

Hatchell Wood Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	130924
Local Authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	315659
Inspection date	7 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Joe Peacock

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	261
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs J Heaviesides
Headteacher	Mr J Bond
Date of previous school inspection	5 July 2004
School address	Plumpton Park Road Bessacarr Doncaster South Yorkshire DN4 6SL
Telephone number	01302 538108
Fax number	01302 532691

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following: the school's strategies to raise standards in writing at Key Stage 1 and mathematics at Key Stage 2; how effectively pupils' attainment and progress are assessed and how well leaders and managers are evaluating all aspects of the school to bring about further improvement.

Evidence was gathered from meetings with the headteacher and senior managers, governors and pupils, visits to every classroom, the scrutiny of pupils' work, assessment data and documents as well as an analysis of the parent questionnaires which were returned to school. Some aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This larger than average school is situated in a residential suburb to the south east of the town. Numbers have been falling since the previous inspection and this trend is set to continue. Almost nine out of ten pupils are White British with the remainder belonging to a range of ethnic backgrounds. Only a very small number speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is average as is the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There have been significant staff changes in the past two years and a new deputy headteacher started in April 2008. The school has a Healthy School award.

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 some outstanding features and it provides good value for money. The experience, energy and expertise of the long-serving headteacher has helped keep to a minimum the disruption caused by the significant changes in staff over recent years. The falling school roll has also been managed well to ensure that the learning needs of pupils in mixed-age classes are effectively met.

The well managed Foundation Stage with its good teaching and curriculum enables children to make good progress. In the infant and junior classes, effective teaching and pupils' positive attitudes to learning ensure that all pupils continue to make good progress. By the end of Year 2, standards are usually above average, although in 2007 they dipped to broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. An analysis by the school linked this to the particular year group and some staffing changes. Boys, in particular, many of whom had learning difficulties, did not perform as well as the girls. Standards in the current Year 2 are above average, with boys doing as well as girls. However, in line with the national pattern, fewer pupils are working at the higher Level 3 in writing than in reading and mathematics. By Year 6, standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science with half the pupils attaining above the expected level for their age. High standards were also evident in information and communication technology (ICT) from the displays in the computer room, and Year 3 and 4 pupils' confidence in creating Second World War posters. Pupils' good achievement and well above average standards reflect their outstanding behaviour and the good quality of teaching throughout the school.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. All seem happy and confident in school and say that it is virtually free from any bullying or intimidating behaviour. This security has been firmly established by staff who deal quickly and effectively with any such behaviour. The excellent booklets on bullying, produced with some pupils' help, for pupils of different ages, give clear guidance on what they should do. All show an excellent understanding of how to adopt healthy lifestyles and enjoy a wide range of sporting activities in lessons and after school. Pupils' advanced literacy, numeracy, and ICT skills prepare them well for their future. Attendance is average. The school is working hard to return it to the above average levels of previous years.

Teachers plan work carefully to meet the different needs of pupils in the mixed-age classes. As a result, all are appropriately challenged and standards are improving. Some show remarkable patience as they occasionally have to wait for other groups to be allocated work. The extremely detailed assessment of pupils' progress and the school's own system for carefully tracking individual pupils, quickly identify any who are falling behind. Support and guidance are immediate for these pupils. They benefit from tasks that are carefully planned to meet their specific needs and the support of skilled teaching assistants. The support for pupils with learning difficulties and those who have English as an additional language enables them to make good progress.

The school is refining its good quality curriculum to engage boys better and give more emphasis to teaching writing skills. Computers are used extensively to enhance pupils' learning. Pupils enjoy lessons in philosophy and French. The number and variety of visits, visitors and extra-curricular clubs are outstanding. Latin and 'the task force', which is an environmental

club, are popular. These help raise pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence, as well as teaching them new skills.

Parents' views of the school are positive. They understandably appreciate the excellent level of care and support their children receive. Staff know their pupils well and set challenging individual targets for them in English and mathematics. Most pupils know precisely what is expected of them and are beginning to assess their own progress towards meeting their individual targets. This helps them to understand what they need to learn.

Leadership and management are good. The senior leadership team supports the headteacher well, and the coordinator for pupils with learning difficulties ensures effective provision for these pupils as well as those who are especially able or beginning to learn English. There is a long list of priorities in the school improvement plan but it is not clear which are the key priorities or how the school will assess if they have been successful in achieving them. This means that bringing about improvement is not as effective as it could be as not everyone is clear about what the key priorities are or if their actions are having an impact. Staff carefully check pupils' progress and subject leaders are increasingly involved in evaluating the effectiveness of teaching by observing one another's lessons. The governors are very supportive and keen to help to evaluate school performance in order to bring about further improvement. The school has a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the Reception classes with skills that are above those normally expected. Well established links between the school and nursery settings ensure the specific needs of all children are known, enabling them to settle in quickly. The two teachers and very experienced teaching assistants work effectively as a team to create one Reception unit. Staff welcome the good quality, expert leadership provided by a member of the senior management team. Careful planning, the extremely spacious accommodation and the calm, purposeful atmosphere combine to ensure that all children enjoy the wide range of challenging and exciting activities provided for them. Boys, for example, thoroughly enjoyed burying buckets in sand, leaving a flag marker with a letter sticking up so that they could draw a treasure map. When writing instructions on how to plant seeds after planting their own, most children formed their letters neatly and were able to spell many simple words accurately, without support. Children maintain their concentration well, listen attentively and are keen to answer questions. Sensitive care, support and guidance from staff who are quick to use praise, successfully raise children's self-esteem and develop their ability to work independently. The outdoor area with its farm shop is used well to encourage and support learning in all areas of the curriculum. It is used so much that some of the grass areas are badly worn and the small area of soft-fall surface limits children's opportunities to use any adventurous play equipment. As a result of effective teaching, children make good progress. Well over half exceed the standards expected nationally in all areas of learning by the time they join Year 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing by the end of Year 2.
- Ensure that priorities for development are specific and the expected improvement of each is clearly identified so that success can be evaluated.

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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	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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
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	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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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 Hatchell Wood Primary School, Doncaster, DN4 6SL

I really enjoyed my inspection of your school. Thank you for being so friendly and for making me feel so welcome. I'd like to outline some of the reasons why yours is a good school.

In Reception, there is so much room for you to learn and play. I liked your giant's castle and farm shop and I hope your flower seeds grow. I could see how much fun you have in the outdoor area from the worn out grass! Your teachers plan some exciting things for you to do and it is good that there is always someone there to help you if you need it. I can see why everyone does so well in this class.

The behaviour of everyone is outstanding in lessons and around school. You seem to be living up to the message and advice in the excellent booklets you helped to write on bullying. You get on so well with one another and with your teachers. Well done! The school takes extra special care of you all and is quick to support you if you need help. It is good that you know what your targets for learning are and that you help to assess how well you are achieving them.

All of you make good progress as you move through the school because all the staff are working so hard to make sure you have lots of new things to learn. I have not been to another school where Latin is being taught. Year 1 and 2 pupils need to continue concentrating on improving their writing as standards are not quite as high as they are in reading and mathematics. I have asked teachers to make sure that they always give plenty of writing to do in literacy lessons so that you can practise your skills. Year 3 and 4 pupils were doing exceptionally well in the computer room creating Second World War posters. I was very impressed! By the end of Year 6 you achieve well above average standards in English, mathematics and science.

Your headteacher is leading the school well and governors and staff are all working hard to make sure that you enjoy school. They have a long list of things that they want to improve but need to be sure which are the most important and then check carefully how much improvement is achieved. I hope that you will carry on trying your best in everything you do to make your good school even better.