

Catcliffe Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106915
Local Authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	309259
Inspection dates	6–7 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Terry McDermott

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	139
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr Reg Littleboy
Headteacher	Mrs J Baxter
Date of previous school inspection	12 January 2004
School address	Rotherham Road Catcliffe Rotherham South Yorkshire S60 5SW
Telephone number	01709 828598
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This smaller than average school serves the community of Catcliffe, an area of some social and economic disadvantage to the south of Rotherham. The area, though not the school building, was seriously affected by flooding in the summer of 2007. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is double the national average. The number of pupils with a statement of special educational need is broadly average, though the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. There are no pupils of minority ethnic heritage. All pupils speak English as their first language. The school has experienced, until recently, some difficulties in recruiting suitable staff. The school holds the Healthy Schools Award and Sports Activemark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Catcliffe is a good school. It is improving rapidly. Parents feel that their children are making good progress and the views of an overwhelming majority are reflected in the typical comment: 'I am really proud of my child for doing so well.' The inspection confirms these positive views. The school leadership team has worked well, in partnership with the local authority, to resolve the difficulties associated with recruitment. Consequently, teaching is now improving and impacting well on pupils' learning.

Children join the school with skills usually well below those normally expected for their age, though these can vary significantly. They make consistently good progress through each key stage, and are making rapid progress in English, catching up on earlier missed work, owing to staffing difficulties. Good use is made of challenging targets to help raise standards. In the current Year 6, standards are improving and are close to average in English, mathematics and science. However, more still needs to be done to raise standards further and ensure this upward trend continues. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also make good progress because of the good, focused support they receive. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good as demonstrated by their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They are well behaved in lessons and around the school. They are polite, helpful and friendly to each other. Older pupils are keen to take on responsibility.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. It is firmly founded on good and productive relationships between adults and pupils. Teachers have high expectations that pupils will behave well and work hard. This is shown in the consistency with which teachers challenge pupils to work quickly and independently. This enables pupils to experience success regularly, develop their confidence, and raise their aspirations. Pupils say they enjoy lessons because teachers, 'make learning fun'. However, lesson planning is inconsistent. Teachers do not always make best use of available assessment information on what the pupils can do in order to fully meet their individual learning needs.

The curriculum is good. It has recently been reorganised to ensure that mixed-age classes do not duplicate work. Good links are now made between different subjects. This allows pupils to use and develop the skills they learn in one subject, to solve problems in another. This ensures pupils make good progress in learning the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, important for their future well-being.

The care, guidance and support the school provides for its pupils are good. Adults can give sensitive support when needed because they know the pupils well. The school has a robust system for tracking and measuring the progress pupils are making. Leaders have made good use of the information this system provides to ensure that the curriculum has the flexibility to meet pupils' needs. The impact of this has been to help pupils to make solid, consistent progress.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has built an effective leadership team, which is working well in partnership with many outside professional agencies. The school is clear as to its strengths and what it needs to do to improve. Through its reliable tracking system, areas of weakness are quickly identified and planning for future improvements has become much more effective. There is clear evidence of the positive impact of recent actions to improve achievement since the last inspection. This confirms the school's good capacity for improvement and its good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the Nursery with skills that are well below those normally expected for their age. Many have particularly weak communication skills, and a limited perspective of the world in which they live. By the time children leave Reception, standards have risen and many are working within the Early Learning Goals. This represents good achievement. The recently refurbished and reorganised Foundation Stage provides a stimulating environment, with many activities, both indoors and out which are closely targeted on meeting children's needs. Links with parents are strong, enhanced by daily 'Stay and Play'. Relationships between adults and children are excellent. This has created a trusting environment where children are always prepared to listen. They are keen to learn and are proud to do well. As a result of good teaching and good levels of care, children make rapid progress in their speech and language. Consequently, they develop a clearer understanding of the world around them.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards further in English, mathematics and science.
- Ensure that teachers consistently use assessment information on what pupils know and can do to plan lessons that best meet pupils' individual learning needs.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

As a result of the good provision in Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils are making consistently good progress throughout the school. All groups of pupils achieve well. In 2007, overall standards in the core subjects at the end of Year 6 were significantly below average, badly affected by prolonged poor learning in English over several years. This problem has been eradicated due to improvements to the quality of teaching and because recruitment issues have been resolved. Standards in Year 6 are now close to average. This represents good progress. Progress made in English by the current Year 6 is very good, whilst in mathematics and science it is good. However, work still needs to be done to raise further the standards in English, mathematics and science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is evident from the respect they show one another, the pleasure they gain from the success of others and their obvious joy in creative activities. Pupils say they enjoy learning. Almost all have good attitudes to school. Some parents expressed concerns about the impact of poor behaviour. However, no evidence of this was found during the inspection. Pupils say they feel safe, they are confident that they can turn to staff if they have any concerns and any issues that do arise are dealt with quickly and fairly. Pupils have a good grasp of what constitutes a healthy diet and know that exercise is good for them. Pupils' strong sense of community responsibility is shown in the support they give to each other, for example, through work on the school council, as 'playground pals' and as road safety officers. Pupils gain a good understanding of cultural diversity through the good curriculum. They are prepared satisfactorily for the next stage of their lives. Attendance is broadly average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. In all lessons, teachers have high expectations that pupils will behave well. Pupils respond well to these expectations. Typically, lessons are characterised by good relationships between adults and pupils. As a result, pupils enjoy being in happy learning environments. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to work independently, and lessons move along briskly, challenging pupils to think for themselves. Throughout the school, teachers pose well-timed searching questions to check on pupils' learning. Pupils know that they will be expected to explain the thinking behind their answers. This builds and secures pupils' communication skills and improves their self-confidence. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together ensuring that all pupils move forward at similar rates. However, planning is inconsistent. Teachers do not make best use of the information the school holds on what pupils know and can do to fully meet pupils' individual needs and help them learn more quickly.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The recently restructured curriculum is promoting pupils' literacy and numeracy skills successfully. Progress is now good in both areas, though standards overall across the school still remain below average. Teachers are now linking different subjects together in meaningful ways and this is helping pupils to understand how skills learned in one subject can be transferred and used in another. Creative subjects such as music, dance and drama feature regularly in the curriculum. The curriculum is adapted well for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities helping them make good progress towards their targets. Residential and other visits, as well as visitors to the school enliven the curriculum and widen pupils' perceptions of the world around them. A good range of extra-curricular sporting and creative activities promote pupils' fitness, health and enjoyment. Personal, social and health education allows pupils to examine important life issues and to understand the importance of staying safe and being healthy.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The needs of the majority of pupils requiring extra help are met well and this ensures that they make good progress in their personal development. Statutory requirements for safeguarding pupils are met. Small class sizes allow staff to know the pupils very well and working closely with parents, they are able to give support sensitively and positively. This is exemplified in the comment: 'We were flooded last June, and as usual, the school stepped in with support'. When extra help is required, the good, close links the school has with a range of professional agencies ensure that assistance is prompt and fruitful. The progress pupils are making in lessons is accurately measured and carefully monitored. Pupils know the levels at which they are working, and what they need to do next to improve. The school works hard with a welfare officer to reduce persistent absences and many strategies are in place to promote good attendance. However, attendance levels are often affected by holidays taken in term time.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The effective headteacher has engendered a good team spirit amongst all staff. There is now a common sense of purpose focused on helping every pupil to be safe and happy, whilst making the best possible progress in their all-round development. The school runs smoothly and is a calm place for pupils to learn and develop. The instabilities and staffing difficulties of recent times have been overcome and the school is moving rapidly forward. The school is very much aware that work still needs to be done to raise standards further in English, mathematics, and science. Self-evaluation is accurate and effective in helping to bring about improvements. Good links with parents and outside agencies have helped the school gain a good reputation within the community it serves. Governance is satisfactory because, whilst governors support the school well, they do not yet hold the school sufficiently to account for its performance.

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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	2
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?	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	3
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 Catcliffe Primary School, Rotherham, S60 5SW

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful to me when I inspected your school recently. I was impressed with your politeness, the way you listen to each other and the way you work and play together. You help to make Catcliffe such a happy place.

I found that Catcliffe is a good school and here are some of its strengths:

- the headteacher and all other adults take good care of you; they make sure you are safe and well looked after
- the school is effective in helping you to learn because the teachers encourage you to think for yourselves and they always ask you to explain your answers
- the curriculum helps to build up your confidence, by showing you how to use what you have learned in one subject, to solve problems in other subjects.

However, the school could do even better and so I have asked the headteacher, governors and teachers to do the following things:

- improve the standards you reach in English, mathematics and science, because they could be higher than they are now
- make better use of the information they hold on what you know and can do, so that lessons can best meet your needs to help you to learn faster.

You can help by continuing to be the happy and well behaved children you already are. Thank you once again for helping me and best wishes to you all for the future.