

High View Primary Learning Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134686
Local Authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	294150
Inspection dates	16–17 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Joyce Taylor

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	471
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Kate Harper
Headteacher	Mrs Geraldine Foster-Wilson
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Newsome Avenue Wombwell Barnsley South Yorkshire S73 8QS
Telephone number	01226 273220
Fax number	01226 273225

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This popular school takes its pupils from the local area which suffers from social and economic disadvantage. The majority of the pupils are of White British heritage. A small proportion is from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is higher than average. Fewer than average have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and statements of special educational need. Hardly any pupils speak English as an additional language. The school opened almost two years ago following the closure of a nearby infant and junior school and moved to its new accommodation less than 12 months ago.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

High View Primary Learning Centre provides an outstanding level of education for its pupils and parents are rightly pleased with the opportunities their children receive. Pupils say they are very happy in school and that they thoroughly enjoy their lessons and the wide range of additional activities the school provides. Care, guidance and support of the pupils are outstanding. The school is extremely calm and the pupils' behaviour is good. As a result they settle happily to their work and are keen to learn. The pupils' personal development is excellent. Provision for pupils to use sport as a means of raising their confidence and developing a team spirit has proved extremely effective. Consequently, pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles is exceptionally good. They talk knowledgeably and confidently about the need for regular exercise and link this to their extended sport curriculum.

Children start in the Nursery class with much lower levels of attainment than are typical for their age. Effective teaching in the Foundation Stage classes ensures children make very swift progress and by the end of Reception most children are reaching average levels. Pupils continue to make fast progress in Key Stage 1 and standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average by the end of Year 2. In Year 6 standards are above average in mathematics and science and broadly average in English. Progress in these subjects is good overall and pupils have achieved well during their time in school. Year 6 standards have risen from an average level in 2006 as a result of new and extremely effective assessment strategies and because of teachers' high expectations. Those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because their work is closely matched to their needs. The few pupils who speak English as an additional language make progress at the same rate as their peers.

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall with some outstanding features, with particular strengths in supporting the pupils' personal development. For the most part, enthusiastic, lively teaching, involves pupils in their own learning very well. On a few occasions in some classes the pace of lessons slows and when this happens the pupils do not learn as well as they could: the school has already begun to remedy this concern. Generally though, the tasks teachers prepare for pupils are very interesting and ensure pupils find their work stimulating and challenging. Teachers' accurate assessments of pupils' work contribute strongly to their successful achievement as any slowing in progress is identified by senior staff and action is swiftly taken to tackle the problem.

The curriculum is outstanding. A wide range of well thought out practical activities ensures that pupils learn enthusiastically. Themed events and links between subjects contribute strongly to pupils' enjoyment and contribute well to their above average standards. A creative approach, using sport to improve behaviour, is working really well. A wide range of extra activities involves many pupils and increases their enjoyment of school and adds significantly to their social and cultural development.

The headteacher and senior staff provide outstanding leadership. They have implemented extremely effective plans for school improvement in a very short time. Their thoughtful and successful influence is evident in a wide range of original developments designed to help pupils learn more effectively. Checks on pupils' achievement are rigorous. The need to raise standards in writing in Years 3 to 6 has been managed successfully through a very effective whole-school focus for improvement. Strong teamwork is a significant factor in the school's outstanding capacity for further improvement. Not surprisingly, the school gives excellent value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the overall quality of teaching and learning so that it all matches the best and pupils make even better progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The whole school focus on raising standards, particularly for boys, is effective and results in pupils' good overall achievement. Progress is particularly fast in children's personal development in the Foundation Stage and in literacy and numeracy in Years 1 and 2. Progress is accelerating in Years 3 to 6, although English remains slightly weaker than mathematics and science. Effective strategies to improve writing are proving very successful and are contributing to rising standards, particularly for the more able learners. The attention given to improving pupils' speaking skills has broadened their use of vocabulary and improved standards in writing across the school. This was seen in Reception where, for example, children invited visitors into their role play caf, with the triumphant notice 'Yumi fud in the cafi'. The progress of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is checked closely and many interventions are put in place to support them and to enable them to achieve as well as their classmates. The drop in the pace of learning in some lessons is restricting pupils' progress from being better than good.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils enjoy the many opportunities to develop their social skills and grow in confidence. For example, they work as playground leaders, produce the school magazine, run the school council, perform in concerts and support social events in the local area. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and ensures pupils are learning to cope with any difficulties and helps them respect others through, for example, supporting a school in Ghana. They have an excellent understanding about leading a sensible lifestyle, they eat healthy food in school and many join the wide range of after and before school sporting activities. They say they feel very safe in school. Attendance has improved and is now broadly average. Preparation for citizenship is particularly good, reflecting the good progress made by pupils in developing key skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils learn well because teaching is good overall and in some lessons is outstanding. Lessons are well prepared. Teachers make clear to pupils what they are expected to learn and require them to reflect on the extent to which this has been achieved. Teachers' good subject knowledge gives confidence to their teaching and a simple system of 'thumbs up or down' involves pupils in showing whether they have understood new concepts or not. Relationships are effective. Work is matched well to meet the needs of pupils with higher ability. In many lessons pupils are given time to discuss with a partner and this sparks some good contributions such as working out a formula to solve specific mathematical problems. The teaching assistants have a very good and sometimes outstanding level of expertise which enables them to support pupils extremely well. Day-to-day assessment and teachers' marking show pupils how well they are

doing and how to improve their work. However, in a few lessons learning could be better: some pupils become restless and find difficulty maintaining their concentration because the pace of the lesson is too slow.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school provides an exceptionally high quality curriculum. The excellent provision for Foundation Stage children ensures that they have a strong basis to build on. Working closely together staff constantly review and adapt the curriculum to suit the needs of the pupils. For example, in addition to the central library, there are exclusive book areas for boys and girls with tempting gender related texts. Staff continually search for fresh ways to make activities exciting and relevant, particularly through real-life investigations and practical learning opportunities. The provision for sport is excellent, enhanced by the appointment of the sports coordinator. As a result pupils enthusiastically join many sporting activities. Curriculum areas are linked well. For example, pupils use their writing skills and develop art techniques in their study of the Tudors. An excellent range of extra-curricular activities, trips, visits and visitors to the school further engages pupils' interest and considerably enhances their personal, social and cultural development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The very high levels of care, guidance and support promote pupils' excellent personal development and provide an environment in which they achieve well. Pupils are safe. Vulnerable children are cared for very well and their progress is closely monitored. This helps them make good progress. Procedures for safeguarding pupils meet current government requirements. Rigorous systems monitor the academic progress pupils make and underachievement is identified, and tackled, early. Excellent relationships ensure the pupils know they are listened to and that help is always at hand if they need it. The very skilled sports coordinator, who is highly rated by the pupils, successfully targets groups to develop cooperative team working skills and raise self-esteem.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher's leadership and management provide the school with outstanding direction. Together with the deputy headteacher and senior staff a terrific pace for improvement has been set. Initiatives to raise standards have been a top priority. As a result, new, highly effective assessment strategies have been introduced, prompt interventions made to speed the progress of some underachieving boys and more active learning activities for older pupils are provided. Pupils' personal development and care is a top priority and specific staff have been appointed to support vulnerable learners. On the whole, the school's monitoring and self-evaluation strategies are excellent, although the school over modestly judged the provision in the Foundation Stage. Governance is good and improving. Governors provide strong support and do not flinch from difficult decisions, such as taking legal action against parents whose children have poor attendance due, for example, to extended holidays. The capacity for further improvement is excellent.

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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?	1
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	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
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

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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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?	1
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	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

Thank you for your help when we recently inspected your school. We very much enjoyed watching you work and talking with you in your classes and around school. Yours is an outstanding school and you have a brilliant headteacher and very enthusiastic, talented staff. You work very hard and learn well. As a result many of you reach good standards by the time you leave the school. You really enjoy your lessons and sport activities. You are making a huge effort to behave well and get on with each other. We were particularly impressed with how polite and friendly you were to us during our visit. Your parents say they are pleased you come to this school because it helps you do well.

I have asked your headteacher and staff to carry on their good work and have identified that the school could improve if all lessons moved along as quickly as the best. This will help you do even better in all areas of learning.

You are enthusiastic about your school and we hope you carry on enjoying lessons and making High View Primary Learning Centre such an outstanding and happy place for you to learn.