

Featherstone Streethouse Junior Infant Nursery and Resources for Pupils with Physical Difficulties

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108195
Local Authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	309611
Inspection dates	25–26 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Joan McKenna

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	105
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Roy Aldred
Headteacher	Mrs Charlotte Clerehugh
Date of previous school inspection	3 November 2003
School address	Whinney Lane Streethouse Pontefract West Yorkshire WF7 6DJ
Telephone number	01977 723575
Fax number	-

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This very small school serves an ex-mining village which has higher levels of deprivation than typically found. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. There are very small numbers of pupils of Asian/Asian British heritage and Travellers of Irish heritage, the latter having joined the school very recently. The school has been a local authority resource for pupils with physical difficulties. This is being phased out, and currently there are only two resource pupils on roll. Nevertheless, the proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) and with statements of special educational need are both well above the national average. The school has experienced extreme disruption over the past few years, involving both some significant staffing issues and building works. The acting headteacher took up the position in January 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Streethouse School provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. It has successfully come through a very difficult period which had caused a marked decline in the standards reached by pupils. Under the strong leadership of the acting headteacher, the school has become revitalised. Staff work closely together as a committed team with high morale, knowing that their efforts are recognised and appreciated. Action to bring about improvement has been taken on many fronts, with a focus on promoting pupils' achievement. The higher standards in 2007 indicate its success.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Test results in 2006 at the end of Key Stage 2 were exceptionally low. In 2007 they have improved considerably, and are broadly in line with the provisional national figures in mathematics and science. Despite a considerable improvement in English, results in the subject are still low overall because of the writing results, especially those of boys. Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage, but their progress tails off in Key Stage 1. It picks up again in Key Stage 2 and, across the school as a whole pupils are making satisfactory progress in their learning. This includes the large proportion of pupils with LDD. Not enough pupils reach above average standards, however.

Academic provision, including the curriculum and the quality of teaching, is satisfactory. There has been a particular and successful focus recently on improving the planning of mathematics and English in order to boost standards. Thorough systems for tracking pupils' progress have been introduced. The information collected is analysed well at a strategic level to decide which pupils need extra support to help them make the progress they should. In lessons, teachers create a climate conducive to learning and pupils work hard. Teachers are clear about what they want pupils to achieve and plan a suitable range of activities to promote this. They give attention to meeting the wide range of needs in their mixed age classes but tasks are not always based precisely enough on information about where individual pupils are in their learning. As a result, work is not always at the right level of challenge for all, especially the more capable pupils. Teaching is best for the youngest children, and least effective at Key Stage 1.

Pastoral care, support and guidance, and pupils' personal development are satisfactory. The small size of the school means pupils are well known to adults and this helps their needs to be met. Specific support provided for pupils who have extra needs, such as those with emotional issues, is strong. The resourced provision for pupils with physical difficulties is good. The majority of pupils respond well to the school's expectations, behave well and play and work nicely with others. They know how to keep healthy through diet and exercise. Most say they enjoy school and there is good participation in the clubs provided for them to develop their interests outside of the classroom.

The acting headteacher knows the strengths and weaknesses of the school very well and has identified the correct priorities to work on to make it more effective. There has been a concerted effort to take the actions necessary to improve pupils' achievement, such as ensuring that their progress is regularly monitored so those not keeping up can be quickly identified. Parents are welcomed into school, a fact they greatly appreciate. Action has been taken to improve the previously underdeveloped skills of middle leaders, especially those for literacy and numeracy, but as yet they are not equipped to carry out their responsibilities well. Governors, too, are acquiring the knowledge and skills needed to carry out their role more effectively. Key governors

are now more informed and involved in monitoring how well the school is performing but not all are yet playing a full part.

There is some way to go for the school to be as effective as it both wants and needs to be to ensure that pupils achieve well. However, the improvements made over the past two terms provide a solid foundation on which to build.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the Foundation Stage with standards well below expectations for their age, especially in aspects of language and communication and personal and social skills. The warm welcome they receive and the good relationships enjoyed with adults means that most settle in quickly. Considerable effort is made to help children adapt to the expectations and routines in the unit, so pupils develop their social skills well and learn how to interact appropriately with others. Good assessment of their individual needs is used to focus adults' attention on their specific requirements. Good teaching, based on the carefully planned promotion of knowledge and understanding along with individually targeted conversations and questions, results in children progressing well. Teaching assistants give them valuable support. Although achievement is good, standards remain below expectations by the time pupils enter Year 1. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed. Priorities for development are appropriate. These include improving aspects of curriculum provision such as the outdoor space, which currently is not used to full potential.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve achievement with regard to pupils in Key Stage 1; more capable pupils; and writing, especially that of boys.
- Improve the quality of teaching, especially in Key Stage 1, by ensuring that information about how pupils are progressing is used to make sure that work set for them in lessons is at the right level of difficulty.
- Improve the knowledge and skills of middle leaders and governors so that they can play a more effective part in improving the school and monitoring its effectiveness.

A small proportion of the schools where overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Information from the tracking and analysis of pupils' progress shows that many are progressing at a rate that is beginning to compensate for their prior underachievement. There are some variations. For instance, progress is slower at Key Stage 1. Test results do not always reveal a full picture of performance due to the small numbers of pupils and the often high proportions that have LDD in individual year groups. The 2007 assessments for Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics were very low, however, and this has been the pattern for several years. Following extreme underachievement by Year 6 pupils in 2006, there has been a significant improvement in 2007. All pupils in science and all but one in mathematics gained the level expected for pupils of that age. While results in reading for both girls and boys were broadly average, results in writing were very low, especially for boys. The achievement of the large

group of pupils with LDD is satisfactory overall as is the achievement of the very small number of minority ethnic pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are satisfactory. Most enjoy school, develop good relationships with others and behave appropriately. Although many lack confidence and social skills when they start school, most develop self-esteem well and learn to interact appropriately with their peers and with adults. Most pupils demonstrate thoughtfulness towards others. Considerable kindness is shown by some pupils towards those with physical difficulties, for example. A few pupils have immature attitudes, cause friction with others and engage in some name calling. Pupils mainly feel safe and know how to keep healthy. They participate enthusiastically in the daily whole-school 'wake up and shake up' exercises, a delight to see. Pupils with extra responsibilities, such as school councillors, buddies and playground friends, carry these out maturely and responsibly. Attendance has improved over recent years from being below average to being slightly above.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Common across all classes is that teachers have good relationships with pupils and establish a pleasant and productive atmosphere which encourages pupils to behave well and concentrate on their work. Teachers clearly explain what pupils have to do and generally make sure that pupils understand why they are doing it. There is usually an appropriate range of activities planned. Occasionally pupils are not given enough time to work independently, and this limits the extent to which they can apply their knowledge and consolidate their understanding. Although teachers plan different tasks for the wide range of capabilities in their mixed-age classes, they are not always based closely on an assessment of what individuals understand or can do. This results in some lack of challenge for the more able pupils, and, less often, work that is too demanding for lower-attaining pupils. Teaching assistants are deployed well to give helpful support to individuals or groups of pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Further developments to the curriculum for writing are being planned and implemented, with strategies to tackle boys' needs a particular focus. A good range of additional curriculum support for pupils not making expected progress in English and mathematics is provided, and more strategies are being introduced. Other subject areas are covered as required but have not been developed yet to create links between them to promote relevance and creativity. Opportunities to promote pupils' literacy skills in all subjects are not identified. Activities to enrich the curriculum so it widens pupils' broader knowledge and experiences are good.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

There are some strengths in care, guidance and support. Pupils and their families are well known and this helps staff understand and provide the personal support that individual pupils need.

There is good liaison with many external agencies in meeting the specific needs that many pupils have because of LDD. Sound procedures exist to promote positive attitudes and behaviour. These are effective for most pupils. The school needs to review its arrangements for promoting positive attitudes to all pupils from a minority ethnic background in light of the first Traveller pupils to attend the school. Arrangements to ensure pupils' health, safety and protection are in place. However, a safety issue raised by both parents and pupils during the inspection was drawn to the attention of governors. Thorough arrangements for checking pupils' progress result in early identification of pupils falling behind. The resulting information is used well at a strategic level to provide support, but is less well used in lessons. There is increasingly effective use of targets to help pupils know what they should be aiming for and to help them improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The acting headteacher's leadership is good. She has shown clear vision, strong determination and a sensitive approach which has secured the support of colleagues and parents. She has a detailed understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, despite some over-estimation of the quality of some aspects of practice. With good support from the acting deputy headteacher, challenging targets are set and well conceived plans implemented, with demonstrable effect. Middle leaders recognise their leadership skills are underdeveloped and are keen to improve them. Professional development and support now have a strong emphasis, with an emphasis on raising achievement. Good efforts have been made to involve parents more in the life of the school and in their children's learning. They are very positive about the school and its leadership. Governors are very aware that they have not been holding the school to account sufficiently, and are strengthening the way they are doing this. Training to inform all governors about their responsibilities has been held. Because senior leadership and management arrangements are not yet permanent, and in recognition of the need for further developments, the school's capacity to improve is satisfactory. Although, overall, the school has not improved sufficiently since its previous inspection, the pace of improvement has escalated over the past two terms, and has begun to reverse the decline.

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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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
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	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Inspection of Featherstone Streethouse Junior, Infant, Nursery and Resource for Pupils with Physical Difficulties, Streethouse, WF7 6DJ

Thank you very much for being so welcoming and friendly when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed talking with you and seeing your work. I would like to let you know the findings following my visit.

Your school is providing you with a satisfactory education. Your acting headteacher has worked hard to improve the school for you since taking up her post, and she has been supported well by other staff. Their efforts are paying off, and things are getting better. This is seen in the way the test results in Year 6 improved last year and the fact you are making satisfactory progress in your learning because of the teaching you receive. How well you are doing in your work is now checked carefully so your teachers know which of you would benefit from some extra help and support. The school is trying to improve the work they give you in mathematics and English in particular. Because your school is small, adults know you well and this helps them give you the personal support you need. The extra special support given to those of you who need it for whatever reason is good. Most of you enjoy school, behave well and are sensible. This helps you learn.

I have asked your school to do three main things to help improve it further.

- Help you to achieve better, especially those of you in Key Stage 1, those of you who are capable of harder work, and in writing, especially the boys.
- Make sure that teachers use information about how well you are doing to provide each of you with work at just the right level in lessons.
- Make sure that teachers with special responsibilities for different subjects know what they have to do to improve things for you, and that governors do too. I have also asked both groups to make more checks on how well the school is doing.

You can help your teachers improve things for you by making sure that all of you are sensible, behave well and try really hard to do what they ask you to.