

Scapegoat Hill Junior and Infant School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 107645 |
| Local Authority | Kirklees |
| Inspection number | 309457 |
| Inspection date | 18 March 2008 |
| Reporting inspector | Michael Onyon |

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 5-11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 58 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr David Humphries |
| Headteacher | Mr K Shilton |
| Date of previous school inspection | 15 November 2004 |
| School address | School Road Scapegoat Hill Golcar Huddersfield West Yorkshire HD7 4NU |
| Telephone number | 01484 222210 |
| Fax number | 0 |

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the impact of the school's care, guidance and support on pupils' learning
- teaching and learning and the curriculum
- the leadership and management of subjects.

Evidence was gathered from performance data and other school documentation, observations of teaching and learning, the work produced by pupils, parents' questionnaires and discussions with pupils, staff and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail. The inspector found that the judgements made in the school's self-evaluation form were justified and these have been included, where appropriate, in this report.

Description of the school

This is a small village school in a rural area which is comparatively socially advantaged. Pupils from Reception and Year 1, Years 2 and 3 and Years 4, 5 and 6 are taught in mixed-age classes. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is very low. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. Fewer pupils than average have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and no pupil has a statement of special educational need. The school has close links with the village community and with other local schools. It has gained Activemark and Artsmark accreditation.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school where pupils achieve well. They develop into polite, courteous citizens who clearly enjoy learning and are well prepared for the future. Parents are right to refer to the outstanding care, guidance and support the school provides, which enables all pupils to be fully included in all activities and to make good progress. Parents relate how much their children enjoy school and this is confirmed by their excellent attendance. Pupils themselves say they are very happy coming to school because of the friendly staff, interesting activities and the opportunities to work and play with children from different classes. There is much about the school that inspires, motivates and supports pupils well.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Good behaviour is evident in class and about the school. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, and the pupils forge good relationships with one another. They demonstrate respect for others and understand a range of other cultures. They understand the need for living a healthy lifestyle and are pleased with the school council's suggestion to offer choices of fruit at morning playtime. Initiatives such as considering safe walking routes to school help pupils to keep safe, and they are confident that they can talk to any member of staff should they have a problem. Pupils make a very good contribution to the school community; for example, as members of the school council. They are also involved in activities in the community; for example, presenting their 'Panto Pandemonium' production at a local special school. Their high levels of literacy, numeracy and social skills, and effective visits to the local high school ensure they have a good basis for the next stage of their education.

Children generally enter the school with a range of skills that are typical for their age. They make good progress in Reception and in Key Stage 1 because of consistently good teaching so that by the time they start Year 1, they have exceeded the recommended levels for their age. In the national assessments at the end of Year 2, standards have been above average for several years. Standards are above, and sometimes well above average in Key Stage 2. The school took prompt action to address a slight fall in reading standards in Key Stage 1 in the 2007 assessments, partly through the introduction of effective daily sessions focused on teaching the sounds of letters and words. Recent assessments show improvements. Emphasis on giving pupils opportunities to use their writing skills in other subjects is helping pupils to achieve well in English. Scrutiny of the pupils' work and recent assessment information indicate that the majority of pupils now in Year 6 are working at a standard that is above average and are on line to meet their challenging targets in English, mathematics and science. Gifted and talented pupils, and pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, achieve well because of the good support they receive.

Teaching is good throughout the school and pupils learn well. Lessons are interesting and varied so that pupils enjoy learning. Work is well planned, and teachers make good use of available information to plan tasks which challenge and support different groups. Teaching assistants are well deployed and make a good contribution in class lessons and in small groups. Teachers mark work thoroughly and give pupils good guidance to help them to improve. Explanations are clear so children understand what they have to do. Because the teachers have experience of working with age groups other than those they currently teach, they have a good knowledge of the progress being made by individual pupils.

Teachers' knowledge in subjects other than English, mathematics and science is not as well developed. They are seeking to address this relative weakness to enrich the curriculum further and enhance pupils' learning.

The curriculum is good overall and meets the needs of different pupils well. The strong emphasis on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills has helped them to achieve consistently above average standards. A good programme for personal, social and health education contributes well to pupils' personal development. The school has looked at ways of offering pupils opportunities for creative learning; for example, the 'Junior Jam' dance sessions seen during the inspection. It intends to link subjects together more closely so that pupils can develop these creative skills systematically across the curriculum, though discussions on this development are at an early stage. The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of additional activities including joint activities with a neighbouring group of small schools. These activities enable pupils to experience competitive sports and collaborative music and drama.

The school provides excellent care, guidance and support for all its pupils. All the required systems for safeguarding pupils are firmly in place and rigorously applied, and the school and governors place a high priority on staff training in this area. Many parents told of their appreciation of the exceptional care their children receive on a day-to-day basis and in times of particular difficulty. Systems are in place to assess and track pupils' work, and are being used well to identify and address any slowdown in progress. Pupils are aware of what they need to do to improve in literacy and numeracy and try hard to do the things they need to do. This is helping to raise standards.

The school is led and managed well. The headteacher provides strong leadership, carefully analysing information about the progress and welfare of pupils and ensuring that they are challenged in their learning and supported in their personal development. The school ethos is one of mutual respect. Staff say that they are listened to and feel valued, and that there is a strong sense of teamwork. One parent summed up the views of many in writing about 'the positive enthusiasm of the headteacher and staff which is passed on to children'. The staff team, with good support from the governors, has evaluated the school's work accurately and thoroughly. It has used the information well to address any shortcomings. There have been good improvements in developing the role of all teachers in leading subjects and improving the quality of accommodation since the last inspection. The school has a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good, so children achieve well. Children enter the school with a range of skills which are generally typical for their age. They make good progress in Reception; most children achieve, and many exceed, the recommended goals by the time they enter Year 1. Teaching is good. Staff make regular observations of children working and use the information well to assess individual progress and to plan the next stage of learning. The curriculum is good and activities are firmly based on suitable, practical activities that show a good understanding of how young children learn. Improvements to the outdoor play area are well in hand and the existing area is used well. Good induction procedures and a strong emphasis on developing children's social skills help them settle quickly and develop good attitudes to school from an early age.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend teachers' knowledge in subjects other than English, mathematics and science to enrich the curriculum further.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

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| 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

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| 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

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|---|---|
| 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 | 1 |
| 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

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|--|---|
| 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 |

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

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| 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

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed talking to you in your classes and to the school council.

I agree with you and your parents that Scapegoat Hill is a good school; indeed, some things about it are outstanding. The school takes excellent care of you all and gives you very good help and support when you need it. You play your part very well by coming to school so regularly, working hard and behaving well. You clearly enjoy school and all it has to offer.

I also agree with you when you told me that teaching is good and in lessons teachers explain things clearly so you know what to do. They mark your work thoroughly and make good suggestions to help you to improve. This helps you to make good progress in school so that you reach standards that are better than average in English, mathematics and science by the time you leave Year 6.

To help make your school even better, I have asked the teachers to extend their knowledge further in subjects other than English, mathematics and science to help you learn more in all the subjects of the curriculum. You certainly appeared to enjoy the 'Junior Jam' dance sessions on the day of the inspection.

Good luck in the future and I hope you always remain so keen to learn.