

Worsbrough Common Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106576
Local Authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	324426
Inspection dates	20–21 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Jane Hughes

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	223
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	78
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Peter Doyle
Headteacher	Miss Kate Davies
Date of previous school inspection	7 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Bruce Avenue Barnsley South Yorkshire S70 4EB

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	20–21 October 2008
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This smaller than average school draws pupils from areas of economic and social disadvantage. Pupil numbers are falling as families move out of the area during local housing renewal. Far more pupils than average are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is smaller than average while the proportion with a statement of special educational need is larger. Most pupils are of White British heritage and few speak English as an additional language. The school has attained the Healthy Schools Silver award and gained Investors in People status in 2007. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) comprises Foundation 1 and 2 classes (Nursery and Reception). The school manages a breakfast club, which runs from 08.15 to 08.45 each morning. The school works in partnership with a governor led Surestart Children's Centre, Rising Stars, which opened in January 2006. The manager is part of the school's leadership team. Rising Stars provides flexible day care for children aged six weeks to five years. It also provides a wide range of courses and support for parents. The headteacher took up post in April 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Worsbrough Common is a good school. Several aspects of its provision have improved since its last inspection, most notably standards and pupils' achievement. Parents value the work of the school, commending its practice with comments such as 'I wish my child could stay here until she is 16', and 'The school has brought the best out of our child who has come on in leaps and bounds'. The headteacher and children's centre manager work collaboratively to ensure that the many education and health services on offer to parents and the community are high quality and meet local needs. Together, these promote awareness among families of the importance of lifelong learning.

The headteacher brings very strong leadership skills to the whole school community. She instils a love of learning in pupils, a sense of pride in the work of all staff and an increasing confidence in parents, governors and community members. Senior leaders show clarity about what the school does well and where it needs to improve. Strong teamwork links every aspect of the school's provision and staff are keen to learn from each other and from other settings in their desire to make the school successful. Governors continue to be highly supportive of the school but they do not yet take an active enough role in the school's evaluation of its performance or in deciding what needs to improve. The school's record of effective improvement, coupled with the good value for money it provides, underlines a good capacity for further improvement.

Pupils achieve well. Children join the school with skills that are well below those expected for their age, particularly their speaking, listening and social skills. They make good progress through the school and reach broadly average standards by Years 2 and 6. Pupils' skills are weakest in communication, language and literacy by the end of the EYFS and in English by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. Indeed, where support programmes and mentoring are particularly successful, these pupils make rapid progress. However, there is insufficient challenge to enable more than a small proportion of pupils to reach the higher levels in their work.

Skilful teachers and teaching assistants encourage effective learning. Careful use of information from accurate assessments of what pupils understand and can do ensures that staff quickly identify when pupils need additional support. The stimulating curriculum enables staff to plan creative and practical tasks that capture pupils' interest. As a result, pupils are keen to learn and do well. They are learning more about how to lead increasingly healthy and safe lives, often with the input from members of the community. Pupils enjoy school and join in eagerly with all the activities. They show increasing independence and maturity as they take responsibility for different areas of school life, such as the Lead Learners (school councillors) who work on behalf of the whole school to improve provision. Rising academic and developing social skills ensure that pupils have a secure foundation for their future learning. Adults offer consistently high quality care, guidance and personal support to pupils. Pupils confirm that they feel safe here and that relationships are good. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of pupils' capabilities along with a keen awareness of the factors that may inhibit pupils' learning.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start in the EYFS as a result of careful introductory programmes and close links with the children's centre. Until recently, the children's centre worked in isolation.

The headteacher, children's centre manager and EYFS leader reorganised the provision so that children in the Nursery (Foundation 1) now learn alongside those in the children's centre while Reception (Foundation 2) children work more closely with Year 1. This approach is working very well. The youngest children are now familiar with expectations and routines when they move into the Nursery and the extension of aspects of the EYFS curriculum into Year 1 benefits the older children. Staff help children to learn and develop well because they provide individual learning programmes for each child. These cater for children's specific interests and stimulate their curiosity. All adults engage children in conversation and use questioning well to develop their thinking and problem-solving skills. By the end of Reception, standards are below expected levels for children's age, but no longer well below. This represents good achievement. Some are working securely within the expected levels for their age and this proportion doubled in 2008 over the previous two years. Children's attainment is weakest in communication, language and literacy, and this continues to be reflected in their performance as they move through the school. Practitioners pay close attention to children's welfare so they feel secure and are able to participate fully in school life. Well-informed leadership and management ensure that children access a rich curriculum that supports their individual needs well. Children choose for themselves where to learn and play and initiate many of their own activities, thereby increasing their independence. They mull over how to build a huge den, construct boats that survive sailing down three sets of rapids and wash cars, windows, slides and often themselves with great gusto and many bubbles. Above all, they discover how much fun it is at school. This initial enjoyment of learning stands them in good stead as they move through the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards, particularly in English throughout the school, and in communication, language and literacy in the EYFS.
- Challenge more able pupils so they reach higher levels in their work.
- Strengthen the role of governors in school self-evaluation and school improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well. Most recent assessment scores show that, in contrast to the steadily improving trend over the last five years, standards at the end of Year 2 declined in 2008, particularly in reading and writing. This was due to disrupted schooling. In Key Stage 2, the provisional results for 2008, coupled with inspection evidence, show that from low starting points, standards by Year 6 continued to rise overall and are broadly average. Standards rose in mathematics and science but dipped slightly in English, a reflection of the continued barriers to learning presented by pupils' weaker communication, language and literacy skills. Throughout the school, fewer pupils than average reach the higher levels in their work. Highly effective mentoring and support programmes for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities help these pupils to make as much progress as other groups of pupils. Some of this progress is very rapid, particularly following reading catch-up programmes.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils say how much they enjoy their learning and this is reflected in their much improved attendance this year. They sense that the school is pushing them forward at a faster rate and that they are working harder in lessons. Pupils shoulder responsibility well and embrace training

for positions such as buddies and Lead Learners. They show increasing maturity in their relationships with adults and each other. Pupils develop a good understanding of how to live healthy and safe lifestyles. In the children's centre, children eat nutritious meals and learn to brush their teeth afterwards. Pupils enthusiastically embrace opportunities to participate in sports, enjoy the cafeteria meals and have an evolving awareness of the dangers of drugs. Pupils who attend the breakfast club enjoy a warm welcome and are set up for a good day's work. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They recognise qualities of friendship and gain in self-confidence as they get older. Pupils follow the simple school rules and behave very well. They know that any rare instances of bullying are speedily addressed by staff. Pupils show a keen interest in helping others in the wider community as, for example, they respond actively to Fairtrade initiatives. Through these and other similar experiences, pupils gain a stronger understanding of the values and skills required to make positive contributions as active citizens.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils learn well. Consistently good teaching enthuses pupils so they approach lessons in a positive frame of mind. They confirm, 'We are learning new things every day'. Satisfactory attendance in school is helping pupils to build more rapidly on previous knowledge and to avoid as many gaps in their learning. For instance, pupils relish opportunities to demonstrate their ideas on the interactive whiteboards and clearly explain a learning point to their peers. Knowledgeable teachers and teaching assistants work well together to meet pupils' individual needs, although there is a lack of challenge in lessons to extend the learning of more able pupils. Effective questioning in lessons encourages pupils to think through problems and find solutions for themselves, a useful skill for the future. Adults have consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour and response in lessons. Classrooms buzz with purposeful activity and displays contain effective prompts to develop pupils' independent learning, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The practically-based curriculum is a major factor in pupils' good achievement and their rapidly increasing love of learning. Wherever possible, teachers include a practical application or reason for learning a particular skill and so enthuse pupils. For instance, pupils used skills in mathematics, science and negotiation to design a rocket launcher, which they then tested in the playground. Good provision in literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) ensures pupils practise these basic skills regularly in other areas of learning. Role play areas are now part of every classroom and these stimulate pupils' imagination and help with their speaking and listening skills, which are so vital for their future success. Opportunities in Years 4 to 6 to participate in residential stays develop pupils' independence and contribute to their burgeoning team building and problem-solving skills. Although there are extra activities for older pupils to enjoy after school, currently there is nothing specifically organised for younger pupils in Years 1 and 2. Links with other partners are strong. There are established partnerships with Creative partners, colleges of higher education, sports clubs and local businesses that also enrich pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

There is strong support for pupils' personal and academic development. All adults take their duty of care seriously and there are appropriate procedures in place for safeguarding pupils. Strong links with outside agencies coupled with close liaison between staff working in the school and the children's centre ensure that any concerns are quickly addressed so that pupils' individual needs are met well. Skilful mentoring enthusiastically promotes the benefits of regular attendance, good behaviour and home-school links to pupils and parents. These supportive links with parents are slowly breaking down deep rooted barriers to learning within the community as parents gradually gain confidence in the school. There is very good support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or special needs so these pupils make good and sometimes very good progress. For example, effective programmes to aid pupils' reading helped some to make more than double the expected rate of progress last year. The school has good systems to assess pupils' learning and track their progress. These are helping to accelerate pupils' progress and raise standards. Staff are skilful at identifying what each pupil must do next to improve, although this is not expressed consistently enough in their marking of pupils' work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is moving forward apace as a result of the headteacher's highly aspirational leadership. This urgency of approach sits well with staff. Staff feel valued as their professional training needs are met. As a result, there is a shared desire to make this an ever more successful school. Strong leadership at all levels ensures that high quality teamwork supports all aspects of the school's work, including a close working relationship with the children's centre management and staff. Simple improvement plans enable all members of the school community to understand the priorities of senior leaders. Efficient administrators, ancillary and lunchtime staff all play their part in the daily smooth running of the school. Financial management is good. The school is mindful of difficulties posed by falling pupil numbers during the redevelopment of local housing. Its promotion of community cohesion is good. Experienced governors provide good links with the neighbouring community and work hard to meet local needs through school based and children's centre programmes. They provide ready support for the headteacher and children's centre manager but do not yet contribute fully to the school's evaluation processes. Parents express their support for the school, although many still lack the confidence or desire to become more involved in school life. Gradually though, more are beginning to appreciate the value of lifelong learning as they attend adult education programmes.

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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

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which 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 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

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	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 Worsbrough Common Primary School, Barnsley, S70 4EB

Thank you for your warm welcome when we inspected your school and for the super letter from two of your Lead Learners. On your behalf, they thanked us for coming to your school. It was a pleasure for us as you are all very friendly. We enjoyed listening to your views and eating our lunch with you – the food was delicious, too!

We judge that yours is a good school. You do well here and are reaching higher standards. Your headteacher and all the adults are always working to make school even better for you. You and your parents say that teachers make lessons interesting so you learn well and we agree. There are lots of practical things to do in school and you told us that you enjoy these. You all behave very well and are getting much better at coming to school every day. This is very important, so well done! Many of you are keen to take part in sports and understand that fruit and vegetables are good for your growing bodies. You are kind to each other and look for different ways to help those outside school to have better lives. The children's centre helps the youngest children to get used to coming to school so they are happy and do well once they transfer into Nursery.

Part of our job is to look at what your school could do better. The Lead Learners wrote, 'You have given us many ideas for our school, who knows we may alter it!' So, here are the most important things your school could improve. We have asked all the adults to raise the standards you reach in English. This includes how well the youngest children in the Early Years Foundation Stage can speak, listen, read and write. We also asked your teachers to make sure that those of you who can cope with extra challenges are given harder work so you do even better. Lastly, we have asked the governors to check in more detail just how well the school is doing, a bit like you do at the end of your lessons.

Carry on working hard and enjoying school!