

# Richmond Hill Primary School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 133709           |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Doncaster        |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 316205           |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 21 February 2008 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Clive Moss HMI   |

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>                    | Community   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                | 3-11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed   |
| <b>Number on roll</b>                     |   |
| School                                    | 405   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body  |
| <b>Chair</b>                              | Mr Malcolm Wood   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                        | Mrs Jill Foster   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | Not previously inspected  |
| <b>School address</b>                     | Melton Road<br>Sprotbrough<br>Doncaster<br>South Yorkshire<br>DN5 7SB |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                   | 01302 782421  |
| <b>Fax number</b>                         | 01302 789609  |

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. It focused on the personal development of the pupils in the school, the quality of the care, guidance and support, pupils' achievement, the monitoring of teaching and learning, and the quality of marking of pupils' work. This was done by gathering evidence from observing lessons, scrutinising school documentation and questionnaires completed by parents/carers, and by talking with pupils, teachers, school managers and the headteacher. Other 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.

## Description of the school

Richmond Hill Primary School is much larger than average. Pupils are drawn from an area with generally below average levels of affluence. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average, but the proportion with statements of special educational needs is much lower than the national average. The overwhelming majority of the pupils are of White British heritage, with few pupils from other ethnic groups. The school has achieved a number of awards including the Healthy Schools Award, the Basic Skills Award and the Eco School Bronze Award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Richmond Hill is a good school. It has some outstanding features and is improving rapidly. Pupils achieve well and reach standards that are above average by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Standards at both these key stages and particularly at Key Stage 2 are improving faster than the national average. There are no significant differences between the progress of boys and girls, and of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has correctly identified that, whilst improving as a result of successful interventions, pupils' writing skills by the end of Key Stage 2 are less well developed than other skills.

The personal development of the pupils is outstanding. The school has very high expectations of pupils' behaviour, to which the pupils respond very well. Their behaviour is excellent. They are exceptionally polite and helpful. Pupils say that bullying is not an issue at Richmond Hill, and know what to do if it happened. They say also that racism is not tolerated. The number of reported incidents in the last three years is very low and there were none in the last year. Pupils are keen to take on the responsibility that the school offers, from serving on the school council, to acting as playground leaders, to helping younger pupils at the daily 'family service' in the dining hall. In many ways the dining arrangements exemplify the ethos of the school, as even this everyday aspect of school life provides a civilised experience that contributes directly to the pupils' health, welfare and personal growth. Pupils demonstrate good awareness of healthy living. Changes to the catering arrangements, prompted in part by the pupils themselves, have resulted in a dramatic increase in their consumption of vegetables. Many take part in physical and sporting activities, including outside of school.

The pupils demonstrate a very high level of enjoyment and liking for their school. The school council has been closely involved in developing child-friendly equal opportunities policies that now form the basis of the school's practice. The school successfully encourages pupils to be active and responsible learners, through a broad range of strategies. Attendance is satisfactory, although small rises in the percentage of authorised absence have resulted in a slight decline in the last two years overall. Daily assemblies are just one of numerous ways in which the school provides for the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of the pupils. The positive attitudes that result from this work along with the above average standards they reach mean that the pupils are well placed to make the most of the next phase of their education and ultimately achieve economic well-being.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils respond very well in lessons. Most think learning is interesting and fun. They concentrate and apply themselves diligently to the tasks they are set. Activities are varied and designed to capture interest. Relationships between pupils and teachers are very good. Much of the school's development activity is focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning. This results in well planned lessons, incorporating many opportunities to develop the pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness, and a variety of tasks appropriate to their abilities. Teachers use assessment effectively to identify how well pupils are doing and what they need to do to improve. Work is marked accordingly and offers pupils both encouragement and guidance on how to improve. In addition, work to involve pupils in planning and assessing their own work is helping them to understand how well they are doing and how to get better. There is good support for pupils with special educational needs. There is a strong focus on the needs of vulnerable pupils that begins in the Foundation Stage. This, along with the range of interventions used by the school, ensures these pupils make just as much progress as their peers.

The curriculum is broad and balanced, and progressively includes new areas of study, such as modern foreign languages. It has been adapted well to meet the needs of individuals and different groups of pupils. In the Foundation Stage, the first term concentrates on personal, social and emotional development, and language activities, as a direct result of careful assessment of pupils' levels of skills on entry. The introduction of mathematics daily 'countdown' sessions for all groups has improved many pupils' confidence in this subject. There is a wide range of carefully selected and intelligently targeted interventions that help pupils experiencing difficulties to make good progress. There are opportunities to allow pupils to act as peer mentors, providing a further opportunity for individuals to take responsibility and make a positive contribution to the school. The curriculum is augmented by themed weeks such as 'world awareness' and 'healthy living'. In 2007, pupils from the school won the national Primary Engineer final. These experiences are successful in developing good understanding and positive attitudes in the pupils.

The care, guidance and support of the pupils are outstanding. Pupils feel safe and well cared for. Health and safety checks and risk assessments are carried out regularly. Child protection procedures are thorough. The staff ensure a calm and orderly environment that supports pupils' learning well. There are clear procedures with which pupils are familiar and that increasingly promote their independence. This has a major impact on behaviour. The school places considerable emphasis on celebrating the achievements of all pupils. This results in many of them becoming confident learners. The school has all the relevant policies and action plans in place to promote gender, disability and race equality. Work to support the transition of pupils into and through the school is valued by parents. The progress of pupils is tracked carefully. Teachers are alert to the minority of pupils who are not on track to make the progress expected of them and action is taken to modify the curriculum or provide additional support when appropriate.

Both the achievement of the pupils and the standards they reach are improving each year as a result of good leadership and management. The school has made good progress in tackling the areas for improvement at the last inspection. The headteacher and senior managers are focused clearly on securing continuous improvements. They are supported well by a highly motivated staff. The school makes excellent use of performance data, for the school as a whole and individual pupils. Comprehensive analyses of the data ensure that senior leaders know the school very well. Self-evaluation is rigorous. The judgements the school reaches about itself are accurate, balanced and well grounded in evidence. Appropriately challenging targets are set, based on individual pupils' performance. Areas for development are identified with precision and pursued with vigour. Extensive partnerships with other schools are used effectively and make a significant contribution to the quality of self-evaluation and lead to carefully chosen improvement activities suited to the needs of the children and the school. The school has very good knowledge of the views of parents/carers and the pupils, and is very responsive to both. The overwhelming majority of parents are understandably very positive about the school and, whilst there are individual concerns on matters such as homework, most are highly complimentary about the education provided for their children. Governors are engaged well with the work of the school and provide an important element of both challenge and support. They understand what the school needs to do to improve and ensure that the physical environment is of very good quality, contributing to the pupils' learning. The school has demonstrated excellent capacity to improve and provides very good value for money.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is broadly in line with the levels of personal skills, attributes and abilities expected of children of this age, but many pupils start with several particular barriers to learning in terms of their personal, social and emotional development and language. These are clearly identified by the school and overcome successfully as a result of a carefully planned and well balanced curriculum and good teaching and learning. By the time they start Key Stage 1 most have reached or exceeded the levels expected for their age.

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

- Improve the quality of writing by the end of Year 6 so that more pupils attain higher levels in English.

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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 |
|---|----------------|

### 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?   | 1   |
| The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage   | 2   |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements   | 1   |

### 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  | 3 |
| 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 | 1 |

### 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  | 1   |
| 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**

Inspection of Richmond Hill Primary School, Doncaster, DN5 7SB

Thank you for talking to me and making me welcome when I visited your school recently. I spoke with you in lessons, around the school and in groups, looked at your work, read the results of questionnaires filled in by your parents/carers, and spoke with some of your teachers. Here is a summary of my main findings, which I hope will be of interest to you.

- Richmond Hill is a good school. It is very popular with both you and your parents.
- You enjoy being at school, feel safe and know that the teachers care about you.
- You make good progress. Your behaviour is excellent. You are very polite and considerate young people. This is the result of the very high expectations from you and your teachers and of the excellent care, guidance and support you are given.
- The school is led and managed well.
- The headteacher, the staff and the governors at the school have a very good understanding of what needs to be done to make things even better and I agreed with them that you need more help with writing skills in order to reach even higher levels.

Many of you already make an excellent contribution to the school and I am sure you will want to do everything you can to support the staff in making Richmond Hill an even better school.