

Sandringham Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106730
Local Authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	309215
Inspection dates	18–19 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Philip Jarrett HMI

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	282
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr D Miles
Headteacher	Mrs S Turner
Date of previous school inspection	17 May 2004
School address	Sandringham Road Doncaster South Yorkshire DN2 5LS
Telephone number	1302 361880
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Sandringham Primary School is a larger than average school in Doncaster, serving an area of above average deprivation. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is very high. Most of the pupils are of White British origin although the school has recently received some children from Eastern Europe as a result of economic migration. The proportion of pupils identified by the school as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the number of pupils with statements of special educational needs are broadly average. The school has maintained nursery provision. It is an Extended School and works closely with the breakfast club, an after-school club, holiday play schemes and a play school on the same site. The school has achieved the Investors in People award, Healthy School status and the Activemark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school judges itself to be satisfactory overall and this was confirmed by the inspection. Despite improving provision and some innovative practice, standards remain low and achievement has generally been no better than satisfactory. However, many aspects of the school such as the curriculum and the care, guidance and support for pupils are good. This reflects the significant impact of effective leadership. All aspects of the school are currently improving. This is confirmed by parents and governors who speak in particular of a much better environment for learning and more positive pupil attitudes.

Standards on entry to the school are below national expectations. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage. Achievement throughout the school is satisfactory but varies between classes, reflecting differences in the quality of teaching. The senior leaders are strongly focused at present on improving teaching and learning throughout the school. Alongside other developments, this is beginning to raise standards. Standards are below average at the end of Key Stage 2, especially in writing and mathematics. However, test results for 11-year-olds have improved over recent years and provisional results for Year 2 pupils in 2008 suggest significantly higher standards. The school tracks achievement very effectively and this also confirms better rates of progress by pupils, especially in the upper junior classes.

The headteacher provides thoughtful leadership. She has sought to establish a shared vision for the school that will secure permanent improvements, based on fundamental changes to both teaching and learning. The school has worked imaginatively to identify the particular needs of the pupils and the local community. It has developed an innovative initiative known as the Community Designed School (CDS) which has involved all members of the school, including pupils, in a joint project to improve pupils' learning. As a result, staff show a good sense of purpose and work well together on agreed priorities. The five year plan focuses on improvements in assessment and developing teaching skills as well as engaging the community more effectively in supporting learning.

The school has already revised its curriculum in an effort to motivate pupils more than before. This has produced an effective curriculum that engages pupils and makes a positive contribution to their good personal development and well-being. Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is confirmed by improved levels of attendance. The school is an orderly community. Effective school systems ensure that pupils' personal and social development is good. Pupils behave well. They form good relationships and appreciate the fact that the school asks for their views and acts on them. For example, the school revised its approach to marking and assessment after hearing what the pupils said about the most effective forms of feedback.

The school enjoys the support of its parents and an effective governing body. Recent developments and evidence of better standards confirm that it has a good capacity to make the further improvements needed in raising levels of attainment. This is because the school is well led and knows its areas of weakness, and because all staff are working closely together to pursue clear and commonly agreed aims.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Children enter the Nursery with knowledge and skills that are well below average overall, especially in some elements of communication,

numeracy and personal development. Progress is good across the Foundation Stage. However, many pupils are still not achieving securely within the national expectations by the time they move on to Year 1.

Progress is good because provision is well managed and there is effective teaching. Pupils enjoy lessons and play together well within a safe environment. There is especially good continuity of provision between Nursery, Reception and Year 1. Pupils settle quickly and work effectively across a range of different groupings. Comprehensive and moderated assessment ensures that the teachers build well on what pupils already know and can do. The school has provided an attractive learning environment for children with very good outdoor provision. There are good relationships with parents, including some family learning projects.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards, especially in writing and mathematics.
- Extend the consistency of teaching throughout the school in order to improve pupils' achievement.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be 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

Standards are below average at the end of Key Stage 2. However, the trend is upwards and results have improved over the past four years. Science results have been close to the national average but standards in English and mathematics are below average. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have declined over recent years, as measured by the national assessments. Standards in writing are significantly weaker than reading throughout the school.

Despite good progress in the Foundation Stage, many pupils enter Key Stage 1 with poorly developed skills in key areas of communication and mathematics. Achievement is satisfactory overall and improving. Importantly, changes made by the school to extend the curriculum and strengthen teaching are beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' achievement. The unconfirmed Key Stage 1 results for 2008 are significantly better than before in all areas. Progress in lessons observed was good overall. The school's very thorough and rigorous tracking data suggest that Year 6 pupils are making good progress. In particular, the proportion identified as making two levels of progress since Year 2 is much higher than in 2007.

There are no significant differences in the performance of the various groups of pupils in the school. Girls tend to do better than boys in English, in line with national trends, although the boys caught up last year and performed better than the girls in writing. The school's tracking system enables it to identify under-achievement and it is currently keeping a close eye on the progress of some very specific groups such as boys who receive free school meals and high attaining girls in mathematics.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being flourishes within the safe and happy environment. Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is shown by rates of attendance which have improved

and are now above average. Behaviour is good and pupils show high levels of care for one another. Relationships are good and pupils work and play together well. Incidents of bullying or racism are rare and they are quickly dealt with by staff.

Pupils contribute well to the life of the school, working as playground helpers or 'buddying' younger pupils. The school council is given an important role and pupils take this responsibility seriously. For example, they are expected to respond to messages of concern left in the 'Tell' box (Together Everyone Lives and Learns happily) and speak proudly of how this has helped to eliminate bullying in the school. There are good links with the local community; pupils take a lead in promoting recycling measures in the school and help to raise money through coffee mornings for parents. Although personal and social development are good, pupils have a more limited awareness of the ethnic diversity in modern society. They take notice of advice for keeping themselves safe in and out of school. This has improved their understanding and pupils talk confidently about how issues such as substance misuse need to be taken seriously.

Pupils respond well to the good provision for physical education (PE) and healthy living. There is a good take-up of extra-curricular sporting clubs and involvement in team competitions and pupils recognise that sport is an important recreational activity. Pupils make good progress in their information and communication technology (ICT) skills, and despite weaknesses in English and mathematics, they are well prepared socially and personally for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall but improving. The school has identified variability in quality and has put clear measures in place to improve teaching. Some lessons that were observed were outstanding and the school has a core of good teaching on which to build.

Teaching observed was good overall. The positive features included: good relationships with pupils; effective support from teaching assistants for identified pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; a range of lively activities, including the widespread use of drama, that engaged pupils well; and good planning with clear learning objectives and outcomes. Where teaching was less effective, the aims of lessons were not sufficiently clear and the pace was slow. Occasionally, teachers talked too much or did not give pupils enough opportunities for independent work.

The school recognises the importance of good assessment and this is its key development priority at present. Learning targets are set consistently in English and mathematics. Practice remains variable at present in marking. The best marking is of very high quality, with good feedback for pupils on their progress in relation to the learning objectives or individual targets. However, some marking is less clear in identifying the next steps for pupils and marking in general is much more detailed and helpful in English than in other subjects. The school programmes specific time for teachers and teaching assistants to provide oral feedback to pupils and this is beginning to work well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school considers that its curriculum is satisfactory but improving. This inspection confirmed that it is already good. It is a varied and interesting curriculum that meets pupils' needs well. The curriculum has a positive impact on pupils' good personal development and promotes their enjoyment well. It is contributing to more positive attitudes to learning and better achievement although the developments have not yet worked through to consistently higher standards for pupils.

The school has revised its curriculum to include a topic-based approach that extends the links across subjects. This is designed to motivate pupils and develop creativity through a good range of practical and creative activities. The positive impact of this approach was evident when talking to pupils about the Dracula project and when observing the Scarecrows day that took place during the inspection. Other innovative elements to the curriculum include themed days where pupils work in mixed age classes and are given some choice over the activity, together with good opportunities for the development of independent and collaborative skills.

The curriculum benefits from good community links, involving local businesses and outside agencies. Year 5 pupils enjoyed a drama-based day during the inspection, working creatively on road safety issues with a visiting theatre group. There is good enrichment through a wide variety of trips and visits, including residential trips for older pupils. Extra-curricular provision is also good with an impressive range of clubs, particularly in sport but also including music, gardening and ICT. As one wise pupil observed: 'It would be hard for the teachers to fit in any more as they have families to go back to and it's important that they don't spend too much time in school.'

The curriculum is strengthened by good ICT provision, the teaching of Spanish throughout the school and very well planned provision for PE. Work scrutiny confirmed that the curriculum focuses on the core subjects and that work in some of the foundation subjects lacks depth and challenge at times.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's pastoral systems are strong. Teachers know pupils well and pupils are happy to turn to them for support and advice: 'The teachers are all nice,' one girl commented. One of the school's declared aims is to 'put children first'. This approach is largely successful. The school listens to pupils. It has canvassed their views, for example, on what sort of feedback they prefer and about learning in classes. Close links have been made with a wide range of support agencies, such as the Vulnerable Pupils panel and Families First group, to support pupils who are seen to be at risk and those who need specialist educational help. As a result, some of the more vulnerable pupils are currently making good progress.

All procedures are in place to ensure pupils are safeguarded and their health and safety assured. The school works hard to encourage families to support their children's education through regular attendance and punctuality to school, and this has been especially successful in reintegrating back into school those pupils whose education has been interrupted by outside circumstances.

Links with the local secondary school are good. Pupils' academic progress is tracked carefully and extremely systematically and this enables teachers to identify pupils who are underachieving

and need extra input. Systems for providing feedback, although relatively new, are successfully helping pupils to understand better what they need to do to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Parents, governors and staff speak openly about the significant impact of the current headteacher. This is reflected in better teaching, a lively curriculum, good behaviour and rising standards. The headteacher's approach is collegiate. She has generated a debate within the school about the type of school that staff wished to create and how it would meet the needs of the pupils and the community. This process was a model of good practice. It was research-based, engaged all staff and generated a strong sense of commitment and belonging; staff speak about feeling valued and able to contribute. The outcomes were a five year plan which identifies clearly the key priorities to raise standards. This process has provided a clear sense of direction to the school and a shared purpose.

The headteacher has also developed the leadership capacity across the school so that there is now an effective senior leadership team and improved subject leadership. The subject leaders in English and mathematics, for instance, are fully involved in monitoring provision, analysing data, curriculum planning and supporting colleagues.

The school is firmly focused on improving achievement through better teaching and learning. A strength is the excellent tracking of pupils' progress and the analysis of this data to identify under-performance. This is extremely detailed, covers all classes and generates evidence about very specific groups of pupils. It enables the school to target extra support accurately.

This is a caring school with a positive ethos for learning. Equal opportunities are provided for all pupils. The governing body is effective. It knows the school very well and provides good support. It is kept up-to-date by the headteacher and has been closely involved in developing the school's vision and monitoring its progress. It holds the school to account by questioning, suggesting and challenging when appropriate. The school has a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses. It now sets challenging targets with the confidence that they are increasingly likely to be met.

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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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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	2
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?	3
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?	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	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	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

Inspection of Sandringham Primary School, Doncaster, DN2 5LS

My colleagues and I enjoyed visiting your school on the 18 and 19 June and meeting you all. We had some especially interesting discussions with pupils. You told us that you enjoy coming to school and feel safe. You like the wide range of clubs and after-school activities.

Parents and governors told us that the school has improved a lot in recent years. They said that behaviour is better and that the school is a pleasant place in which to learn. We agree with them. Many aspects of the school are improving as a result of Mrs Turner's good leadership. For example, many of you find the lessons interesting and particularly enjoy the practical and creative activities. We saw for ourselves how much you enjoy projects such as the Scarecrows day for Year 3 pupils, the drama work on road safety for Year 5 pupils, and the drumming session in the hall for all pupils.

Pupils said that they usually enjoy lessons. There are some very good teachers in the school and we saw the good progress you make in some lessons. We have urged the headteacher to try to make sure that all the teaching is as good as that. Your school is very caring and staff know all the pupils well. You enjoy opportunities to take responsibility and use your initiative, for instance, when acting as a buddy for a younger pupil. The school council has done some good work and you told us how the 'Tell' box has helped to improve behaviour.

Most pupils make satisfactory progress while they are in the school and this is improving. The Year 6 pupils are making good progress towards achieving the targets they have been set. We have asked the headteacher, governors and staff to continue to work hard to raise standards, especially in writing and mathematics.

Thank you again for helping us to have such a pleasant time when we visited the school.