initiative is well used and pupils are given the opportunity to discuss their problems with an adult the same day. This is a school where every child matters.

The procedures for academic guidance are not as rigorous and pupils are not involved in setting their own targets. The school does not routinely ensure that every pupil is aware of how well they are doing and what the next steps are for improvement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall with some obvious strengths but also some aspects of management which could improve further, thus enhancing the work of the school.

The headteacher, rightly, recognises the characteristics of the local community and their impact on the lives of the children, and he works hard to encourage the staff to find ways to respond to their needs; he achieves a good measure of success. Senior staff changes last year resulted in the senior leadership team being redesigned to

share out major responsibilities between the headteacher and the two recently appointed assistant headteachers. The roles are clear, aiming to provide strong leadership across the key stages as well as leading important developments such as assessment, and in the core subjects. The middle managers also have clear roles and make very good contributions to the overall support and personal development of different groups of pupils and in fashioning how the curriculum is designed. Most of the current initiatives are identified in the school improvement plan, which was drawn up in consultation with the whole staff; it is detailed and reflects accurately the current needs of the school.

However, the mechanisms for making sure that developments are kept 'on track' and lead to improvement or for pinpointing what may need to be done further, are not well established. The monitoring of teaching is infrequent; time for managers to monitor the impact of their work is insufficient; and the provision of resources to help give the Foundation Stage children the best possible start, is hindered by lack of financial resources. The work of the governing body was not inspected.

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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
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	3

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	3
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?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	4
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	3
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I would like to say how much Mrs Frost and I enjoyed spending time in your school. Thank you for being so polite and friendly and telling us about your work and what interests you.

We spent a lot of time finding out how well you are learning and by watching you work in some of the lessons and talking to Mr Tyson and your teachers. Don't they do well! Showing you how to do things, and making sure you have lots of exciting things to do. At the end of the inspection we talked to Mr Tyson about what we had found out. This is what we said.

We thought you were extremely well behaved children, listened carefully to your teachers, did as you were asked, and worked hard in your lessons. Even the youngest children were good at taking turns and sharing things. The older children acted responsibly, taking care of books and equipment. You told us that you enjoyed coming to school and that the adults took good care of you. You certainly seem to enjoy your work and we are pleased that you want to do well.

One of the jobs we have to do when we inspect schools like yours is to see if there are any things which could make your school even better.

We asked Mr Tyson and your teachers to see if there were any ways which they could help you do better in your English work, try to involve you more in deciding on what things you need to do to get better in your work, and then to check and make sure you are working as hard as you possibly can!

So, keep working hard, doing your best and enjoying your school. Remember, if I ever come to Hunslet Carr again, I'll want to know how you are getting on!