



Pontefract St Giles Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior and Infant School

Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 108268
Local Authority Wakefield
Inspection number 288059
Inspection dates 14–15 February 2007
Reporting inspector Bill Keast

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Skinner Lane
School category	Voluntary aided		Pontefract
Age range of pupils	3–11		West Yorkshire WF8 1HG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01977 722880
Number on roll (school)	240	Fax number	01977 722881
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs M Murray
		Headteacher	Mr J Gunn
Date of previous school inspection	26 March 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–11	14–15 February 2007	288059

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average sized urban primary school draws its pupils from an area with some deprivation. A below average proportion of pupils have identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities although an above average proportion have a statement of special educational need. Few pupils have minority ethnic backgrounds or are at an early stage of learning English.

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 an effective school providing good value for money. Children enter Nursery with standards that are below those expected for their age. The teaching and support staff work well together to provide an enjoyable and exciting experience which enables all children to make good progress. The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are good. Building on this good start pupils achieve well so that by the end of Year 6 they have reached average standards. Teaching is good with teachers and support staff working well together. Pupils say their lessons are fun. However, there is inconsistency in the detailed planning of activities for different groups of pupils.

Pupils enjoy coming to school because of the good relationships they have with their teachers and the good support they are given. The school works well in partnership with others to promote their well-being. Pupils feel safe and have someone to turn to if they are worried. They behave well and are keen to learn. The good curriculum provision promotes pupils' personal development effectively. The extensive range of subsidised trips is fundamental in extending pupils' first-hand experiences and providing a stimulus for learning. Playground buddies and the school council provide good opportunities for pupils to contribute to their school community and both are appreciated by pupils. By the time they leave the school pupils are confident and articulate with a good grounding in personal and academic skills which prepare them well for later life.

The standard of pupils' work is assessed regularly and pupils' progress is tracked. End of year targets are set and shared with pupils. All pupils receive general guidance on how to improve their standards in literacy and numeracy. While marking generally identifies what pupils have done well there is inconsistency in the extent to which it gives guidance on how they might improve.

Leadership is good. There is a shared desire to improve. All staff are involved in regular monitoring and evaluation and, as a result, the school knows its strengths and where improvement is needed. Planned actions have led to development. The issues raised in the previous inspection have been successfully tackled and the school has good capacity for further development. However, school development plans are not clear enough and this makes it difficult for governors and staff to see how well the school is improving. Financial resources have been used effectively to provide a well resourced learning environment in which pupils thrive.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that marking consistently guides pupils on how to improve the standard of their work.
- Ensure that planning consistently identifies specific work for individual pupils, using the information from marking and testing.
- Make the school's development plan clearer so that outcomes can be evaluated more easily.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children enter Nursery with attainment below that expected for children of their age. The communication skills of a significant proportion of pupils are well below average. Children achieve well and by the end of the Foundation Stage attainment is broadly what is expected for their age. Standards at the end of Year 2 have been falling. They were well below average in 2006. This was because the restructuring tried by the school in the Foundation Stage and in moving children into Year 1 proved to be unsuccessful. The situation has been remedied, the decline has been halted and standards now in Year 2 are broadly average. Results at the end of Year 6 have been consistently broadly average, showing that pupils have made good progress while at the school. In 2006 the school exceeded the targets it set and is in a position to make these targets more challenging. Current standards in most year groups are close to what is expected for pupils' ages, and overall, all year groups are making good progress from their earlier standards at the start of Key Stage 1. All groups of pupils achieve well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. They know the expectations for their behaviour. They respond well to praise and develop confidence in their own abilities. Their self-esteem is raised through sharing feelings and ideas within the personal, social and health education lessons and in circle time. Pupils say everyone gets on well together and feel that the playground buddies have been very effective in improving behaviour on the playground. They have a good understanding of staying safe and healthy and know the importance of taking exercise. They have contributed, through the school council, to improving both healthy food options and exercise facilities in the playground. Pupils recognise the value of the school council and members take their roles very seriously. The playtime tuck shop is run, under supervision, by pupils who sell the items and handle the money. Pupils are developing skills for their future life well. Their attendance is satisfactory. Pupils really enjoy coming to school and show good attitudes to their learning. They say they particularly like practical activities, and using computers and the interactive whiteboards.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers make lessons interesting and fun and, as a result, pupils are totally engaged. Relationships are good and praise is used effectively to celebrate pupils' success and to boost their self-esteem. Support staff are well aware of the planned activities and work well alongside the teachers to enable pupils to make good progress in their learning. Teachers share with pupils what learning is expected and use time well at

the end of a lesson to check what has been learned. Pupils use their numeracy and literacy targets well during lessons and teachers' marking usually identifies the things that pupils have done well. Within this good picture, there is less consistency in the way this marking guides pupils as to how they could improve their work. While work is generally well matched to pupils' needs, there is also variation in the extent to which teachers clearly identify in their planning specific tasks for different groups of pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets both national requirements and the needs of all pupils well. It makes particularly good provision for pupils to learn about being healthy and keeping fit. A very good range of visits widens pupils' first-hand experiences and provides the stimulus for exciting and enjoyable lessons. Pupils enjoy the topic weeks in which learning in many subjects is developed through a common theme. A typical range of regular clubs and activities supports teaching and gives opportunities for pupils to develop their interests, particularly sporting activities. All pupils have the opportunity to take part in at least one activity. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to contribute to the school community but fewer to the wider community. Good provision is made for pupils with identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Child protection procedures are in place and risk assessments are thorough. Pupils respond well to their teachers' concerns for their well-being and, as a result, the school is a calm and ordered place in which pupils can learn. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those at an early stage of learning English make good progress towards their targets because of the good support they receive. Regular assessment and thorough records allow the identification of the small number of pupils making less than expected progress and effective support is put in place. Individual discussions with each pupil in Years 4 to 6 ensure that they know their end of year targets. Pupils know the level at which they are working and understand the general targets they need to meet to raise the standards of their work. However, they do not consistently get guidance on how they might improve the standard of their most recently completed work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

All staff, as subject leaders, are involved in regular monitoring and evaluation of their subject. This is well planned and thorough and is a strength. The progress pupils are making towards their yearly targets is regularly reviewed. The outcomes of this monitoring are shared with all colleagues and any action necessary to tackle identified weaknesses is planned and undertaken. As a result, all staff are fully aware of the areas for development within the school. The school is accurate in its identification of the

areas for improvement but school development plans do not always make the anticipated outcomes for pupils sufficiently explicit. The lack of clear outcomes makes it difficult for leaders to be certain that the most effective action has been taken.

Governors are very supportive of their school and are active in visiting the school and understanding its strengths and weaknesses. They have effectively discharged their responsibilities in nearly every respect but they have not always been sufficiently critical in holding the school to account. Financial resources have been well used, for example to develop the use of the school grounds, to make good provision for teaching information and communication technology (ICT), and to provide a well resourced activity area for the Foundation Stage.

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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	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	3
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?	3

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	3
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?	No
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 being so friendly and welcoming when we visited your school. We really enjoyed seeing you at work and talking to you about your school.

We think your school is giving you a good education. Your teachers and your classroom assistants take good care of you and help you all to be successful in your learning. Your school is a calm, bright and interesting place in which to learn and play. You say that you feel safe at school and that there is always someone you could go to talk to if you are worried. The school helps you to develop your personal skills well. You are lucky to have opportunities for so many interesting visits and you look forward to and enjoy these occasions. You behave well and have a good understanding of how to keep fit and healthy. Being members of the school council or playground buddies is making an important contribution to the school and you take these responsibilities seriously. You get on well with your teachers and you told us you enjoyed your lessons. You told us you particularly liked practical activities, working in the ICT suite and when you and your teachers used the new interactive whiteboards. We think you are taught well and that the school is preparing you well for your future.

Your teachers want you to learn as well as you can. You know the targets which they set for you and you have your literacy and numeracy target sheets to help. To help you even more to reach your targets we have asked that all teachers regularly tell you, when they mark your work, how you could have made it even better. We have also asked them to make sure that, in their planning of the work for you to do, they are always clear about what different groups of you need to do. Finally, to help your teachers be certain that they are taking the best action possible to improve your learning and progress, we have asked them to be very clear about identifying what they need to do.