

Dinnington Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106867
Local Authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	309251
Inspection dates	17–18 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Andrew Clark

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	270
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Kevin Robinson
Headteacher	Mrs Vanessa Vaughan
Date of previous school inspection	8 March 2004
School address	School Street Dinnington Sheffield South Yorkshire S25 2RE
Telephone number	01909 550034
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average sized school serves an area characterised by social and economic disadvantage. The percentage of pupils eligible for a free school meal is well above average. The proportion of pupils identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very high. The vast majority of pupils are White British. A temporary associate headteacher led the school for an interim period from September 2007. A new headteacher was appointed in January 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to standards and pupils' achievement in English, mathematics and science and in attendance. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory.

The headteacher, with good support from the local authority and the governing body, is providing clear guidance for future development and building well on recent improvements in pupils' behaviour and achievement.

Although pupils are now making satisfactory progress in the majority of lessons, there is some way to go to make up for the longstanding underachievement in the school. Consequently, standards are well below national averages in English, mathematics and science at both key stages and pupils' achievement is inadequate.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is satisfactory. Pupils behave well in the majority of lessons and at playtimes because teachers set clear expectations. Pupils with emotional and social difficulties are supported well so that they make the same progress as their classmates. The majority of pupils enjoy their lessons, although occasionally insufficient pace and relevance of learning leads to some lapses in concentration. Hard work by the school in promoting attendance has led to some recent improvement. However, too many families allow their children to take time off without a good reason and so attendance levels are well below average. This adversely affects the achievement of these pupils. The pupils know how to keep healthy and take advantage of a range of after-school sporting activities.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Some notable emerging strengths, and the sharing of good practice, have not been in place long enough or consistently applied to secure the necessary improvement in standards and achievement. Relationships are good and lessons are planned well. Occasionally, lessons are not exciting enough or sufficiently relevant to the pupils' needs. Marking is increasingly used well to indicate to pupils how they can improve their work and meet targets set. However, the language used is not always easily understood by pupils.

The satisfactory curriculum provides a clear focus on English and mathematics and teachers are making good use of new national frameworks. However, there are missed opportunities to improve pupils' learning by making stronger links between subjects and building fully on pupils' understanding and experience. The curriculum is enriched by regular visits and visitors which add interest and enjoyment for pupils. The quality of care, guidance and support for pupils is satisfactory. The pastoral care for pupils is good and procedures to keep pupils safe are thorough. New arrangements to track and monitor pupils' progress are beginning to improve pupils' achievement but have not been in place long enough to raise standards.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. There have been significant staff changes since the last inspection and the local authority has worked with the school to provide the support it needs. The school has moved rapidly and successfully to ensure good staff morale and to begin to raise achievement. The governing body has taken robust action to support school improvement. Subject leaders are becoming increasingly confident in their role. Parents are supportive of the recent developments. Through its accurate self-evaluation the school has

identified its strengths, whilst recognising that it has some way to go to bring about all the improvements required. Importantly, the school has the capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

The children enter Nursery with skills which are mostly well below those typical for their age. Their achievement is satisfactory so that by the end of the Reception year their attainment remains much lower than is usually expected of this age group. Children make good progress in some aspects of personal and social development because of the bright and stimulating classroom, but they are not encouraged to be sufficiently independent. Leadership is satisfactory. Systems to assess and track children's progress are satisfactory, although the information is not always used to provide activities matched closely enough to individual needs and to increase the pace of learning. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Strengths of teaching are in the skilful questioning by adults and the lead they take in children's role play, encouraging early language skills and personal development. The outside provision is not used sufficiently to promote rapid learning. Effective systems to welcome children into school mean they settle well. This is helped by the good links with the adjacent children's centre.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' achievements and raise standards in English, mathematics and science at both key stages.
- Work with families to improve attendance to at least the national average.
- Make sure that all lessons are relevant, exciting and challenging to meet pupils' different needs.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

The school acknowledges in its own self-evaluation that pupils' standards and achievement are inadequate and significant improvement is required. The latest results of National Curriculum assessments and tests show that standards are well below average in English, mathematics and science in Year 6 and in reading and writing in Year 2. They were below average for mathematics in Year 2. Standards are significantly below average overall and have been since the last inspection. The achievement for all groups of pupils has been too low. The local authority provided additional support to the school during the last year which helped to raise standards in mathematics at Key Stage 1 in 2007. The school's new tracking systems, and observations of progress in lessons and of pupils' work, indicate clearly that since September achievement is improving for pupils of all abilities in English and mathematics: it is not yet good enough. An increasing number of pupils are showing improved progress and are narrowing the gap towards the levels expected for their age. This is a result of improving teaching and learning, better use of assessment information, and rigorous monitoring by leaders.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

School leaders have taken a strong and consistent approach to improve behaviour and this is welcomed by pupils and parents. The notable reduction in exclusions over the last two terms reflects very significant steps in the right direction. Attendance is inadequate compared to national averages but the growing positive culture within the school and the developing work

with families are leading to some improvements. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are aware of right and wrong and their skills in working with others are becoming well established. Pupils show reverence in acts of worship and are attentive. Good support is given to help those with emotional or behavioural difficulties to improve their self-awareness. The school helps all pupils become more aware of their feelings and how to manage them. The oldest children make a positive contribution to the life of the school by undertaking responsible tasks which help the school run more smoothly. However, some opportunities to extend these skills and help pupils become more independent are missed. The school council enables pupils to have a developing voice in the school. Because of the low standards in basic skills, pupils are not well prepared for their next school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Pupils' learning is satisfactory because teaching is satisfactory and improving: there is a significant element of good teaching. However, the quality of teaching is not yet consistently strong enough to make up for the backlog of underachievement over many years. After a long period of staffing changes, the school is now stable and morale is high in response to clear and purposeful leadership. The best lessons are planned well with practical and exciting activities which grab pupils' attention from the outset. In these lessons interactive whiteboards are used to bring learning to life. The purpose of the lesson is made clear to pupils and they know how to improve their own work. The activities are relevant and interesting to pupils. Teaching assistants effectively support pupils with learning difficulties in a range of situations. In less effective lessons, the learning objectives are not presented in language pupils easily understand. As a result, pupils lack clarity about what they have to do to achieve them. In some lessons, the work set is too complex or outside the pupils' experience and this limits the progress made. Occasionally, the work is not practical and fast-paced enough to meet the needs of all learners. Teachers' expectations for pupils to work hard and present their work neatly have improved throughout the school and pupils take increasing pride in their work as a result.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school has made good progress in implementing the new national framework for English and mathematics and this is helping to improve pupils' achievement. However, the school is not yet making close enough links between subjects to ensure all learning is as relevant and exciting as it could be for pupils. A good programme of visits for pupils, including residential visits, adds to pupils' knowledge and skills. Visitors, such as members of a circus, also promote pupils' enjoyment. A good range of after-school activities, including a variety of sports, helps pupils to keep fit and healthy. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is satisfactory. There are well planned steps to improve their learning but these are not shared consistently with parents and pupils and this limits their effectiveness. New procedures are being introduced to address this.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The day-to-day care for pupils is good and ensures that they receive appropriate support. Arrangements for safeguarding and child protection meet requirements. Attendance and good behaviour are promoted well through assemblies and in the classrooms. Although liaison with other agencies is in place to encourage parents to support regular attendance, the outcomes are not always effective enough. The breakfast club and after-school activities provide care and motivation to pupils and promote equality of opportunity well. Satisfactory academic guidance includes close tracking of pupils' progress to ensure that they are on target to achieve their expected levels. However, this has not been in place long enough to help pupils make more rapid progress. The school has recently started to share pupils' targets with parents so that all understand the next steps in learning and the importance of meeting the targets; older pupils appreciate this involvement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school has benefited from a strong relationship with the local authority which has ensured continuity to improvements through the last year. The governing body took robust action in 2007 to improve matters quickly and the new headteacher has built upon this. As a result of monitoring the school's work and evaluating the findings, a very clear and realistic long-term programme of change is starting to secure the necessary improvements. Leaders demonstrate satisfactory capacity to drive these forward. However, the current low standards and inadequate achievement by pupils mean that the school has not made sufficient progress since the last inspection and does not provide value for money. Parents are very pleased with the changes whilst recognising that they are at an early stage. They particularly appreciate the open communication between school and home.

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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?	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	4
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4

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?	3

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?	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	4
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?	Yes

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

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspectors when we inspected your school recently. We enjoyed spending time talking to you. We especially enjoyed watching you practise juggling and balancing with the visiting circus school.

We found that you enjoy lessons. You told us that you like your teachers and feel safe in school and this is reflected in your satisfactory behaviour. You like being involved in the school council and taking part in many of the clubs and sporting activities after school. You know how to keep healthy and many of you start the day at the busy breakfast club.

We judge that your school is satisfactory in some areas, but it needs a lot of work to make some things better. It therefore has a 'Notice to Improve'. Another inspector will visit you again in the near future to see if things are improving.

We have asked your school to improve a number of things. We found that too many of you do not do as well as you should and do not reach high enough standards in English, mathematics and science by the time you leave school. Some pupils take too much time off school and this prevents them from learning as much as they should. Sometimes lessons lack interest and excitement for you.

You can help by coming to school every day and working hard.