

Branton St Wilfrid's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106767
Local Authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	309227
Inspection date	12 June 2008
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	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	187
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Y Docherty
Headteacher	Mrs E Crayton
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2004
School address	Valley Drive Branton Doncaster South Yorkshire DN3 3NB
Telephone number	01302 537344
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector investigated the following issues: the differing rates of progress made by pupils across the school, multicultural aspects of pupils' personal development and the support provided for vulnerable pupils. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation, national published assessment data, the school's own assessment records, policies, observation of the school at work, interviews with senior members of staff, pupils and three governors and the questionnaires returned by parents. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This smaller than average primary school serves a stable, socially mixed area. Fewer pupils than average are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than average although more than average have statements of special educational need. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average and these pupils mostly speak English at home. The school has gained the Healthy Schools Award, the Roy Castle Clean Air Award, Artsmark Gold Award, the Basic Skills Quality Mark and Activemark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school and many aspects of its work are of the highest quality. Pupils receive an extremely effective education and under the exceptional leadership of the headteacher, senior staff and governors, there are excellent opportunities for pupils to develop as confident and successful learners. This is evident, for example, through the continuing improvements in pupils' rate of progress and in the outstanding curriculum provision, teaching and care that pupils receive. Consequently, pupils have an exceptional enjoyment of school. The school's calm environment fosters pupils' enthusiasm and concentration resulting in sharply focused and enjoyable learning and above average attendance. It is no surprise that parents talk enthusiastically about how well their children learn and say, 'We would recommend St Wilfrid's for any child.'

Children arrive in Reception just reaching the expected level of skills and leave Year 6 with standards that are well above average. Achievement is outstanding and in all year groups the most able pupils reach extremely high standards. The school teaches reading particularly effectively and the vast majority of pupils make exceptional progress in this subject. Recent improvements to the school's assessment systems accurately indicate how quickly individual pupils are learning, prompting teachers to intervene as soon as problems occur. Extremely effective teaching has led to many pupils making more than a year's progress before the school year is halfway through. As a result, in English and mathematics the current Year 6, which includes more pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities than in previous years, and which came into school with below average standards, is very close to achieving the same high standards attained in the 2007 national tests. Consequently, pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next step in their education.

At the time of the last inspection the standards in writing, while above average, were reported to be slightly lower than in mathematics by the end of Year 6. The school responded so effectively to remedy this that pupils' standards in writing quickly overtook standards in mathematics. During the last school year, by introducing many sharply focused but fun learning strategies for mathematics, standards have now risen to match those in literacy, and pupils are exceeding their challenging targets in both literacy and numeracy. Pupils are involved alongside teachers in identifying how well they are doing and what they need to learn next and are able to declare with confidence whether or not they understand new learning and are ready to move forward.

The school provides extremely strong support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Very detailed information, gathered by experienced classroom assistants, shows how effectively these pupils are encouraged and how closely their work is monitored. As a result, their achievement is outstanding too.

Relationships are excellent in this exciting and well organised school. A typical view, expressed by younger pupils, is 'We love playtime. Big children come and play with us.' Parents comment on how grown up their children become during their time at the school. They particularly value the 'family feeling' in the school, where pupils learn to look after each other, as, in their words, 'It helps [their] children develop into good people.' Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding overall. However, while pupils have good cultural awareness, this area is slightly weaker than the others as there are limited opportunities for pupils to meet people of different cultures. Well planned curricular activities provide good opportunities for

pupils to reflect and express their thoughts and feelings. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They have an excellent understanding of how to stay healthy and their understanding of acting safely, for example when moving around school or out on visits, is extremely thorough. Their outstanding personal development and their outstanding academic achievement contribute very strongly to supporting their future economic well-being.

The curriculum is of very high quality and is a credit to the thoughtful and hardworking staff. Subjects are linked seamlessly to excite pupils' interest. For example, food technology based around history led to the preparation of a range of historical dishes such as honey cakes. Safety and precision during physical education (PE) lessons enables pupils to move with good control and push themselves physically. 'Think out your movements on the floor,' their teacher told one class during a PE lesson as pupils, working in pairs, were forming bridges for their partner to pass through at floor level. A recent extremely effective history week linked different year groups who visited transport museums and recorded their findings together. By matching the youngest and oldest pupils together in this way many aspects of personal development occur alongside learning and the older pupils say these weeks are some of the best things about the school. The school provides an oversubscribed and interesting range of after-school clubs including sport, music and art clubs, a worship group for older pupils, a Chinese arts and food club, and French club.

Outstanding leadership and management are provided by the headteacher, senior teachers and governors, who form an excellent team and provide very effective support for all staff. The pace of development is fast, but teachers speak enthusiastically of new initiatives. The leadership team has an extremely accurate view of the school's performance but is over modest about the school's effectiveness. Procedures are in place to promote health and safety and child protection. Parents have confidence in the school and the views expressed by many of them reflect their enormous respect for the headteacher and the staff. Governors are extremely effective. They are challenging and persistent in their support of the school and know how well it is doing. They willingly contribute their professional skills and are preparing to support the school through a period of extensive rebuilding in the autumn. Together with teaching and support staff, governors contribute to the feeling of enthusiasm and friendship that permeates the school. The school gives excellent value for money and has an outstanding capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Most children join the Reception class with skills that are broadly in line with those expected for children of their age. They settle quickly and thoroughly enjoy themselves. Parents comment on how quickly their children are learning and that they love school. Reception children show a high level of involvement. In a typical example, children learned to count back by sharing out segments of a satsuma, counting the segments and working out how many were left as they each ate a piece. Even children who said, 'But I don't like satsumas,' readily joined in the counting. By the time they move into Year 1, children are working within and often beyond the expected goals in all areas. Learning opportunities in Reception are stimulating and challenging and the children have many opportunities to choose and discuss their play activities. These thoughtful opportunities and the excellent teaching ensure that children's achievement is outstanding. Their progress is tracked extremely closely and lessons are planned to support identified areas of weakness as well as stretch the children as learners. There is a good range of resources inside the classroom, and although the outside area is currently limited, the plans for redevelopment include spacious and well equipped outdoor learning activities.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop a stronger understanding of cultural diversity.

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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?	1
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	1
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for your help when I inspected your school. I very much enjoyed watching you work and talking with you in your lessons and around school. Special thanks should go to the school council, who gave up some of their lunch break to talk with me. They told me that your school is excellent and I agree with them. It gives you wonderful opportunities for learning, helps you all get along together and provides you with a huge range of interesting and lively activities.

One of the really good things about your school is the way your teachers think of such exciting lessons. I was also impressed that you know exactly how well you are doing and know what you need to learn next in order to get even better. You try hard in lessons and concentrate extremely well even though your work is difficult. The leadership of your headteacher is excellent, she knows how well the school is doing and she knows exactly what to do to make things even better. Your teachers and classroom assistants are dedicated and very hardworking and they are always trying out new ideas to keep the learning interesting for you.

Your parents say they are very pleased you come to this school because it takes such very good care of you and helps you learn. You told me you like looking after each other and I could see that you enjoy your lessons, you behave extremely well, and you are very polite and extremely kind to each other. I know you like to take part in helping the school to get better, so I have suggested something that you can do to help. You don't have many chances to meet with and talk to people from different backgrounds, or to understand about the different people who live in this country. This needs to be improved and I have asked your school to think of ways to help you do this.

You are enthusiastic about your school and I hope you carry on making St Wilfrid's Church of England Primary School a happy place to learn.