

Staincliffe Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107710
Local Authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	309483
Inspection dates	4–5 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Peter Jones

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	343
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Z Rashid
Headteacher	Mr P Spencer
Date of previous school inspection	16 June 2003
School address	Staincliffe Hall Road Staincliffe Batley West Yorkshire WF17 7QX
Telephone number	01924 326756
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Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large junior school with the vast majority of its pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, most of whom have English as an additional language. The school serves a mixed residential area. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for a free school meal is above average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The school holds the ActiveMark and Investors in People awards and has Healthy Schools status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This good school provides good value for money. Improvements in teaching and learning have led to a significant rise in achievement and standards are rising year on year. Given its good recent progress, the school has good capacity for future improvement. The successful collaboration of pupils, parents, staff and governors is reflected in the school's proud motto of 'One Team Together.' The school has improved the personal and social skills of its pupils. This has been central to the effective learning taking place. It has also successfully promoted an outstanding tolerance and understanding in its pupils of the diverse faiths and cultures to be found within the school community. Parents speak of how their children are 'happy, full of confidence and excited about school'.

The school's drive to raise the aspirations and motivation of its pupils is bearing fruit. The reward system is a major feature of the school's success in cultivating pride and endeavour in its pupils. Achievement of all kinds is celebrated and given a high profile in the school in assemblies, lessons and in high quality displays. Behaviour is good and the school has worked hard and successfully to change the behaviour of a minority of its pupils. As a result, pupils say they feel safe from bullying and discrimination. Pupils enjoy coming to school and taking part in the many additional activities on offer. They enthusiastically undertake the daily lunchtime sporting challenges and impressive numbers join in the many after school clubs. Attendance fluctuates over time, but is broadly average. It is particularly influenced by pupils taking extended visits abroad during term time. The school has worked closely with parents and other schools to limit the frequency of these visits. The award to the school of the ActiveMark and its Healthy Schools status recognise the excellence of pupils' awareness of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle. They are strongly encouraged to contribute to the wider community as prefects or monitors. The active school council has a strong voice and manages its own budget. Its projects have resulted in quality improvements to the school playground that have featured in an educational television programme. The continuing improvements in achievement and standards and in pupils' social and practical skills help to provide them with the vital abilities they will need in the future.

The quality and consistency of the teaching and learning in school have improved markedly since the last inspection. It is now good. The quality of the relationships between staff and pupils underpins these improvements. Staff are now better trained to meet the needs of all the pupils. This has resulted in the pupils making good progress throughout the school. Pupils achieve well from below average starting points to reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6. The most able pupils are not always sufficiently stretched and challenged in lessons and this limits their progress in reaching higher standards. Pupils are well supported but are also encouraged to work independently and with initiative. However, in some lessons computer and technology resources are not used sufficiently to contribute to the development of pupils' investigative and research skills.

The school's curriculum is good and is particularly effective in the way it has a positive impact on pupils' personal development and the promotion of effective learning. It is well planned with themes organised to make meaningful links between subjects. It is broad and rich and offers all pupils a wide range of interesting and imaginative activities. There is a strong emphasis on the personal, health and social education of the individual pupil that helps foster tolerance and respect. Staff take good care of the pupils and guide and support them well. Pupils trust

and respect the staff. They say there is always someone ready to help with any problems they may have.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and his deputy provide inspirational leadership. They enjoy outstanding support from staff and pupils, with increasing numbers of parents becoming involved in the school. They share a vision of school improvement based on raising standards and achievement and providing every pupil with a rich and varied learning experience. The governing body carries out its responsibilities well. The enthusiasm and dedication of many of its members is commendable. The school's improvement since the last inspection is good. The school's self-evaluation of its work is accurate, with a clear view of future priorities.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the most able pupils are always sufficiently challenged in all lessons so that they can make the best possible progress and reach higher standards.
- Make more use of information and communication technology (ICT) resources to improve the skills and abilities of pupils in all lessons.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good throughout the school. Pupils enter the school with standards that are below those expected for seven-year-olds. Good teaching enables the pupils to make good progress to reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6. The best progress is in English, with mathematics and science just behind but improving rapidly. Boys do better than girls do, but school strategies are improving girls' performance. A higher proportion of pupils are now reaching the higher levels in the national tests but there is still scope for more higher-attaining pupils to do better. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of the skilled and focused support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being is good. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is excellent. The school has forged close links with the church and local mosque. It celebrates and values all faiths and cultures equally. This tolerance and respect are at the heart of the school's good relationships. Pupils experience a rich variety of musical, dramatic and artistic experiences in and out of school. The social skills of older pupils benefit from a residential visit, an experience also enjoyed by a number of parents. Pupils are welcoming, positive, and keen to do well. They feel safe because of the consistent application of strategies such as the reward system and the 'brick in the wall' that recognises their qualities. Pupils say 'This is a nice place to be because there are loads of things to do!' They have outstanding opportunities to take part in physical exercise and to eat healthily. Attendance is average but improving as the school successfully tackles issues around extended leave abroad. The school has a good tradition of fundraising for local and national charities. All pupils are taught the importance of taking responsibility for their own behaviour and discipline is good. The school's strategies to improve the behaviour of a minority of pupils with poor social skills are making a positive impact. The school is an orderly community of polite and thoughtful individuals. Pupils make good progress in basic skills and have opportunities to learn about managing money and running an enterprise. This helps them to develop the skills they will need in later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress as a result of good teaching and learning. Relationships between pupils and staff are very positive. The powerful and well understood systems for rewarding effort and behaviour form the basis of the successful learning taking place in a calm and happy environment. Pupils work hard and are eager to please. Lessons have a clear focus, and the good subject knowledge of teachers and their use of a range of interesting learning styles keep pupils engaged. Special activities such as the Roald Dahl Day give an extra boost to pupils' interest and enjoyment. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills and to share and develop ideas. Pupils are well served by the school's teaching assistants. Those responsible for working with pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities sensitively use a range of skills and expertise to help them make good progress. Other teaching assistants provide equally good support for pupils who require extra help during the early stages of learning to speak English. While the progress of all pupils has improved, the most able pupils are sometimes insufficiently challenged to enable them to attain the higher standards they are capable of.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum makes an important contribution to pupils' personal development and their improving achievement. The school ensures that basic skills are appropriately covered. It uses a thematic approach to add breadth and interest to learning. Innovative work such as the teaching of yoga helps pupils to stay calm and focused. Pupils enjoy their lessons and respond well to the many theatre workshops, visiting artists and musical projects involving specialist teachers. Learning is further enriched through the varied selection of after school clubs. The school has good ICT resources, but these are not yet fully utilised across the curriculum to further develop pupils' skills and abilities. The school is promoting very good community links through paired work with other schools in contrasting locations. This broadens pupils' experience and understanding of other groups and cultures. Also, the study of community faiths in the programme of religious education contributes strongly to the spirit of tolerance and respect in the school. The emphasis on personal and social education is helping pupils to feel good about themselves and their learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support is good. There is a happy and caring atmosphere in school that is much appreciated by parents and pupils. Staff are approachable and sensitive to the needs of their pupils. The school's arrangements for child protection and health and safety are comprehensive and are in line with national requirements. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked and support is provided for those who are not doing as well as expected. There is a strong culture of hard work and achievement. Pupils receive good guidance on how to improve their work, although sometimes the next steps in their learning are not identified clearly enough for them to progress as quickly as possible. Parents say that they are kept well informed of their children's progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher together with the deputy headteacher have successfully implemented a programme of school improvement resulting in an improvement in pupils' progress and achievement. This is the result of good teamwork and commitment from staff and governors, and the creation of a 'can do' attitude in pupils and parents. Staff have embraced the opportunities provided to improve their knowledge and expertise. Results in English, mathematics and science have improved with the school now clearly focused on raising standards in writing. The school's work is checked carefully, with subject coordinators taking an increasing part in this role. The school makes good use of its budget and has made impressive improvements to the school site and to its learning resources. The school's management does not yet ensure that its most able pupils are challenged as much as possible in all lessons to reach their full potential. The good governing body maintains close links with the school and monitors its performance closely. It shares the ambition and vision of the senior management team. It is working hard and successfully to recruit and train new governors from the local community.

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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 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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	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?	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	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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Inspection of Staincliffe CE (VC) Junior School, Batley, WF17 7QX

I am writing to you to let you know what we found out about your school after our recent inspection. We enjoyed our time with you. Thank you for making us very welcome and for telling us about your school.

You go to a good school. You work hard in lessons and make good progress. You live up to your school motto of 'One Team Together' very well. We were impressed with how well you behaved at all times. You told us how much you enjoy school. Many of you told us how much you look forward to the many visits the school provides. We liked the way you took part in the sports challenges at lunchtimes and the many clubs. We saw that you had great fun and learned a lot during the Roald Dahl Day. We also admired your willingness to help in school. Your prefects do a great job. We know that the brilliant playground you enjoy is in response to ideas you gave to your hard working, excellent school council. We know too that your headteacher and the staff and governors are always working hard to make things even better for you. They really want you to be happy and to do as well as you can.

We would like you to be even better learners and so we have suggested two things that will help. We would like your teachers to make sure that your work always makes you think hard and challenges you to do better. In addition, we have asked your teachers to find more ways of using computer equipment in your lessons to improve your learning. You can help by always trying your best and thinking of how you can improve even more. It will be worth the effort, and we know you can do it.