

# Knottingley Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior and Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108183
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wakefield
<b>Inspection number</b>	288041
<b>Inspection date</b>	3 July 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jane Hughes

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	287
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Glynn Humphries
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Julie Sandham
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 November 2002
<b>School address</b>	Primrose Vale Knottingley West Yorkshire WF11 9BT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01977 722480
<b>Fax number</b>	01977 722481

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This larger than average school draws pupils from an area of social disadvantage. It offers part-time nursery provision for up to 52 children. An average proportion of pupils is eligible for free school meals. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and nearly all speak English at home. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs is in line with national averages, although fewer than average have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school is part of the Excellence in Cities Community Cohesion Project and is part of a learning network of schools. The school achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark (2004) and has maintained Investors in People status since 1999. Knottingley is working towards Healthy School status.

## 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 and improving school with several outstanding elements to its work. It is held in high regard by the local community, pupils and parents who comment that, 'this is a great school' where children 'really improve in every way'. This is because, within an overall picture of good leadership and management, the headteacher provides excellent direction for staff and pupils alike. In the last three years, she has forged a close working partnership with the highly effective governing body. Together, they set the right priorities to propel the whole school community on to greater success. Senior leaders have a largely accurate view of the school's work in practice, although some judgements are overly modest. Clarity of purpose, stable staffing and the highest expectations, both personal and academic, combine with current successes to demonstrate the school's good capacity to improve further.

Pupils' achievement is good. Young children join the school with skills below those expected for their age. They get off to a flying start because of the good quality provision in the Foundation Stage. The consistently good and sometimes outstanding quality of teaching and learning in Nursery and Reception continues throughout the school. As a result, pupils reach broadly average standards by the time they leave Year 6, and recent trends show that standards overall are improving. Even so, staff recognise that there is still work to be done to raise standards further, particularly in reading and writing. Although teachers mark pupils' work regularly, they do not always record clearly enough how pupils could improve each piece of work. High quality mentoring and a nationally recognised team of teaching assistants provide timely and skilful support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities so they make as much progress as others. There is also strong support for pupils with particular gifts and talents and for the few who are learning to speak English. Effective partnerships with other schools and outside support agencies add to the good provision. The rich and increasingly varied curriculum provides good quality learning experiences both in and out of school. These fuel pupils' curiosity and often enliven the lunch table conversation.

The school invites parents to work with staff in helping each child 'to develop into a mature and responsible member of the community'. This shared aim succeeds well, as seen in pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being. Pupils become increasingly confident and emotionally self-aware, showing regard for the feelings and needs of others. Older pupils are keen to take on responsibility in school and the local community, and this promotes important life skills for their future success and well-being. Outstanding pastoral care, guidance and support provide daily nurture for pupils as well as rigorous tracking of where they are up to in their learning.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards by Year 6, particularly in reading and writing.
- Ensure that teachers' marking always provides pupils with clear guidance on how to improve each piece of work.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Most children join the Foundation Stage with skills below those expected for their age, especially their language and social skills. They get off to a strong start so that, by the time they leave Reception, many are working securely within the expected levels for this age group. A few

higher attaining children develop more advanced skills than this. Pupils achieve well through the school. By Year 2, standards are broadly average overall. The most recent test scores indicate that although pupils' attainment in reading dipped, standards in writing rose, particularly for the most able pupils. By Year 6, standards are broadly average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Standards show an overall rising trend. Nevertheless, there is more to be done to realise higher standards by Year 6, especially in reading and writing. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, those with particular gifts and talents, and those who are learning to speak English, make similarly good progress to other pupils because of the skilful and timely support they receive from teachers, teaching assistants and mentors.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils enjoy school enormously in response to the school's concerted efforts to nurture their personal development and well-being. They relish their learning as they settle to morning challenges, such as establishing number bonds between a selection of digits set out on the interactive whiteboard. Such a rigorous start sets them up well for the day's work. Excellent relationships and first-class attitudes go hand in hand with behaviour that parents agree, 'is superb'. Pupils have a very good understanding of what constitutes healthy and safe lifestyles and appreciate the healthier lunches on offer. Improved outdoor resources for Reception age children increase their independence as they choose when to work inside or outdoors. A wealth of rich experiences and strong modelling from adults result in pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Eye-catching displays promote pupils' awareness of the high personal standards to which they should aspire in terms of their own emotional and physical well-being. Pupils benefit from close links with local churches. They feel safe in school and say, 'People are kind to you and you make friends.' Pupils are able to list the benefits of an active school council and trained pupil befrienders. As a result, they become productive citizens who are increasingly aware of the diverse nature of British society. This knowledge, along with their good attendance and secure basic skills, creates a very solid foundation for future success.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Classrooms, corridors and halls are laden with colourful displays that remind pupils of the value adults place on their work and opinions. Teachers encourage pupils to become increasingly independent learners, using the 'working walls' to find out the information they need rather than always asking for help. Excellent relationships between staff and pupils ensure pupils learn a great deal in lessons. They work very well in pairs, or in small and large groups, sharing ideas and sometimes assessing a partner's work. These key skills of collaboration and team work serve them well in school and prepare them for their future. Teachers and teaching assistants set high standards of behaviour and this enables pupils to learn more self-control, another important life skill. Improving use of interactive technology stimulates pupils' engagement in their learning. For example, a young child in Reception was fascinated as he watched a spider spin its silken web on screen and this prompted a rich discussion with the adult working with him. Teachers offer good oral feedback to pupils in lessons and check pupils' understanding through effective questioning. Nevertheless,

teachers' marking does not provide consistently clear guidance to pupils on how to improve their work.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is rich and varied. Currently, the school is working to develop closer links between subjects and to introduce strategies to extend pupils' creative thinking in order to engage their interest still further. Some first-class experiences in the Foundation Stage ensure that young children quickly become eager learners and lap up knowledge. This provides an increasingly strong basis on which to build their future learning. There is equally good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, those with particular gifts and talents or for pupils who are just beginning to speak English so that they are included in every activity and learn well. A good range of extra-curricular activities provides a variety of sporting and artistic opportunities such as the widely admired choir. Visitors contribute specific expertise to extend pupils' knowledge during, for example, personal, social and health education lessons. One group of visitors gave an entertaining presentation based on the 'toys in the attic', which was extremely well received, and pupils confirmed they learned a lot about healthy eating from this.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

First-class pastoral care, coupled with keen attention to each of the five elements that make up the 'Every Child Matters' agenda, ensures pupils' outstanding well-being. Pupils say they feel safe here. The work of the learning mentor is integral to the care and support the school offers. For instance, pupils can complete homework at school, in a very purposeful atmosphere. The breakfast club sets a jolly tone for the day while supportive lunchtime staff ensure these are enjoyable social occasions. The strong personal, social and health education programme helps pupils to learn important life skills such as listening to and valuing the views of other people. The excellent checking and ongoing tracking of pupils' progress ensures they all receive appropriate levels of challenge in lessons. Child protection and safeguarding systems are in place and work well. There is close attention to all aspects of health and safety within the well maintained building. Vulnerable pupils receive just the right levels of support; parents value this as it helps their children to do as well as others.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. She, along with the very well informed and highly efficient governing body, promotes a 'can do' culture among pupils, parents and staff alike. Parents offer good levels of support and value the way the school is run, saying, 'I didn't think it could get any better but it has'. Improvement at all levels is the core focus for the school. This is seen in its recognition of the need to maintain the drive to improve standards. Senior leaders monitor regularly the quality of lessons, but they do not yet check the consistency or effectiveness of teachers' marking. The relatively new deputy headteacher works well with the staff team and ensures that the correct use of data supports this key focus. Middle managers are increasingly responsible for the quality of teaching and learning in different curriculum subjects and this helps to enhance their own professional development. There is good financial management and a creative approach to seeking solutions to longer standing issues. For example,

the new outdoor area for Reception age children provides a useful learning resource. Efficient administrative, ancillary and lunchtime staff ensure the smooth day to day running of the school.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
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	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	1
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

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**Annex B**

**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of Knottingley Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior and Infant School,  
Knottingley, WF11 9BT

Thank you for your friendly welcome and help when I visited your school. I enjoyed talking to you and listening to what you think about your school. I agree with so many of the positive points you made. Yours is a good school that is still improving. It is heart-warming to see how well you all get on together and the happy atmosphere in classrooms and shared areas. I was very tempted to join those of you at breakfast club when I arrived - it was such a cheery way to start the day. I was also very impressed with the way you all settle down so well first thing in the morning to do your 'daily challenges'. They are such a good idea and really help you to focus, ready for the day's learning. Your headteacher is excellent. You see, I listened hard during the literacy lessons I came to and am using different adjectives, too! She, along with the deputy headteacher and governors, is improving your school quickly so standards are rising and you are doing well.

One of the reasons for my visit was to see how your school could improve. I have asked all the adults to help you do even better by the time you leave Year 6, especially in your reading and writing. I know you will help by continuing to try hard in all your lessons. I have also asked your teachers to make sure that, when they mark your work, they always show you ways to improve it so you keep getting better and better. Remember to read what they write and use their advice in your next piece of work. I know you can do this because you are very sensible and are keen to do well. Perhaps your parents can help too by reminding you?

With my very best wishes to each of you for a happy summer.