

# South Crosland Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107734
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kirklees
<b>Inspection number</b>	309492
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Peter Jones

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 aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	200
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs C Jones
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Carolyn Booth
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 June 2003
<b>School address</b>	Moor Lane Netherton Huddersfield West Yorkshire HD4 7HF
<b>Telephone number</b>	01484 222814
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This small primary school serves a semi-rural area of mainly private housing. In recent years the school has experienced a fall in its roll due to a decline in the local birth rate. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The school holds the Active Mark award and has Healthy School 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 is a good school. It has some outstanding features. It provides good value for money. In view of its current performance it has good capacity for future improvement. The school has responded well to the challenges it has faced as a result of a fall in its roll. In the school prospectus, it declares its aim of ensuring, 'That our school is a happy place for all.' The smiling and confident faces that greet visitors to the school and the enthusiasm of pupils to learn indicate that this aim has been achieved.

The outstanding personal development of the school's pupils is central to its successful performance. There is mutual respect, leading to excellent relationships between staff and pupils and a strong sense of care and tolerance. Parents say that the school is, 'Very friendly and involving.' There is great pride in the recent improvements to the school buildings and interiors that have modernised the learning environment. These have raised the esteem of all pupils and further increased their desire to contribute to the school and wider community. Pupils thoroughly enjoy all aspects of their school life. Their attendance is consistently above average and they are eager to participate in the wide range of interesting activities available to them. They say that, 'There is always something new to try.' The safety and security of pupils is a priority and pupils say the new security fence around the school helps them feel protected. All pupils show care and consideration towards each other. Behaviour is always excellent and pupils say that they feel safe from bullying and discrimination. The school rewards and celebrates achievement of all kinds in lessons and assemblies. Parents and pupils share this celebration, thus adding to the strong sense of community that pervades school life. Pupils have excellent awareness of the importance of following a healthy lifestyle and the school's work in this area has been recognised with awards. They are very well prepared for later life with the school working hard to provide them with the skills and attributes needed to do well.

Achievement in the school is good and has improved steadily over recent years. Pupils make good progress to reach well above average standards by the end of Year 6. This is the result of the consistently good teaching they receive. Staff have worked hard to extend their skills to meet the needs of their pupils. They have high expectations of their pupils and this has contributed to the improved performance. Those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive expert and focussed support and make good progress. The school has seen the performance of its most able pupils improve, but planning for lessons does not always provide them with opportunities to further extend and challenge their abilities to reach their full potential.

The school's curriculum provides a good blend of basic skills and enrichment opportunities for all pupils. It is developing good links between subjects and makes good use of the specialist skills of the teaching staff. The care, guidance and support provided by the school are outstanding. The atmosphere within school is warm and caring. Inspectors received many comments from parents expressing appreciation for the efforts the school makes to ensure their children are cared for and supported. Academic guidance is of good quality. Pupils' work is marked conscientiously with good advice pointing out the next steps for learning. Their progress through school is carefully checked and support is quickly made available should it be needed.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has managed the financial and practical issues caused by the school's falling roll very well. Appropriate staffing levels have been

maintained and the school's fabric and resources considerably improved. At the same time, the need to raise the overall performance of the school has been successfully addressed, particularly in the area of teaching and learning and achievement. The governing body carries out its roles and responsibilities well in a close partnership with the school. The school's self-evaluation of its work is broadly accurate and it knows itself well. Its strategic planning looks to maintain and build upon its current success.

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

- Provide more opportunities for the most able pupils to develop their skills in order to raise their achievement.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement in the school is good. Pupils enter the school at age seven with skills and abilities that are above national averages. Thanks to the good teaching they receive they make good progress to reach well above average standards in all subjects by the end of Year 6. The standards of girls have been consistently higher than those of boys. The school's strategies are beginning to remedy this situation, particularly in writing. The proportion of pupils reaching the highest level in the national tests has risen but more higher-attaining pupils could reach this standard. Those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress in line with their classmates. This is because of the skilled and sensitive support they receive. Achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) was an issue at the last inspection. As a result of the school's successful actions pupils now make good progress to reach well above average standards in this subject.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils are taught the importance of behaving well and being courteous and considerate. The confidence and involvement shown by pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in learning and social situations is particularly impressive. Good manners are valued and pupils are quick to hold open doors for each other as well as adults. A place on the 'Marvellous Manners' table in the dining room, a reward for exceptional courtesy, is highly prized by pupils. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility from an early age. Many take the role of buddies in the playground, keeping a careful eye on their fellow pupils and helping ensure they are happy, safe and involved. The school council represents the pupils very well and is particularly active in its fund-raising initiatives. The links with a local special school have increased pupils' awareness of the lives and needs of others. Pupils clearly understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle and the importance of making healthy dietary choices. There is a comprehensive programme of physical exercise and the school boasts an ever-growing band of 'Wicked Walkers'.

Pupils are well-equipped with the skills they need in later life. They organise their own clubs and have opportunities to take part in business and commercial projects. The specialist teaching they receive prepares them well for the next stage of their education.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, with some outstanding teaching seen during the inspection. Teaching is typically enthusiastic and well informed and pupils say learning is fun. It is underpinned by the very good relationships between staff and pupils and the school's clear expectations for work and behaviour. Lessons are well planned and teachers use a range of strategies that maintain the interest of learners. Good use is made of the impressive ICT resources across a range of subjects to promote learning. Teaching assistants and teachers form very effective partnerships and support staff contribute well to the quality of pupils' learning, particularly in the case of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In the best lessons, pupils are encouraged to think independently and to be creative in their responses, as observed in a lesson about the Victorians. The school's most able pupils generally progress well but are not always provided with the time and opportunities they need in lessons to develop their skills as fully or as rapidly as they might. As a result they are not all sufficiently stretched to meet their full potential. Pupils particularly enjoy the teaching in the afternoons when they work alongside pupils from an adjoining year group, often with staff focussing on their specialist teaching area.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The quality of the curriculum is good. It makes a significant contribution to pupils' outstanding personal development and to their good achievement. There are many visitors to the school and exciting residential visits to Cliffe House and Castleton, with numerous day visits to museums, art galleries and places of worship. There is a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and activities, many of them created and organised by the pupils themselves. The curriculum is innovative in its inclusion of philosophy and in the way it has organised the teaching of subjects other than literacy and numeracy, including French. Each afternoon different year groups work together in classes that make effective use of the specialist skills of staff. The school has developed good links between subjects in ICT and is beginning to introduce elements of literacy into its science and history curriculum.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 1

The school provides an outstanding level of care, guidance and support to its pupils. Procedures for safeguarding pupils and supporting their personal development are exemplary. There is a strong family feeling in school and pupils feel safe and know who to turn to if they are upset or troubled. This sense of security helps them make good progress in their learning. Parents and pupils express great confidence in the school. Child protection and health and safety arrangements meet local and national guidelines. There is a high priority given to day-to-day safety with pupils gaining skills and knowledge in road safety, cycling and swimming. Academic guidance is of a high quality. Pupils' progress is regularly assessed and they have individual targets to guide their learning. Any pupils needing help are quickly identified and the necessary support provided to boost their progress. All pupils are given clear advice on how to improve their work and also have good opportunities to evaluate their own progress.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The quality of leadership and management is good. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and is well supported by her deputy headteacher. Their good leadership has helped create good morale and a strong sense of teamwork amongst staff. The school has successfully implemented strategies that have resulted in a steady improvement in achievement and in teaching and learning. The school is producing useful information to inform its work. This is used particularly well to target support for individual pupils who need help. However, the structure of the senior leadership team does not always support the school in making full use of the expertise of all staff. The school uses its budget well and successfully sources additional funding. The recent improvements to the school site and buildings have tremendously improved pupils' safety and the quality of the school's classrooms and shared spaces. The governing body is highly involved in the work of the school. Governors have special links to individual classes and receive regular reports from the headteacher and her staff to keep them well informed. Their broad range of experience and expertise benefits the school and they perform their 'critical friend' role most effectively.

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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 <sup>1</sup> 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?	1
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	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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?	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	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

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

I am writing to you to let you know what we found out about your school after our recent inspection. We enjoyed our visit. 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 we were very pleased with your behaviour at all times. You are very proud of your school and its achievements. You told us how pleased you are with the improvements to the school building. You care about each other and your buddies help make sure you are safe and happy in the playground. Your school council has helped to make your school a better place. You enjoy your lessons and taking part in the clubs and activities that your school provides for you. We were impressed with the way some of you organise and run design, drama and ecology clubs. We know that you are busy producing a school newspaper and that you are going to write about the inspection in it. You think that the trips and residential visits to Cliffe House and Castleton make learning fun and exciting. You make good progress as a result of your hard work and the good teaching you receive. All the staff and governors really care about you and look after you very well. They are always thinking of ways they can make South Crosland even better.

We would like you to be even better learners and so we have suggested something that will help. We would like your teachers to make sure that those of who are capable of reaching the highest levels have the chance to improve your skills as much as possible in lessons. You can help by continuing to do your best and thinking of how you can improve even more. It will be worth the effort and we know you can do it.