

# Herringthorpe Junior School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 106840            |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Rotherham         |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 309243            |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 4–5 February 2008 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Joan McKenna      |

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>                | 7–11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed   |
| <b>Number on roll</b>                     |   |
| School                                    | 256   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body  |
| <b>Chair</b>                              | Mr P Moran  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                        | Mrs JK Fearnley   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 28 September 1998   |
| <b>School address</b>                     | Chatterton Drive<br>Rotherham<br>South Yorkshire<br>S65 2JW |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                   | 1709 828168   |
| <b>Fax number</b>                         | 1709 367838   |

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This average size school serves a mixed area, but levels of deprivation are above average overall. A higher than typical proportion of pupils is entitled to free school meals. The proportion with learning or behavioural difficulties and/or disabilities is above average, although the proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need is average. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who are at early stages of learning English, although below average, are increasing. Some of these pupils are new to the country. In the recent past there has been an increase in the number of pupils joining and leaving the school during the key stage.

The school has gained the Basic Skills Quality Mark 2 Award, Activemark Gold, Artsmark Gold, the Excellence in Enterprise Award and a Leading Aspect Award for positive behaviour. It is part of a local Education Action Zone.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Herringthorpe Junior School provides a good quality of education for its pupils. Concerted efforts have resulted in considerable improvements to almost all aspects of provision since the last inspection. Pastoral care is outstanding and makes a strong contribution to pupils' excellent personal development. Weaknesses in teaching and learning, the curriculum, and leadership and management have been successfully tackled and these aspects are now good. As a result, most pupils achieve well.

The school is very inclusive and values all of its pupils as individuals. All are very well cared for and receive effective personal support. Pupils with additional needs receive extra special attention which helps them deal with the challenges they face and participate fully in school life. This includes the increasing number of pupils who join the school at times other than Year 3, many of whom need extra specific support to enable them to benefit from what the school offers. As a result of this high quality care and support, pupils feel safe and secure. They trust adults and are confident to approach them about any concerns they have. They respond extremely well to teachers' high expectations of them. Relationships are excellent and behaviour is exemplary. Pupils grow in confidence and self-esteem and develop good levels of independence and maturity.

The curriculum provided by the school is broad, creative and exciting, and promotes pupils' academic and personal development well. The many trips, visits and visitors bring it to life and capture pupils' interests, and links made between different subjects increase their relevance to pupils. They participate with great enthusiasm in the wide range of clubs and extra-curricular opportunities. The unsatisfactory teaching present at the last inspection has been eliminated and teaching and learning are now good. Clear and detailed explanations of topics are based on secure subject knowledge. In many cases tasks and questions require that pupils think very carefully about their work and actively involve them in their learning. An excited and purposeful buzz characterises many classrooms. There are effective systems for tracking pupils' progress, resulting in a detailed understanding of how individuals are learning. The information is used to promote further progress, but it is not yet fully used to ensure that the curriculum and teaching are adapted to meet the diverse and increasing range of pupils' needs. The improved academic provision is having a positive impact. Achievement is improving. Standards are broadly in line with the national average when the pupils start school in Year 3. Although the school data clearly show that overall pupils' achievement is good, the significant number of pupils who start the school partway through the key stage do not do quite as well. Although they are helped to feel happy and secure, the learning and language needs of many of them mean their achievement is not as strong. Standards overall at the end of Year 6 are broadly average.

Under the strong and determined leadership of the headteacher all staff work with enthusiasm and commitment to improve the school for all pupils. Senior leaders have clearly defined roles and provide effective leadership. Subject leaders take action to improve the areas they are responsible for in a variety of ways. Their monitoring of the impact of these developments on outcomes for pupils is less well developed. The school has good capacity to improve further as demonstrated by the improvements it has made since the previous inspection.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate progress for those pupils who join the school during the key stage.

- Make greater use of information about how pupils are progressing to ensure the curriculum and teaching meets all of their needs equally well.
- Ensure that monitoring and evaluation focus on the impact that developments have on outcomes for pupils.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils entering the school in Year 3 have broadly average standards. Those who enter at other times during the key stage often have lower than expected standards. Test results at the end of Year 6 in 2007 were broadly in line with the national average, higher in science than in mathematics and English. Achievement has improved over the past few years and is good overall. School data clearly show pupils who have been in the school since Year 3, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are currently making good progress and this escalates as pupils move up the school. When the school targets specific groups for extra attention, as it did recently, the positive impact on their achievement is evident. Data show those pupils new to the school make slower progress than those who stay at the school for the whole key stage.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils are extremely proud of their school, with positive comments such as, 'teachers make learning fun' and, 'all staff help you', being typical. They enjoy their lessons very much and are keen to learn. They play and work well together. New pupils are welcomed and settle in quickly. Pupils are supportive of each other both generally and through acting as peer mediators, playground friends and reading partners, responsibilities they take very seriously. They understand the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle and how to make healthy choices. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Spiritual development is strong because it is explicitly promoted through studying philosophy. Pupils think and reflect upon their own actions and have a clear regard for the feelings of others. They have a growing understanding of cultural diversity. The school council is effective, having helped to improve playground facilities and equipment. Pupils organise a wide range of fund-raising activities and competitions. Involvement in the local community is strong through participation in events and competitions such as 'Street Pride' and the Rotherham Show art competition. Their enterprise skills are strong and visitors such as scientists, musicians and artists help them become well informed about life beyond school. Attendance is average because, despite the school's best efforts to discourage it, a small number of pupils are taken on holiday in term time.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is good and enables pupils to learn well. Teachers create calm, attractive and stimulating environments for learning within which pupils thrive. The supportive relationships give pupils confidence to contribute to class discussions, answering questions and giving their opinions. A strong emphasis is placed on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills through regular opportunities for them to work with partners or in small groups. Teachers question pupils skillfully, developing and deepening their knowledge and understanding. In the best

lessons pupils are actively involved in their learning by being encouraged to think for themselves. In a minority of lessons, a slow pace and lack of challenge results in pupils being less engaged with their work and not learning quickly enough. Teachers make efforts to plan work for pupils of different abilities. However, this is often not precise or extensive enough to meet the full range of pupils' needs; this is especially so for pupils new to the school. When marking work, teachers celebrate pupils' successes and give clear guidance to them on how to improve. Pupils have increasing opportunities to assess their own work. Computers, new technology and other resources are used well to interest pupils in learning.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

There is a strong commitment to providing an all-round education and pupils thoroughly enjoy the lively and stimulating curriculum. The emphasis on promoting literacy and numeracy is not at the expense of other subjects such as art, music, dance and French. The impressive display of pupils' own work throughout the school shows the care and pride they take in tasks in all subjects. A very good range of residential trips, visits to museums and theatres, and visitors to the school make learning real and enjoyable. The opportunity for pupils to participate in a wide range of additional sporting, musical and enterprise activities both within school and beyond it greatly adds to their enjoyment, confidence and experiences. Some special provision is made for gifted and talented pupils. Staff from the Education Action Zone give effective support to these enrichment opportunities. However, while general planning of the curriculum is good, there is not enough fine tuning to ensure it is catering precisely enough for the diverse and increasing range of pupils' needs.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Very high quality pastoral care and support is at the heart of the school. Pupils know they can turn to any adult and, indeed, other pupils, if they have a problem and are confident it will be dealt with. The learning mentor plays a key role in supporting pupils and their families to help remove barriers to learning. Partnerships with outside agencies are strong, contributing to excellent provision for vulnerable pupils or those with specific needs, including, for example, pupils who have recently suffered a bereavement or parental separation. Strong systems are in place to identify and support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils and parents new to this country, or who need language support, receive valuable assistance from a recently appointed support assistant. Strong efforts are made to promote good attendance. Appropriate arrangements to ensure the safeguarding and health and safety of pupils are in place. Pupils' academic progress is thoroughly assessed and checked. The data from this is used to promote progress further, for example, by identifying who needs extra support. All pupils are given specific targets to aim for, which they find helpful.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher has created a staffing structure that has, at its centre, an effective senior leadership team. All senior leaders, including the deputy headteacher, have clearly defined roles and responsibilities which they carry out to good effect as seen in the high quality of pastoral care and the good academic provision in the school. The outstanding personal

development and well-being of the pupils and the good academic progress most make are evidence of this. The way senior leaders check and evaluate the work of the school at this level results in strengths and areas requiring development being well known. Middle leaders approach their responsibilities with energy and make a good contribution but, as yet, they have had less opportunity to measure standards and judge progress in their areas. Challenging targets are set for improvement. The headteacher has high expectations of staff and provides support and training to help staff meet them. Key governors are well informed about the school and aware of their responsibility to hold the school to account as well as supporting it. They carry out both aspects of their role well. The large majority of parents are positive about the school. Senior leaders are aware that a small minority of parents feel that communication with them could be improved. A good range of strategies is being adopted to increase opportunities for parental involvement. The school works in good partnership with the Education Action Zone to develop and share good practice.

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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 |
|---|----------------|

### 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 capacity to make any necessary improvements   | 2   |

### Achievement and standards

|  |   |
|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve?  | 2 |
| The standards <sup>1</sup> 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?                                  | 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   | 2 |
| How well learners enjoy their education   | 1 |
| The attendance of learners  | 3 |
| 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 | 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? | 2 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?   | 1 |

<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>                                       | 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 Herringthorpe Junior School, Rotherham, S65 2JW

Thank you for being so friendly when the team of inspectors visited your school earlier this week. We enjoyed talking with you and looking at your work.

We judge that your school is good. Adults in the school look after you and support you all very well indeed. This means you feel safe and that there are people you feel confident to go to if you have a problem. Your school provides many interesting and fun activities in lessons and outside of them and you have lots of opportunities to take part in exciting things. This helps you really enjoy school. You work hard and are keen to learn. You play and work very nicely together and welcome new children to your school. You behave fantastically, and care for and help others. Teaching is good so you learn well. Teachers help you by asking you to think for yourselves and explain your ideas. The school checks how well you are doing and uses this information to help you improve, for example, by setting you targets to aim for. Those of you who are at the school from Year 3 onwards are achieving well. You reach the standards expected for pupils of your age and some of you reach above average standards by the end of Year 6. Those who join the school later than Year 3 are not progressing quite as well. Your headteacher and other senior leaders are doing a good job of improving the school for you. They know what is good and what could be better and are taking many positive actions to deal with these.

There are some things we have asked your school leaders and teachers to focus on to improve further. They need to help those of you who join the school later than other pupils to make faster progress. They need to use the information about how you are all progressing to make sure the curriculum and lessons they plan meet all of your needs equally well. We have also asked staff to make sure that when they check how effective the changes they make in school are, they really focus on what difference they make to your progress and the standards you are reaching.

You can help your teachers by continuing to work hard, behave well and by coming to school regularly. We hope you continue to enjoy school as much as you do now.