

# Dearne Carrfield Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106597
<b>Local Authority</b>	Barnsley
<b>Inspection number</b>	309169
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 January 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Terry McDermott

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>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	238
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Ann Cross
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr S Poxton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 April 2004
<b>School address</b>	Highgate Lane Bolton-on-Dearne Rotherham South Yorkshire S63 8AL
<b>Telephone number</b>	01709 893121
<b>Fax number</b>	01709 888167

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This average size school serves the village of Bolton-on-Dearne, an area of some social and economic deprivation. Almost all pupils are White British. A small proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. A very small number are at the early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average, as is the proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need. The school has faced significant staffing issues in recent years. It is in an Education Action Zone and holds the bronze Healthy Schools Award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with some good features. It helps pupils to develop well through the good care, support and guidance it provides. The headteacher is a key figure in the daily lives of the pupils. Leaders and other adults ensure that the school runs smoothly and calmly on a day-to-day basis. It gives satisfactory value for money.

By the end of Key Stage 2 in 2007, standards were significantly below average. This was untypical and due in very large part to interruptions in pupils' learning caused by staffing issues. Standards are currently in line with expectations for pupils' age in Year 6: most pupils now make satisfactory progress overall because the school is more settled now.

Pupils' personal development and well being is good. The large majority of parents are pleased with what the school offers, their feelings typified by the comment, 'If I were a child again, I would be happy to attend this school.' Pupils thoroughly enjoy being in school. This is clearly shown in their smiling faces and friendly demeanours. Pupils make a good contribution to the life of the school and through their confidence and good manners. They are well prepared for the next stage of their learning.

Teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. It is inconsistent, but none is inadequate. The best lessons are dynamic, provide lots of challenge for all groups of pupils and have high expectations that pupils will work hard even when not directly supervised. Other lessons, although resulting in satisfactory progress, do not ensure that pupils, particularly the more able, are challenged sufficiently well. The curriculum is satisfactory. It is well planned and has appropriate breadth and balance. It provides a good range of opportunities for pupils to enrich and extend their learning. Its full impact is reduced by some teaching which does not make enough of the opportunities it presents.

Care, guidance and support is good throughout the school. Support for all pupils is good because adults want only the best for every individual. Good systems for recording and tracking what pupils have learned are robust and accurate. The school sets realistic targets for most pupils to aim for and these are well known to pupils and parents alike. However, the targets set for the more able pupils are not yet ambitious enough.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The strong and purposeful leadership of the headteacher maintains a good team spirit and a clear focus on meeting the needs of pupils. The school's self-evaluation is overly generous because it focuses too much on what it provides, rather than on the effect it has on pupils' standards and achievement. Relative weaknesses in self-evaluation are caused by a lack of rigour in monitoring the progress made by classes, groups and individual pupils. New appointments and promotions have strengthened leadership, subject coordination and assessment considerably, but the influence of their work has yet to be fully felt on standards and progress. A challenging and well informed governing body gives good support. The school has good capacity for improvement based on the way it has maintained strengths and brought back standards to a satisfactory level after an unsteady period.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Children settle quickly and happily into school and make sound progress because teaching is satisfactory. When children start in Reception year, their skills are below those typical for their age. By the end of the year, they are below the expected levels, but not far below them. The

outdoor facilities allow children to improve their physical development. They have plenty of opportunity to play actively and energetically, learning to share with others. The indoor area currently lacks stimulating and imaginative activities where children's interest can be captivated and they can see relevance in their learning. The knowledgeable coordinator has already begun to address some well identified shortcomings: indoor areas are being improved; good work is being done to address gaps in children's learning; and stronger bridges are being built between the Foundation Stage and its feeder nurseries.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Increase the proportion of good teaching in order to improve progress and raise standards throughout the school.
- Ensure that tasks are better matched to the needs and capabilities of individual pupils, particularly the most able.
- Ensure that leaders and managers check with more rigour on the learning and achievement of all groups of pupils.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

In 2007 standards at the end of Key Stage 1 were broadly average. They were better than the national expectation in writing, but lower than the national expectation in reading and mathematics. At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2007, standards were broadly average in science, below average in mathematics and significantly below average in English. Standards in the current Year 6 have recovered and are broadly average. Most groups of pupils are making at least satisfactory progress in most classes. Achievement is good where higher attainers are given more demanding work, but this is not the case consistently throughout the school.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, because of the clear focus on fairness, respect, honesty and thoughtfulness which pervades the school. Pupils have a good sense of right and wrong and relate well to each other. They say they feel safe and that any incident of bullying is quickly and effectively dealt with. Pupils are well-informed about the importance of healthy eating and have plenty of opportunities for exercise. They enjoy coming to school and they work well together. The school is a harmonious environment with the children at the heart. Attendance is satisfactory and the school works hard to raise pupils' and parents' awareness of the positive impact good attendance has on progress. Cultural education is emphasized well. Pupils enjoy themed weeks such as 'Roman week' and they find out about the faith and beliefs of others as well as their own heritage. For example, pupils in Key Stage 1 researching Chinese culture and customs, through art, music and food. Pupils enjoy planning and involvement in fund-raising and enthusiastically support charities such as Children in Need. They actively recycle used resources and are aware of their carbon footprint on the earth through the effective work of the very active 'Eco-committee'.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching has some good features, but is inconsistent. Pupils learn well and make best progress when lessons have a range of activities which closely meet their needs. These lessons are well planned and organised, have short sharp tasks which capture and hold pupils' interest and present many opportunities for pupils to think for themselves. Overall, teachers make good use of assessment information to provide activities which build on previous learning. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to ensuring that pupils' with learning difficulties and/or disabilities can learn alongside the rest of the class. In some lessons, the same task set for the whole class does not stretch the more able pupils. In other lessons, teachers tend to talk too much whilst pupils sit patiently waiting. Inevitably this causes learning and progress to slow, though it remains satisfactory overall. In these lessons pupils could do better. The marking of pupils work is inconsistent. It does not often enough give pupils clear guidance on what they need to do to make further progress.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum is broad and well balanced. The school has started to make useful and interesting links between subjects to improve pupils' learning, though these are not yet fully embedded throughout the school, making the curriculum satisfactory rather than good. A good range of visits and visitors for all pupils brings learning to life, making it real and relevant. All pupils in Years 5 and 6 gain substantially from residential experiences. There is appropriate support throughout the school for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and these pupils make satisfactory progress. Innovations such as 'thinking skills time' enhance provision, preparing pupils well for literacy lessons and contributing to raising self-esteem. There is a good range of enrichment activities after school for all pupils. Pupils think highly of these and participation rates are good.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

The school takes its responsibilities for safeguarding pupils seriously. The necessary requirements are met. Very positive relationships between adults and pupils exist throughout the school. Coupled with a high priority for treating each child as an individual, this ensures that support is directed quickly and sensitively to where it is needed. Pupils say that, 'everybody gets fair treatment' from adults who, 'don't miss a trick'. This helps to build confidence and openness and is an important factor in creating the happy and harmonious environment within the school. A good example of this is seen in the dedicated and productive work of the 'Eco-committee'. Target-setting is used satisfactorily to guide pupils' academic development. However, not all pupils have a clear understanding of what they must do to improve. Action is being taken to deal with this. The school works well with parents, volunteers, the learning mentor and a variety of external agencies to support all children, including the most vulnerable.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The headteacher is a strong leader who knows what needs to be done to improve achievement and raise standards. He has been instrumental, with strong support from the local authority, in reviving standards in Year 6 and maintaining morale within the school. Substantial staffing issues have diverted the focus of some aspects of the work of the school. The headteacher and other adults have worked hard to ensure the smooth running of the school but the rigour of monitoring decreased and hence self-evaluation is not as sharp as it could be. Governors are well informed, supportive and understand their role. They have a good understanding about the strengths and areas for development of the school. Able, key stage coordinators and other middle managers have been appointed and are working enthusiastically and energetically. They are confidently beginning to assume greater responsibility in monitoring and evaluating the work of colleagues. The school is well placed to move forward.

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

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	2

### 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

<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>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
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	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 making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. It was a pleasure to meet you and to see how much you enjoy school.

Yours is a satisfactory school with some things that are good. Here are some of the things we found out.

- The school takes really good care of you all. The adults make sure that you are safe and happy.
- You behave well. You clearly understand how important it is to be considerate and polite, and to care for each other and the environment.
- The headteacher and other adults are always striving to make the school an even better place.

To help them do this, we have suggested three things to be done.

- The school should make all lessons as interesting, exciting and challenging as the best of those that we saw.
- Teachers could plan their work in more detail to ensure that all pupils, but especially the ones who find learning easier, are kept working hard and learning lots in every lesson.
- The adults who lead the school should check more closely that you are all learning as much as you can.

You can help the school do these things by continuing to do your very best. This will ensure that the school remains a happy place to learn and have fun. I am sure you will.