

Greenfield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106599
Local Authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	309170
Inspection dates	15–16 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Fiona Gowers

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	231
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr S Angel
Headteacher	Mr A Ralph
Date of previous school inspection	3 November 2003
School address	Cherrytree Street Hoyland Barnsley South Yorkshire S74 9RG
Telephone number	01226 743468
Fax number	01226 742734

Age group	5–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This above average sized primary school serves an area with a high level of social and economic disadvantage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. Most children are White British. A very small number of pupils are from a minority ethnic heritage; none is at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. Recently, there has been a substantial turnover in staff. At the time of the inspection the headteacher had only been in post for two weeks, after being the deputy headteacher at the school for 18 months. The Nursery and Reception classes are on two separate sites.

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. In a short time, the newly appointed headteacher has helped the staff and governors develop a common sense of purpose. The view of one parent that, 'children come first at Greenfield', sums up the opinions of others and reflects the nature of the school very succinctly. Parents feel their children are looked after well.

Raising standards whilst maintaining a high level of pastoral care is the main focus of school improvement. Pupils' work is assessed regularly and school leadership tracks closely the standards reached. The information gained, however, is not always used effectively in all classes, to help pupils understand how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further. The headteacher has a clear vision for developing the talents of every pupil and an aspiration for Greenfield to become a fully inclusive school.

Children enter school with levels of skills that are below national expectations. Previous underachievement has been eliminated quickly and pupils progress well. Standards have improved since the last inspection. At the end of Year 6, they are broadly average in English and science. However, they remain below average in mathematics. Nevertheless, initiatives that have been put in place to improve teaching and learning in mathematics are now having an impact.

The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school has improved and is now good. Good learning is having a rapid effect on pupils' progress to such an extent that they achieve well overall. A close eye is kept on pupils' performance and support is provided for those who occasionally fall behind. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, particularly when they are taught in small groups and individually, is good, enabling these pupils to progress well.

Greenfield's pupils amply live up to their aim to be 'kind, polite and thoughtful'. They have positive attitudes to learning, work hard and want to do well. Parents say that they feel welcomed at all times, and pupils believe that their views are taken into account regularly. As part of their good contribution to school life, pupils take seriously their roles as school councillors, team captains, playground leaders and general monitors. They feel that they have a say in the running of their school.

Governors are supportive and ambitious for the future of the school. School leaders and governors know what the school does well and are clear about what needs to be improved. Appropriate priorities have been identified but the school's action plans do not always contain precise outcomes against which progress can be accurately measured. Based on its recent success in securing improvement and on the quality of its leadership and management, the school has good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

When children join the Nursery class, their skills are generally below those typical for their age and many have poor language and mathematical development. They settle very well into school, enjoying a range of opportunities to develop language through play. Children develop positive attitudes to learning in the Foundation Stage and enjoy the practical activities provided for them. However, they are not able to learn as much from their outdoor activities, as these are not as well planned and focused as the activities indoors. The children receive a good level of pastoral care and, consequently, make the most progress in their personal and social skills.

They are able to develop positive attitudes for learning higher up the school. Recent improvements to pupil assessments are providing a clearer picture of levels of attainment, showing that the children are making satisfactory progress. At the end of the Foundation Stage, standards remain below national expectations. Communication between Nursery and Reception classes is improving, but is hampered by a split site that means staff cannot share information about children as quickly as they would like.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics throughout the school.
- Use information gained from the assessment of pupils' work throughout the school to help them understand how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further.
- Sharpen management planning to gain a more accurate view of how well the school is improving its performance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children enter Year 1 with below average levels of attainment, particularly in mathematical calculation. Standards at the end of Year 6 have risen over the past two years. Test results in 2007 show standards are now broadly average in English and science, with pupils making good progress. The proportion of pupils achieving above the expected level of attainment for their age is starting to increase and is in line with national expectations in English. Standards in mathematics remain below average. However, following the successful implementation of whole-school strategies to track pupils' progress and address underachievement, standards are beginning to rise and pupils are now making good progress from a low starting point. Standards at the end of Year 2 have generally been in line with national averages in reading and writing since the last inspection, with higher ability pupils doing particularly well in reading.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They really enjoy school. Pupils show consistently positive attitudes and behave well. They are polite, courteous and supportive of each other. They say that bullying is rare because, 'we all get along well together.' Attendance is now in line with national expectations and has improved since the last inspection. They are proud of their contributions to chosen charities and the performances that they put on. They are fully aware of the importance of diet and exercise to stay healthy, enjoy the many sports on offer, and take full advantage of the fruit and vegetable schemes. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils learn to take account of the feelings of others and to understand the difference between right and wrong. Through art and music, visits to theatres, museums and places of interests, as well as links with other schools, their awareness of their own culture and that of others, is strengthened. Their well-developed social skills, and their satisfactory literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills, prepare them adequately for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall and, consequently, pupils make swift progress. Strong relationships and good behaviour create a positive, hardworking atmosphere for learning. Planning is detailed and learning is broken down into clear steps. 'Teachers make learning fun and it gets into our heads quickly,' commented a group of pupils. Furthermore, teaching assistants provide sensitive, skilled support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, enabling them to make good progress. Pupils learn particularly well from practical 'hands-on' activities. For example, work on writing instructions, involved children working well together outdoors, to develop their own rules for playing boules. Standards in writing are improving as a result of the good opportunities for children to talk, share and think together, and the positive impact of whole-school strategies to improve the quality of children's writing. There is, however, a weakness in that information from the assessment of pupils' work is not used well enough to set them clear targets for improvement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements, having improved since the last inspection. There is now a clear progression of skills, providing pupils with a greater degree of continuity in their learning from class to class. This has also been helped by a more stable staffing situation. There have been improvements in the organisation of the mathematics curriculum. An increased use of practical activities is helping pupils make better progress and gain a better understanding of key mathematical skills and concepts. There is more work to do in this aspect, which prevents the curriculum from being good at the moment. Opportunities for creativity in the curriculum are improving, with children enjoying a range of music, dance and art activities. Activities to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are effective, as they are often set in a 'real life context', such as role play shopping activities to help pupils' numeracy skills. Many enrichment activities are good. Links between different subjects are developing, especially through the use of ICT. Children speak with enthusiasm about the good range of extra-curricular activities, such as karate, tennis, and guitar. They showed how much they enjoyed a recent residential visit to Castleton, by performing a specially written song!

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The strong pastoral support provided by the school is very much valued by parents. 'My son is well aware that any member of staff is there for him to talk to if he needs any help at all,' is a view shared by the majority of parents. Children do indeed feel 'valued and safe', as they said when they were involved in writing school vision statements. Pupils' social and emotional well-being are well supported. They are encouraged to discuss their own feelings and to make helpful choices in their own lives. Effective transition arrangements are in place and safeguarding requirements meet government requirements. Effective systems are in place to track pupils' progress. However, many are still unsure what they need to do to improve their work further to sustain and increase their rate of progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and governors have provided a good impetus for improvements that have had some rapid results already. Middle managers are beginning to practise the skills of evaluating school performance, although the school recognises that more work needs to be done in this area. Notwithstanding, staff with key responsibilities are highly supportive of the headteacher and committed to raising achievement further. Short-term strategies have already resulted in gains in English and mathematics. Recently improved tracking procedures are resulting in better quality teaching for pupils with gaps in their learning. However, the impact of the school's evaluation of its performance is limited because management planning does not always provide a sharp enough focus on how to measure improvement. A good range of links with local primary and secondary schools, post-18 providers and public services enhance pupils' learning and well-being.

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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?	2
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?	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 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	3

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?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
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	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	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 very much for being so helpful when the inspectors visited your school.

We enjoyed meeting you and talking with you. You are right to be proud of your school and your parents are pleased that you go there. It is a good school: one that is improving fast. These are the things that we found are best about your school.

- You are kind, polite and thoughtful.
- You are making good progress with your work, because you have good teaching at school.
- We like the way you are encouraged to have a say in what goes on at school both in lessons and through the school council.

Your headteacher and all the adults at school look after you well and they are very good at making you feel valued and safe. In order to make your school even better, we have asked them to help you to reach higher standards in mathematics and to help you to know more clearly what you need to do to improve your work. Also, we would like them to find even sharper ways of checking how well the school is doing.

Thank you for helping us so much with the inspection at school. Keep working hard and enjoying your time at school!

We wish you well in the future.