

# Rawthorpe St James CE(C) Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107700
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kirklees
<b>Inspection number</b>	309479
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Heap

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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	183
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Peter Rock
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Joan Rock
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 March 2004
<b>School address</b>	Rawthorpe Lane Rawthorpe Huddersfield West Yorkshire HD5 9NT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01484 226601
<b>Fax number</b>	01484 226602

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This smaller than average school has a reducing roll, but few pupils move in and out during the school year. It serves an area with high levels of social and economic disadvantage. Around a third of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is almost three times the national average. A broadly average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities but the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is around three times the national average. The school has a resourced provision for pupils with a physical disability. Children's attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) is well below expected levels. The school has successfully achieved the following awards: Healthy Schools; Activemark; Basic Skills Quality Mark; and Financial Management. Since April 2008, the school has entered into a federation with the neighbouring junior and secondary schools.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school with outstanding features. It provides good value for money. The work of the school is much appreciated by pupils and their parents and a typical view is, 'I think Rawthorpe St James is a really good school. My child has always been really happy there.' The school is beginning its federation with neighbouring schools in a confident way because of the significant progress it has made in recent years and its outstanding capacity to improve even further.

Pupils' personal development is good, with outstanding features, because of the highly effective way that it is promoted by the outstanding curriculum and excellent care for all. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exemplary. Consequently, pupils behave exceptionally well and show very good understanding of safety issues. They have very good attitudes to school and their work. Pupils are happy and thoroughly enjoy school, and the vast majority attend regularly. However, a small minority does have a significant amount of absence, even though the school is diligent in the way it tries to reduce this.

Standards are below average by the end of Year 2 but this represents good achievement given pupils' starting points. The good teaching and learning and robust way that pupils' achievements are monitored fosters pupils' good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, those from minority ethnic backgrounds and the more able also make good progress. This is due to the very strong support they receive in lessons and the extra adaptations made to the curriculum that provide for their needs. Pupils with physical disabilities are included well, partly because a very good range of specialised equipment is used to help them.

The curriculum is packed with opportunities for pupils to learn about health and safety issues and as a result, they have a good understanding of the importance of leading healthy lifestyles. The grounds are used exceptionally well to make teaching and learning more interesting and exciting. Levels of care are very high and the commitment to include all pupils in all aspects of school life is very successful. For pupils so young, the school council has a strong say in the running of the school and this is part of the good contribution pupils make generally.

None of the above would be possible without strong leadership and management. The senior leaders give very good and thoughtful support to the highly effective headteacher. As a team, they continually strive to ensure that all provision and outcomes are as good as they can be. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body is highly supportive, but lacks the independent means to evaluate the work of the school. Because of this, it has to rely too heavily on the school for the information it receives.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children start school with skills and abilities that are well below expected levels for their age. There are particular weaknesses in communication, language and literacy. Standards by the end of Reception are below the nationally expected levels but children have progressed well. This good progress is the result of good teaching and very thorough induction activities that help the children to settle quickly. Occasionally, in some Reception lessons, teachers are not sufficiently vigilant in ensuring that the children understand their explanations, which slows their progress a little. Leadership and management are good. Any relative weaknesses in teaching are spotted and are being addressed. The school makes sure that from the beginning, there

are good gains in children's independence and this impacts well on their learning. The strong curriculum is interesting to the children and the particular focus on developing social and literacy skills is successful. For example, good emphasis is placed on developing children's knowledge and understanding of letter sounds and good use is made of the extensive and well-resourced outdoor areas to promote learning across the curriculum.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise the levels of attendance of the few regular absentees.
- Strengthen the governing body's role in school self-evaluation.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

The well below expected level of children's language and communication skills on entry to the Foundation Stage is a significant barrier to learning and delays pupils' acquisition of skills in Key Stage 1. Nevertheless, by the end of Year 2, pupils have progressed well in relation to their starting points, although standards are below average. Pupils are challenged to do well and many meet the targets set for them. In particular, pupils currently in Year 2 have made very strong gains in reading, with around 75% having reached the expected level for their age. This shows the effectiveness of the school's work on improving basic skills, which has led to a nationally recognised award. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities progress well. Those learning English as an additional language also make good progress in this and other areas.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development is good overall, with many outstanding features such as their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Relationships are excellent. Pupils feel valued as individuals and they are confident in the adults with whom they work. Attitudes to school and work are exemplary. This adds much to the school's harmonious nature and helps them to be well prepared for the future. Pupils are extremely polite, friendly and welcoming. They show outstanding levels of respect for themselves, others and the environment. Pupils really do enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in the enthusiasm they show for all aspects of school life. For almost all pupils it is reflected in their regular attendance. However, a small minority of pupils do not attend regularly, despite strenuous efforts on the school's part. Attendance remains at a satisfactory level and requires further improvement. School councillors are proud of their position and are certain that they have an influence on school development. There are excellent links with the wider community, such as regular contributions to charitable events.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Staff throughout the school have a good understanding of pupils' various needs. Basic skills are developed well, particularly in literacy, and this leads to increased confidence and performance in pupils' reading and written work. There is outstanding use of the school's facilities, including the 'Wild Area'. This provided, for example, an exceptionally good impetus to Year 2 pupils' poetry writing about colours. Lessons are interesting and the management of

classes is very good. As a result, pupils show high levels of concentration. For example, a group of Year 1 higher-attaining pupils concentrated really well when they were using computers to add sounds into their pictures about 'Red Riding Hood'. Pupils have learning targets that they understand and work is carefully marked. As a result, they are developing a good understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do next.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum promotes pupils' personal development in an exemplary way. A very wide variety of extra-curricular activities motivates and interests the pupils. Visits and visitors are thoroughly enjoyed and anticipated by the pupils. They also provide a breadth of experience that significantly increase pupils' independence, enjoyment of school and prepares them well for the future. The curriculum promotes pupils' academic development well. It is very well planned, so that highly effective links are made between subjects with a strong emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills. Good modifications to the curriculum ensure that all pupils benefit equally from all that is on offer, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Staff know the pupils and their families extremely well. Procedures and practices for safeguarding pupils and child protection procedures meet national requirements. Outstanding systems are in place for monitoring and supporting pupils with a wide range of additional needs and these ensure that no pupils are disadvantaged. Arrangements for induction to the Foundation Stage and transition to the junior school are very thorough and highly successful. Monitoring of personal and academic development is exceptionally thorough and is a particular focus for the learning mentors. The tracking of academic achievement is particularly rigorous and very clearly shows how well pupils are doing, what they need to do next and readily identifies those who need extra support. The support for pupils with special needs is extensive. It is seen most clearly in the way physically disabled pupils in the resourced provision are supported, so that they are fully included in all activities and learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher has an extremely strong vision, which inspires colleagues to address barriers to pupils' learning. She also recognises the potential for improvement that key initiatives can bring, such as the federation with the junior and secondary schools. Under the headteacher's excellent leadership, the school is highly efficient at identifying, acquiring and using resources, which develop provision and improve pupils' progress. She leads a motivated team by example and knows how to delegate and monitor important matters. The senior leadership team provides very strong support, both in terms of shouldering responsibility and leading initiatives. There is good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Coordinators analyse evidence well and so have a good knowledge and understanding of their subjects. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are supportive and are developing their monitoring techniques. However, the governing body is too reliant on school leaders for its view of the school and does not have a sufficiently independent method of evaluating the school's work.

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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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### 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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
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	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?	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	1
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	1
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

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

The inspectors felt privileged to visit your good school this week. We appreciated very much the warm welcome, courtesy and help that you provided.

What we really liked about your school

- The good progress that you make during your time in the school.
- The strong support for pupils with extra learning needs and the good progress they make.
- Your excellent behaviour, the relationships you form and your very good attitudes to school and work.
- The visits, visitors and clubs that add to your enjoyment of school and help you to learn more.
- The excellent outdoor facilities, such as the 'Wild Area'.
- The excellent care the school provides for you.
- The way the school council helps in the running of the school and your contributions to others through raising money for charity.
- The very good leadership of the headteacher and senior team.

To make your school even better, I would like the staff to find other ways to get even more of you into school as often as possible. I have also asked the governors to keep a closer check on how well the school is doing.