

# Thorne Brooke Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	130289
<b>Local Authority</b>	Doncaster
<b>Inspection number</b>	293617
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Rosemary Eaton

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	330
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr W Ridgill
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sally Kimber
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 January 2003
<b>School address</b>	Wike Gate Road Thorne Doncaster South Yorkshire DN8 5PQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01405 812200
<b>Fax number</b>	01405 741636

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school, serving an area with high levels of social and economic disadvantage. Almost all the pupils are White British and there are none in the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, but a greater than average proportion have statements of special educational need.

## 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 with some outstanding features. It is especially successful in promoting pupils' personal development, which is outstanding. From their first days in the Foundation 1 class, children develop a love of learning together with the confidence to make the most of new experiences. As an older pupil explained, 'We like learning new things every day.' These extremely positive attitudes stem from the way in which all staff insist that every member of the school community is treated with respect. 'I get to say my opinions and I'm listened to', commented one pupil. Pupils know that they are each valued and they feel safe in school owing to the outstanding care, guidance and support they receive. In turn, pupils readily help others. For example, they work together very productively during lessons, take on many responsibilities around the school, and care for the environment. Their behaviour is exceptionally good both in lessons and at playtimes. The headteacher and staff make their expectations of pupils' conduct crystal clear. When necessary, they take instant action in order to keep the school a safe and happy place for everyone. Good overall, the curriculum provides a rich variety of clubs, from salsa to making and selling greetings cards. These enhance skills and personal development, but above all they reinforce pupils' perception that learning is enjoyable and desirable. The school promotes healthy lifestyles exceptionally well, holding the ActiveMark and Healthy Schools award. Pupils respond with great enthusiasm, for instance, to the many opportunities to be energetic at playtimes.

When they join the Foundation 1 class, children's skills are well below those typical for their age. They make outstanding progress in the Foundation Stage because teaching and the curriculum are exceptional. By the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 6, standards are broadly average but are higher in mathematics and science than in English. Pupils make good progress during Key Stages 1 and 2 and achieve well. Progress is slowest and standards weakest in writing. Pupils' overall progress reflects the good quality teaching they receive. Teachers are very careful to give all pupils equal opportunities to learn. The school provides very well for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, enabling them to achieve as well as other pupils.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's leadership has outstanding qualities. For example, she has put in place rigorous systems to check how well the school is performing. These provide the senior team with an accurate view of the school's strengths and the areas that are weaker. Currently, subject leaders do not all analyse information from assessments themselves in order to raise standards. Developments affecting the whole school are planned thoroughly. Their impact is seen, for instance, in better science results and illustrates clearly the school's good capacity to continue to improve. This is an outward looking school. It actively pursues partnerships with other schools, agencies and parents, determined to ensure that every pupil has the best possible start to their education.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and improve achievement in writing.
- Involve all subject leaders in analysing assessments of pupils' learning and identifying ways to help pupils reach higher standards.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Although children make outstanding progress in the Foundation Stage, around one third of them do not reach the levels expected by the start of Year 1. Their skills in communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development are particularly weak. The very rapid progress made in personal, social and emotional development provides an excellent basis for pupils' good progress and continuing outstanding personal development during Key Stages 1 and 2.

Results in the Key Stage 1 national tests were a little below average in 2006, but had improved since the previous year. At the end of Key Stage 2, results were also broadly average, but were a little above average in mathematics and science. More pupils than average reached Level 5 in these subjects. The current Year 6 pupils appear on line to meet most of the school's challenging targets. Throughout the school, writing is the weakest aspect of pupils work and they make slower progress than in reading, mathematics and science. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make the same good progress as other pupils. Boys' and girls' relative performance varies from year to year. There is no pattern to this and the school meets the needs of all pupils equally well.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils develop important qualities such as consideration for others and organisational skills. They demonstrate these as they carry out their roles as playground leaders or school council members with great maturity. Pupils wholeheartedly welcome projects that enable them to contribute to the school or wider community. For example, a very high level of teamwork resulted in a greenhouse made from one thousand plastic bottles containing children's wishes for the future of the environment. Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school. Their attendance is above average as a result of the school's consistent efforts and work with families. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils confidently share their feelings about issues important to their daily lives, such as how they calm down when they are angry. They are enthusiastic learners, very keen to acquire new skills such as learning to play a brass instrument.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teachers make managing pupils' behaviour seem effortless. High expectations, reminders when needed and plenty of praise and encouragement help to create classrooms in which all pupils can learn whilst having fun in the process. Information from teachers' assessments is used well in order to adapt lessons to meet the needs of all boys and girls. Teaching assistants make strong contributions, particularly to the learning of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Lessons are usually well planned and structured. From time to time, activities are allowed to run on for too long and this slows down the pace of learning. Pupils are regularly encouraged to work together and learn from each other. For instance, Year 5 pupils discussed the pros and cons of street games so they could present coherent arguments during a debate. Independent learning is promoted especially well in the Foundation Stage. Pupils think very

highly of their teachers. They observe, for example, that teachers 'explain things if you don't understand'.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The Foundation Stage curriculum is outstanding. Children are provided with a highly stimulating learning environment and exciting activities. They have an excellent balance of tasks led by adults and opportunities to make choices and discuss their own learning. In Key Stages 1 and 2, some aspects of the curriculum are still developing. For example, links made between subjects in order to consolidate pupils' learning are not in place in every class. In particular, not enough opportunities are created for pupils to develop their writing skills in all subjects. Weeks or days devoted to topics such as science, India or World War 2 make for very enjoyable learning. The personal, social and health education curriculum is particularly successful in promoting safe and healthy lifestyles. For example, the school nurse and community police officer share their expertise with pupils. Pupils' emotional well-being is developed sensitively and consistently. Clubs are very popular and pupils' learning and personal development are further enhanced by residential visits.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Parents have great confidence in the care the school takes of their children. This is entirely justified. Arrangements to ensure pupils' health and safety are regularly reviewed and updated. Procedures for child protection are comprehensive and rigorous. The support for pupils' personal development is excellent. Pupils say that the staff are 'really kind and they look after us'. The most vulnerable pupils have opportunities to talk through their difficulties with a trusted adult. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported very effectively and often imaginatively. For example, pupils with autistic spectrum disorders have a weekly club where they learn and practise social and communication skills. The school's outstanding partnerships with a wide variety of agencies and professionals help it to meet pupils' diverse needs. Academic guidance is good overall. Targets for literacy and numeracy motivate pupils and are helping them to become increasingly involved in assessing their own progress. Marking is usually helpful. Each pupil's progress is tracked carefully and suitable measures are put in place when they are not moving on as well as expected.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher ensures that the school's work has a very strong focus on raising standards and improving achievement. The senior team members fulfil key responsibilities well and play a major part in helping the school to improve. Well organised systems to monitor the quality of teaching include teachers scrutinising the work done by pupils across the school. This enables all staff to play a part in identifying areas of inconsistency or good practice. The headteacher leads the work of tracking pupils' progress, but subject leaders are not all sufficiently involved. A number of them are still developing their leadership skills. The governing body is keen to support the school and several members are regular visitors. Governors have identified the need to find out more about the school at first hand. They have begun to attend to this by reorganising how their committees operate.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<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?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
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	2

### 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	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

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

Inspection of Thorne Brook Primary School, Thorne, DN8 5PQ

Thank you for being so polite and helpful when we visited your school. It was a pleasure to meet you and see you working in lessons and having fun at playtimes. This letter is to let you know what we found out about your school.

You told us how much you enjoyed coming to school and we could see how happy you are at Thorne Brook. You should be very proud of how well you behave, because your behaviour is outstanding. This means that everyone in school is able to work and play without being interrupted. You do a great deal to help each other and your teachers, by leading playground games, for example. Your 'bottle' greenhouse is brilliant and shows how well you work together and care for the environment. You also know a lot about how to stay safe and healthy.

We were impressed with how keen you are to learn well. You listen to your teachers and so you make good progress in subjects such as reading, mathematics and science. You don't do as well in writing and we've asked the school to work extra hard to help you improve. You need to do your bit too, by making a big effort to learn as well as possible.

We know you feel safe in school and we can understand this, because the school looks after you extremely well. Your headteacher keeps a very close eye on how well you are each making progress and she talks to the teachers about how they can give you extra help when this is needed. We would like the teachers to do more of this work themselves, so they notice more quickly when any pupil's progress is slowing down - or speeding up.

Your parents think you go to a good school and we agree with them. Your headteacher and all the staff have many good ideas for helping the school to get even better. We wish you all the very best for the future.