

Thoresby Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117822
Local Authority	Kingston-upon-Hull
Inspection number	312715
Inspection dates	25–26 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Derek Sleightholme

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	367
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Kris Dawson
Headteacher	Mrs Melissa Milner
Date of previous school inspection	1 April 2004
School address	Thoresby Street Hull HU5 3RG
Telephone number	01482 342972
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors

Description of the school

This is a large inner city school serving an area of increasing social and economic deprivation. Pupil movement in and out of the school is high, as is the percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils whose first language is not English is also high. There are 16 languages spoken at the school. The percentage of pupils eligible for a free school meal is average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average and rising. The number of pupils with statements of special educational need is well above average.

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. At 8.50 am a boy and a girl ring the original Victorian bell to signal to their classmates the start of another school day. They take pride in this important task, as it allows them to contribute well to their school and promote its presence in the local community. It typifies their good personal, social and moral development.

Although the bell provides a unique historical perspective, this school is now firmly looking forward under the focussed good leadership of its headteacher and her new leadership team. Enthusiastic teamwork has ensured that there has been good improvement since the previous inspection. This includes raising attendance, so that it is now average, and strengthening teaching by introducing a better assessment system.

Personal development is good. Pupils are set challenging targets, show positive attitudes to learning and behave well. In this diverse and friendly school, where cultural development is outstanding, pupils feel safe and well cared for. 'A happy, caring school with a sense of belonging', is a typical view expressed by a parent. Pupils love school clubs; they recognise healthy foods and value exercise. Their efforts have helped secure the Healthy School and Activemark awards. Pupils enjoy taking part in local community events and the school council plays a positive part in developing the school community.

Standards at the end of Year 6 are broadly average. In mathematics and reading they are average, and in writing and science are below average. Pupils lack skills and confidence to write at length and to carry out their own investigations in science. Nevertheless, achievement is good. Most pupils make good progress, although the high movement of pupils in and out of the school affects the rate of progress of some pupils. The pupils identified as more able are not always sufficiently challenged, and they could make more progress.

The good teaching successfully motivates pupils who respond to the varied curriculum and enrichment programme. Lessons are often lively, brisk and engaging. The annual 'Kaleidoscope' event is a very special learning experience promoting cultural diversity very effectively. In some lessons teachers skillfully link topics so that the teaching of one subject contributes well to learning in another. However, teachers are less skillful at providing enough opportunities for pupils to practise writing at length. Support for pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, or who are at an early stage of acquiring English, is sensitively matched to their needs, enabling them to progress well. Academic guidance is effective and, except for the more able, tasks set closely match pupils' needs.

Leadership, management and governance are good. Leaders evaluate school provision accurately and use this information to identify relevant priorities. Good links with local businesses, churches, the School Sports partnership and the residents' association have impacted well on pupils' learning. Governors discharge their responsibilities effectively and support the school well. The school provides good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation stage is good. Children start school with skill levels that are very low compared with what is typical for their age. From these very low starting points children make good progress, although most do not reach the levels of development that are expected for their age. The Foundation Stage classrooms are welcoming and give children a flying start

to their education. Staff make very good use of the space and resources available. They work well together and have a strong understanding of the needs of young children. Teaching is good because it engages children's interest. The good curriculum includes an appealing range of activities. Children's personal development is good. The focus on high quality care and support helps children settle happily into school. Good leadership ensures children's individual progress is carefully monitored. The arrangements for transition into Year 1 are good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in science, and provide more opportunity for practical and investigative work.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to write at length in different subjects.
- Ensure that teaching provides more challenging work to raise achievement for the more able pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. From Year 1 to Year 6 pupils most pupils make good progress. However, the more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged and could make better progress throughout the school. The needs of the pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are at an early stage of acquiring English are carefully assessed, and well planned interventions enable them to make good progress.

Standards by the end of Year 2 in reading writing and mathematics are below average. This is good progress from the pupils' very low starting points when they joined the Foundation Stage. Standards at the end of Year 6 are broadly average. They are average in reading, speaking, listening and mathematics and below average in writing and science. Standards are similar to the results of national tests at the end of Key Stage 2. In recent years standards results have been average but they dipped in 2007. Results were average in English and mathematics, and below average in science. Few pupils exceeded the level expected for their age in all three subjects. The cohort included a high proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school and taking extended leave. Some of these pupils had low attendance and this delayed their progress. The school's records show that pupils who did not experience these barriers to learning made good progress.

School data shows that, currently, standards are rising and pupils are making good progress. This is due to the impact of school leaders. They have put in place new systems to track pupils' progress and address the underachievement of past years. The full impact of these actions is not yet apparent in the results of national assessments.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good, as is their spiritual, moral and social development. Cultural development is outstanding, due to the harmonious and inclusive multi-cultural school community. The annual 'Kaleidoscope' event gives pupils an outstanding 'hands on' chance to experience different cultures.

Behaviour is good. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and value the strong friendships and community spirit. Pupils feel safe. They understand clearly right from wrong. They know isolated

incidents of negative behaviour are resolved promptly. Attendance has improved markedly and is now satisfactory. Pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of education.

Pupils are keen to take advantage of the many opportunities for exercise and competitive sport. They understand how a good diet contributes to being healthy. Pupils value the numerous opportunities they have to contribute to their community. They have successfully raised funds for good causes, entertaining local residents and arranging their own social events disco. An excellent school council is active in suggesting improvements. Pupils say their voice is heard clearly in shaping the life in school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good, so pupils achieve well. Teaching makes sure pupils understand the purpose of lessons and what they must do to succeed. Class, individual and group activities feature strongly with work planned to meet the abilities of most pupils. This is effective with the exception of the more able pupils who are not always sufficiently challenged. Most lessons capture pupils' attention because they use a lively combination of interesting starting points, challenging questions and opportunities for lively debate. In a lively English lesson discussion about estate agents made pupils think about the use of language to express particular views. One weakness is that there is too little opportunity for pupils to practise their literacy skills by writing at length in all subjects. Another is the insufficient attention to practical investigations in science.

Relationships between pupils and teachers are good. This is especially beneficial for the many pupils who are learning to speak English and additional support does much to raise their self-esteem. Most lessons are purposeful and brisk, with timed activities to keep pupils on their toes. Occasionally too much time is spent on discussion. This limits the opportunity pupils have to work independently and find out information for themselves. Marking approaches have been recently revised and there is some inconsistency in the use of these new approaches. Currently, some pupils get more helpful guidance on how to improve their work than others.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is enhanced well through the use of visits and visitors. Priority is given to literacy and numeracy balanced well by work in arts, humanities and social and emotional aspects of learning. Opportunities to practise writing and for pupils to use information and communication technology (ICT) skills to research information or present their work are not fully developed. The curriculum meets the needs of most learners well although not enough attention is given to the more ability pupils. Good intervention programmes give effective support to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are at an early stage of acquiring English. This enables these pupils to take advantage of all that is on offer.

The excellent range of after school clubs includes competitive sports coaching, crafts, cookery, drama and music. The use of visiting experts and visits made to places of interest are amongst the highlights of pupils' time in school. An outstanding feature is the annual whole-school 'Kaleidoscope' that celebrates cultures from around the world. Supported by numerous visiting

dancers, musicians and craft workers this gives pupils a unique and highly relevant way to learn about different lifestyles and sample their traditions.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support of pupils are good. Safeguarding, child protection procedures and risk assessments meet requirements. The well established daily routines ensure pupils receive good care. Teaching assistants adopt a sensitive and unobtrusive approach. Their skilful intervention ensures pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are at an early stage of acquiring English make good progress. Pupils in both of these groups also benefit from the good links the school has with staff from external agencies. Teachers are making increasing use of data to measure progress and to inform their planning. Pupils' individual literacy and numeracy targets are displayed prominently in their exercise books, and pupils are beginning to recognise what they need to do to improve. Academic guidance is effective in helping pupils to progress well in reading and mathematics. Its impact is not yet as successful in writing and science.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management, including governance, are good. The school ethos is founded on raising standards, improving personal development and celebrating the rich cultural diversity within the school population. The determined leadership of the headteacher and deputy has promoted good collaboration and a shared vision between senior leaders and staff. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and are regularly involved in monitoring improvements. They support the school well. Working rigorously together school leaders have made rapid progress in providing this school with new direction, vision and purpose. They have agreed clear school improvement priorities. They promote these well through the very effective day-to-day organisation of the school, its policies and improvement plan. In a short time they have improved attendance, introduced a robust system to track pupils' progress and implemented improved teachers' assessment skills. There are challenging targets in literacy, numeracy and science. These are carefully and systematically thought out. School data indicates pupils are on track to reach average standards. Leaders use a wide range of information to judge the school's effectiveness. This thorough self-evaluation gives them an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas in need of further improvement. Recent and effective action shows the school has good capacity for further improvement.

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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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	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	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	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	3

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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

27 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Thoresby Primary School, Kingston-upon-Hull, HU5 3RG

Thank you for the helping us when we inspected your school. You were polite, courteous and friendly. We enjoyed visiting your classrooms, looking at your work on display and in your books and talking to you about your school. Your school councillors told us how your suggestions to improve school have been followed up.

You attend a good school. People from many differing backgrounds and traditions get on well together and it is a happy place to be. Your behaviour is good. We know you understand the importance of keeping healthy and staying fit. The school takes good care of you. You told us you feel safe and know how to get help. We know that the annual 'Kaleidoscope' event is a very special experience that you enjoy. It is an important part of the good curriculum you receive.

Teaching is good because you have interesting things to do. You enjoy lessons and make good progress. Your reading is better than your writing. We think you should have more chance to write about what you are learning in other subjects. We also think that your work in mathematics is better than that in science because you have too few opportunities to do practical experiments. The school will make sure that you will have more chances to practise your writing and do more investigations in science. Those of you who are capable of reaching higher standards will have tasks that challenge you even further and help you to do your best. You can help by continuing to work hard in lessons and do even better in your tests in English, mathematics and science.

The sound of two pupils ringing the famous school bell is a feature of your school we will remember for years to come!

I wish you and all the staff the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Derek Sleightholme

Lead inspector