

Lydgate Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106998
Local Authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	309283
Inspection dates	6–7 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Ken Valentine

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	471
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs M Neill
Headteacher	Mrs Havenhand
Date of previous school inspection	21 February 2005
School address	Manchester Road Crosspool Sheffield South Yorkshire S10 5DP
Telephone number	0114 2669500
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Age group	7–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Lydgate Junior School is situated on the outskirts of Sheffield. It is much larger than average and the majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Attainment on entry is above average. The socio-economic circumstances of pupils are varied and the proportion eligible for free school meals is low. Those pupils who are learning English as an additional language is broadly in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. The school is designed with extensive open plan accommodation.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Lydgate Junior School is highly regarded by parents and understandably so. Many say, 'We are delighted with the education the school provides.' The school curriculum is outstanding and pupils' achievement is good. There is evidence of clear improvement since the time of the last inspection and there is good capacity for further improvement.

The school priorities for improvement in recent years have had a positive impact on the achievement of pupils, which has risen over the past three years. This improvement has been reflected in the high level of attainment of pupils, which is significantly above average and has been consistently so in recent years. School improvement is guided by good self-evaluation and subsequent effective action by school leaders.

The school leadership, including governors, is good. It embraces a vision of high academic standards, within a rich and varied curriculum meeting the needs of all pupils. The breadth of pupils' work is very evident and pupils express enjoyment of the activities in which they engage. Of particular note during the inspection was a rehearsal of the school orchestra. This showed work of a high quality and with a large number of pupils involved; all thoroughly enjoyed the occasion.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. A significant area of improvement has been in the teaching of pupils' writing, which has led to improvement in writing standards. Improvement in marking and assessment in this subject has also resulted in better monitoring of pupils' progress and subsequent target setting. The school recognises the need to extend this success to pupils' work in mathematics. Equally, the high quality challenge of work and match to pupils' needs, as found in the teaching of English, is not yet developed consistently in other subjects of the curriculum, particularly mathematics.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils respond readily to opportunities to contribute to the community, for example in their participation to the Eco School scheme. They enjoy being at school and the level of attendance is very high. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the need for healthy lifestyles and safe practices. The school provides a good level of care, guidance and support and works very well with others to promote pupils' well-being.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all lessons, particularly mathematics, provide appropriate challenge for pupils of all abilities.
- Spread the existing good practice in English of target setting and marking to mathematics so that pupils know how to improve their work in this subject.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards reached by the end of Year 6 have been above average over the past 5 years and on a rising trend. They improved significantly last year and were well above the national average. Standards in English rose considerably in 2007 and are well above average. The standards of pupils' speaking and listening are noticeably above average and the positive impact of the school's work to improve writing is being seen across the curriculum. Standards in science, by the end of Year 6, are also exceptionally high with able pupils doing particularly well. Standards

in mathematics too are above average and improving, but at a slower rate than those in English. Overall, this represents good progress given the pupils' starting points when they join school. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make similarly good progress as a result of carefully planned and focused support. Those at an early stage of learning English also make good progress given their relative starting point. Pupils currently in Year 6 are in line to meet their targets this year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. Their positive attitudes reflect a genuine interest in their education and their level of attendance at school is very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and they demonstrate enthusiasm and high quality achievement through their involvement in musical and sporting activities. Relationships are good and pupils are consistently polite and show respect towards each other. Behaviour is good. Pupils have a very good understanding of the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Their level of knowledge of health issues is good and many participate very well in physical exercise. Pupils very clearly know how to keep safe and move around the school carefully and with consideration for others. Pupils are involved in decision making and are proud of their efforts in charity fundraising and supporting local charities. Participation in events such as the Broomhill Festival and helping in the school office result in pupils having a good grasp of basic skills through the teamwork involved in these activities. Opportunities for pupils to take their own initiative in lessons are at times limited due to the open plan nature of the teaching bases.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. At the start of lessons teachers make it clear to pupils what they are expected to learn and achieve. Instructions are usually clear, so pupils know what is expected of them. Teachers often use their knowledge and skills well, questioning pupils effectively to make them think and deepen their understanding. The recent focus on improving the quality of the teaching of writing is having a positive impact on standards and achievement. The rigorous monitoring of this is ensuring a consistency of practice throughout the school. Teachers and pupils comment positively about the more enjoyable and exciting approaches to writing. Pupils' individual writing targets and teachers' marking guide improvement extremely well and give pupils a clear understanding of how well they are doing and how to improve their work. This very good practice has not yet been developed in mathematics. Not all lessons, particularly in mathematics, provide pupils with work that closely matches their ability; on these occasions learning is slower and pupils are not fully challenged by their task. Pupils commented that at times the work set could be harder and more challenging. Teachers work hard to ensure that the open plan nature of the building has a minimal impact on pupils' learning. Pupils say, however, they sometimes find the sound from other classes distracting causing their attention to wander.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. It is carefully planned and structured to ensure that there is breadth and balance in pupils' learning and strengthened by some very good opportunities for active and practical learning. Standards in writing are improving, partly because pupils have plenty of opportunities to use their skills in extended writing across the curriculum. Opportunities for speaking and listening are also given much emphasis. The curriculum is greatly enriched through a wide range of visits and visitors and the many extra-curricular activities. Pupils with special gifts and talents are well catered for, particularly in developing their sporting and musical skills. Thematic days and weeks are enjoyed by pupils and add much interest and enjoyment through first-hand experiences. The school has recently improved its information and communication technology facilities and resources, and pupils are enjoying the greater access to computers. Good provision is made for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Additional support is also very well coordinated and tailored to meet the specific needs of those learning English as an additional language.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Provision for the care, guidance and support of pupils is good. Safeguarding procedures and child protection arrangements are in place. There is a high level of commitment by all staff to a good quality of care. Vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have work well matched to their needs and there is effective monitoring of their progress. Pupils feel safe and the school involvement in programmes to develop better learning and social and emotional well-being contribute to improved pupils' self-esteem. Assessment of pupils' progress, including marking, and subsequent guidance is most effective in English but is yet to be equally well developed in mathematics. The school's 'Learning Journals' are a useful tool to increase pupils' potential to become independent learners. The school works extremely well with external agencies to help pupils in their learning and transfer to secondary education. The recent provision of the 'Friendship Room' is of great benefit when pupils need pastoral support.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and school leaders give a good, clear and motivating direction to the school. They have had significant impact on priorities to improve pupils' learning, the most notable being in writing. The overall effect of this has contributed to an improvement in pupils' achievement over the past three years. Governors fulfil their responsibilities well and with school leaders have a vision for a rich and expansive curriculum. The school has developed an impressive range of partnerships that contribute extremely well to pupils' learning and well-being. For example, the Sports Partnership has increased the range and quality of sporting opportunities, which add to pupils' enjoyment and physical development. There is very effective monitoring and evaluation leading to an accurate view of the school's performance. It is clear that the school has an awareness of areas for improvement and how these may be achieved. The school documentation and plans in the school development plan along with subsequent actions taken are orderly and effective. They are all having a positive impact on improving the school further.

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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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	1
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	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?	1
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

In my recent inspection of your school I saw how well you are getting on in your work and appreciated the welcome you gave me. Some of you told me how much you enjoy the sports you do at school and I was particularly impressed with your school orchestra!

When I watched you in class I noted the high standards of your work and thought you were making good progress. You helped your teachers by your good behaviour and I was pleased that you were so interested in the things you were doing.

I know that you are putting a lot of effort into your writing and are producing some very good work. Your teachers told me that they are planning to develop your number work so you can do even better and they will mark this carefully and help you set targets to improve. I think this is a good idea and I am recommending that your school goes ahead with this plan. I am also recommending that all your lessons are challenging for each and every one of you. I am sure that you will respond well and make your teachers proud of you. That's the best way to thank them for their good teaching.

You are lucky to be at your school and I have judged it good. Your headteacher and teachers run the school well and I was impressed with their good ideas for the future. I am sure you like all the new computers they have got for you! It is a very caring school and looks after you well.

I know you enjoy coming to school from your high levels of attendance. So work hard in the future and I wish you all the best of luck.