

High Greave Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106841
Local Authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	324473
Inspection dates	21–22 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Andrew Swallow

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	188
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Lorraine Pepper
Headteacher	Mr R Murray
Date of previous school inspection	16 January 2006
School address	High Greave Road East Herringthorpe Rotherham South Yorkshire S65 3LZ
Telephone number	01709 850566
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

High Greave Junior is a smaller than average school. Almost all pupils are from a White British heritage and an increasing number come from minority ethnic backgrounds, particularly from Eastern Europe. There are few pupils who speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is more than three times the national average. The number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. A higher percentage than usual have a statement of special educational need. Since the last inspection there have been many staff changes, including at senior leadership levels. The school is part of the Thrybergh Education Action Zone (EAZ) and has several awards including the Healthy Schools Award, Enterprise in Education, Activemark, Investors in People and Artsmark Gold.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school that provides satisfactory value for money. The headteacher has successfully tackled the challenges arising from significant changes in staffing, which have slowed pupils' progress in English of late. Staffing is now stable and the new senior leadership team has been empowered to address recent underperformance in writing and to raise standards quickly. Early indications show that this work is already bearing fruit.

Effective care of pupils lies at the heart of the school's work. All adults are very supportive and keen to involve all pupils in the work of the school. This is especially so for pupils with particular learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for those joining the school who speak English as an additional language. Parents recognise this good work and are supportive of the school. A small number express concerns about behaviour in school but inspection evidence demonstrates that where misbehaviour occurs it is dealt with swiftly and does not hinder learning.

Most pupils start school with below average skills and make satisfactory progress to reach below average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. However, pupils' progress and attainment in English has dipped recently, particularly in writing, and this is largely attributable to the numbers of teachers leaving and joining the school in the last year. The current teaching team is much more settled and specific strategies to develop writing skills are beginning to pay off. As a result, standards in writing are beginning to rise, although the school recognises that they are still not where they should be.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some that is good. Teachers increasingly encourage pupils to think for themselves and to work independently. However, information about how well pupils are doing is not used consistently well and with sufficient precision across the school, to inform them of how to improve their work. Similarly, the school's comprehensive arrangements to provide pupils, and their families, with specific guidance about how well they are doing and what they need to do next, are new. They have not had sufficient time to make a real impact.

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy school and their attendance is satisfactory. The vast majority behave appropriately and are supportive of each other. Most have a good understanding of how to keep safe and healthy. Their improving information and communication technology (ICT) and numeracy skills, and their understanding of the world of work, prepare them adequately for their future lives. The curriculum is satisfactory. There is a good range of enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities, but it is too early to see the full impact of the school's strategies to improve pupils' key skills in literacy.

Self-evaluation has identified the right priorities to move the school forward, although procedures to analyse the impact of teachers' work on pupils' learning are not sharp enough. The governing body is supportive and increasingly confident in holding the school to account for its performance. The committed leadership by the headteacher and the developing strengths of the newly formed senior leadership team are improving the work of the school. These factors ensure that the school has satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement and standards in writing across the school.
- Ensure that all teaching matches the best practice in the school.

- Ensure that assessment information is used consistently well across the school, in order that all pupils can receive accurate information on how they can improve their work.
- Refine systems to monitor the impact that teaching has on pupils' learning and progress.

A small proportion of the schools whose 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

Standards at the end of Year 6 are below average in English, mathematics and science. This represents satisfactory progress for the vast majority of pupils, given their below average starting points in Year 3. However, standards in mathematics and science have risen continually since the previous inspection. However, standards in English fell significantly in 2008. This was largely due to staff absences, which hindered the progress of many pupils, particularly in writing. The legacy of this period is now being addressed vigorously by a full complement of teachers and teaching assistants, including additional adults to boost pupils' writing. As a result, standards in English are picking up and a large number of pupils have made much better progress in writing since the beginning of the autumn term. Nevertheless, teachers know that standards in writing are still not as high as they should be and this is a major priority for the school. The most recent information, including work seen in lessons, shows that pupils continue to achieve satisfactorily in mathematics and science, to reach below average standards. Pupils with individual learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those whose first language is not English, make satisfactory progress because work is suitably matched to their needs.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They benefit from a programme of themed weeks, assemblies and good links with the local church and other places of worship. These all help to develop a sense of right and wrong, and also respect for each other. As a result, although some pupils display challenging behaviour at times, for the most part in lessons and around school their conduct is satisfactory. Pupils say bullying is rare and that they feel safe and secure. The vast majority adopt thoughtful routines when working and playing together. The school has good strategies to promote regular attendance, which is broadly average. Pupils enjoy school, in particular their work on the school council, raising funds for charities, acting as 'playground friends' and helping with local environmental projects. They talk knowledgeably about the importance of exercise and diet, as part of a healthy lifestyle. They have a good understanding of the world of work and enterprise through their involvement in projects with the local secondary school and EAZ. While their reading, numeracy and ICT skills prepare them adequately for their future lives, their writing skills are not well enough developed.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is improving as a result of greater stability in staffing. In some classes it is now good. Relationships are positive and classrooms are stimulating places in which to learn. Pupils say they enjoy their lessons because they do interesting things and have many

opportunities to work alongside each other. In the best lessons, skilful questioning enables teachers to determine how well pupils are learning and whether they require further explanation, or additional resources, to enable them to make even better progress. Teachers provide well planned opportunities for pupils to find out things for themselves. Activities are often linked to a theme so that the pupils see relevance in what they are doing. However, in some lessons pupils' misconceptions are not always tackled directly. Activities are not always as engaging as they might be and consequently some pupils do not make as much progress as they should. Overall, the marking of pupils' work is regular and celebratory, but it is not always helpful in enabling pupils to understand how well they are doing and what they need to do next to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Teachers have begun to establish successful links between subjects to ensure that pupils steadily develop key understanding, while retaining an emphasis on literacy, numeracy and ICT. These arrangements are starting to impact positively on pupils' calculation and problem-solving skills and on their confidence in using computers. The school recognises that more work is still needed to improve pupils' writing competencies in all years. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn about British and other cultures. Visitors to the school and visits out-of-school enhance pupils' personal and social development. Touring theatre groups and performances such as 'All Geared Up,' ensure that they are increasingly aware of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. A satisfactory range of enrichment activities, including sport, music, dance and film clubs, all help pupils to broaden their horizons and develop varied lifestyles.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Parents and pupils appreciate the strong pastoral support provided. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements. Every care is taken to ensure that the school is a safe and healthy environment and regular checks are made to minimise risks. Individual education plans for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are used effectively to check pupils' progress and set new targets. Child protection arrangements are in place and there is particularly effective support for vulnerable pupils and also the increasing number of pupils entering the school from overseas. Links with external agencies are strong. The school works successfully with educational welfare officers and behavioural support teams to improve pupils' attendance and to make High Greave an increasingly calm environment in which to learn. Much has been done recently to provide pupils with guidance about how well they achieve. For example, many pupils are enthusiastic about their new personal learning plans, including their targets in reading, writing and mathematics. However, these have not been in place long enough for all pupils to be clear about what they do well and what they are aiming for.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has led the school well through a recent unsettling period and has now refocused the school on raising pupils' achievement. Good links have been forged with local schools, businesses, outside agencies and community services, to help to promote pupils' achievement and well-being. These links enable pupils to appreciate well the values of belonging

to a society in which there are strong and positive relationships. The newly formed senior leadership team is equally committed to quality education and care. Senior leaders are eager to become involved in all aspects of the school's work and have been given more responsibility for raising standards further. Refined tracking procedures for reading, writing and mathematics are enabling earlier and more effective intervention, particularly where individual pupils may not be achieving as well as they should. Processes for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning have improved since the previous inspection but there is not sufficient analysis of the impact of teaching on pupils' learning. Consequently, feedback to teachers lacks precision about how exactly learning can be improved. Self-evaluation is largely accurate and the school's 'Developing Excellence Plan' identifies the right priorities for what needs to be tackled next. Governors are supportive and involved in the work of the school. They receive helpful and detailed information, which is enabling them to understand better how well the school is performing. However, not all committees meet regularly enough to evaluate fully the quality of pupils' outcomes.

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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	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	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/or disabilities make progress	3

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?	3
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	3
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?	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

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 eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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 High Greave Junior School, Rotherham, S65 3LZ

Thank you very much for the welcome and help you gave to the inspectors when we came to your school recently. We liked how you talked to us in such a friendly way, and were impressed by how you all get on with each other. I would like to share with you what we think about your school.

The vast majority of you behave appropriately and show respect for the adults working with you. Now that you have a regular team of teachers in school, most of you concentrate on your work and make satisfactory progress overall. We were particularly impressed with how much you know about the importance of living a healthy lifestyle, and how enthusiastically you take on responsibilities in the playground, and work so thoughtfully alongside younger children. It is good that you become so involved in projects about the local environment and those that encourage you to raise funds for worldwide charities. We were pleased to hear how much you enjoy your lessons, particularly music, art and sport.

Overall, we think that your school takes care of you and provides you with a satisfactory standard of education. But, we know that this could be even better. We are asking the headteacher, staff and governors to do the following things to make sure that you all get the best out of your time at High Greave.

- Help you reach higher standards in writing by the end of Year 6.
- Ensure that all teaching is as good as the best.
- Improve the quality of all your lessons so that you know exactly how well you are doing and what you need to do to improve.
- Ensure that senior leaders concentrate more on finding out whether teaching enables you all to learn and progress as well as you might.

I am sure you will work hard and do your best to help your teachers bring about the improvements we think are necessary. Remember what your headteacher keeps telling you: 'Always look upwards and aim high.'