

# Maltby Crags Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106870
<b>Local Authority</b>	Rotherham
<b>Inspection number</b>	324477
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gordon Potter

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	193
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	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr K Thompson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sheila Ralph
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 May 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Strauss Crescent Maltby Rotherham South Yorkshire S66 7QJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01709 812729
<b>Fax number</b>	01709 798202

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<b>Age group</b>	3–7
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 March 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller than average infant school which serves an area of significant social disadvantage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who are learning to speak English as an additional language are well below average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. Fewer pupils than is usual leave or join during the school year. Two Nursery classes and two Reception classes make up the Early Years Foundation Stage provision, and children enter the Nursery classes in the autumn term. The school has the Healthy Eating Award and the Excellence in Enterprise Education Platinum Award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school which has undergone rapid and sustained improvement. Standards have risen and pupils flourish and make excellent progress. The outstanding leadership of the headteacher has led to exciting teaching, a vibrant curriculum and extremely high levels of care. Teachers ensure pupils make outstanding progress because they challenge them to do well while making learning fun. Parents are highly pleased by the way they are helped to help their children to learn. As they say, 'This is a fantastic school that does the best for children. Enthusiastic teachers care about the children they teach. They make children feel good about themselves. Children thrive in this school.'

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Teachers engage pupils in an exciting range of interesting independent and group work activities and they make it very clear to pupils what they are expected to learn. In the very few lessons which do not reach the highest standard, it is because work is not closely enough matched to the abilities of the least able pupils. The curriculum is outstanding. It is based on pupils' interests and the development of skills which help pupils to achieve constantly improving standards. It is enhanced by an excellent range of activities and visits to promote learning and community cohesion. These activities excite pupils and encourage them to explore new areas of experience.

In 2008, pupils attained below average standards by the end of Year 2. This represented outstanding progress considering their starting points. Inspection evidence shows that pupils currently in Year 2 are well placed to achieve challenging targets in their tests at the end of this school year. Pupils in all classes now make extremely rapid progress. Their achievement is outstanding.

Outstanding care and support from a caring staff promote pupils' excellent personal development and well-being. Academic guidance is outstanding. Detailed analysis of data and meticulous marking of pupils' work ensure that the setting of targets is effective in enabling pupils to make excellent progress. Behaviour and attitudes are outstanding and pupils show remarkable self-confidence and concern for one another and for others less fortunate than themselves. Pupils enjoy school immensely. However, this is not reflected in attendance which is broadly average despite the best efforts of the school. Pupils readily take on responsibilities, such as membership of the school council. Pupils have an outstanding understanding of how to keep healthy and stay fit, as the school strongly promotes these qualities. Pupils develop highly effective life skills as they move through the school because of the varied high quality experiences they receive.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The excellent headteacher has successfully implemented her vision of school improvement so that the aspirations of the pupils have been significantly raised. There is exceptional teamwork and the headteacher encourages all teachers and the team of teaching assistants to develop their leadership roles. Well focused and appropriate initiatives have had an impact on improving provision in school and in raising standards. There is exemplary understanding of the school's many strengths and meticulous development planning to ensure that any weaknesses are addressed. This has ensured rapid improvement for the school since its last inspection. It therefore offers outstanding value for money and has an outstanding capacity to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 1

The knowledge and skills with which children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage are well below that expected for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy, and personal and social development. However, children get an excellent start to their education. Extremely effective induction and welfare arrangements help children to settle and thrive in the warm and supportive environment. They develop a love of learning, have a keen sense of humour and are confident and excited to explore the world around them. Relationships are excellent and engender confidence and a love of learning. Teaching is outstanding with the right balance between activities where children discover things for themselves and those where they work with an adult. This is supported by a first-rate curriculum that stimulates and encourages children to want to learn. As a result children make excellent progress in all areas of learning, irrespective of their starting points, and leave the Reception class with knowledge, skills and understanding that are below the levels expected of children of their age. The flexible use of the indoor accommodation and the exceptionally well planned access to the exciting outdoor accommodation is excellent, exemplifying the school's successful emphasis on the development of independence in selecting and carrying out activities. Very effective management of some initial difficult behaviour means that children's behaviour is soon outstanding. Assessment procedures are rigorous, providing accurate information to support planning, extend children's learning and identify appropriate intervention strategies for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The outstanding leadership and excellent teamwork provide a vibrant and exciting learning environment in which children are valued and where they flourish.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve attendance.
- Ensure that work is matched to pupils' individual needs, especially the least able, consistently well across school.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 1

Current school data and inspection evidence shows that achievement throughout Years 1 and 2 is outstanding taking into account the pupils' individual starting points. Standards at the end of Year 2 in 2008 were below the national average. This is an improvement on previous years, when, for example, in 2006 they were well below average. Standards in the current Year 2 are also below average, but represent excellent progress from their starting points which were well below expectations. Standards are higher, and are broadly average, in Year 1 where pupils have benefited from the impact of improvements in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in the teaching of different early reading strategies. All groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make equally outstanding progress because of the high quality provision and excellent support they receive.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

Pupils are extremely positive about their school, enjoy learning and grow quickly in confidence and self-esteem. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They have a clear understanding of other faiths and cultures and life in other countries. Behaviour

throughout the school is excellent, both in classrooms and around the corridors and playgrounds. Pupils know how to keep safe. They play together very harmoniously and are polite and supportive of each other. They understand how to lead a healthy lifestyle very well. Despite the best efforts of the school, attendance is broadly average. It has been adversely affected by a winter sickness virus and the poor weather. The school council is proactive and has been responsible for improving playground equipment and school meals and for raising money for charity. Pupils are strongly involved in the wider community with contributions to local festivals and public performances. Their enterprise skills are extremely well developed through a strongly focused programme linked to a university. These, and the many other skills they acquire, including exceptional skills in information and communication technology (ICT), and their excellent achievement, mean that pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next phase of their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding and contributes markedly to the excellent progress pupils make. Clear expectations are set and teachers ensure high standards of behaviour. Teachers create a very stimulating environment in their classrooms and vibrant displays create rich learning opportunities. In all classes there is a strong emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills of speaking and listening and improving vocabulary. Teachers are skilful in questioning pupils to ascertain what they know and understand, and then use this information to develop their thinking and learning. Regular opportunities are provided for pupils to discuss their work and ideas with partners or in small groups and to assess their own work. Accordingly, pupils develop confidence to express opinions. The pace of lessons is brisk and tasks are challenging. Interactive whiteboard technology is used very positively in many lessons by involving pupils in their learning and capturing their imagination. Work is usually carefully planned and matched to the abilities of pupils, although in a minority of lessons work presented too high a challenge for a small number of the less able pupils. Excellent systems help teachers to quickly identify and support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities so that they make excellent progress.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The breadth of the curriculum is a particular strength of the school. It is well planned to ensure excellent achievement in the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT. Using pupils' interests and experiences as the starting point, a wealth of additional activities are provided to develop these further. For example, the school makes excellent use of the local environment, including visits to a local park, woods and neighbouring shops. The strong focus on enterprise activities helps pupils develop important life skills and improve their aspirations. Superb international links with a school in South Africa significantly enhance pupils' understanding of their own lives and that of others in different cultures, contributing very well to community cohesion. The provision for promoting pupils' personal, social and emotional development is carefully planned and contributes greatly to their excellent rates of development. Extra-curricular activities enable pupils to taste a wide range of different experiences, for example, in gardening, sport or music. There are specific activities to stretch the gifted and talented pupils. Educational trips to places such as Withernsea and visitors to school enrich and broaden learning significantly.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 1

The school is proud of its inclusive nature and pupils benefit from the excellent quality of care and guidance by all staff and the outstanding management of the inclusion manager. The school has had great success in helping parents to help their children to learn by advising them how to support pupils with activities at home. The school has been very active in encouraging good attendance although adverse weather and sickness have recently had a negative effect. Pupils' safety is given the highest priority and all procedures related to maintaining pupils' safeguarding and child protection meet current requirements. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive excellent support and achieve very well. Overall, provision is well planned, progress is carefully monitored and the skilled team of support staff is appropriately deployed. Excellent arrangements are in place to enable all pupils to make a seamless transition into school. Marking of pupils' work and the assessment of academic progress are rigorous and are used to set targets for pupils or to plan interventions to deal with underachievement. Pupils develop an outstanding understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses and have clear individual targets for improvement.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The dynamic, skilful and focused leadership of the headteacher, very ably supported by the deputy headteacher, has led to rapid and sustained improvement in the school's provision and outcomes for pupils. Challenging targets, based on detailed and meticulous data, have been set for staff and children and these have contributed to outstanding rates of progress. The devolved leadership pattern of curriculum teams, with clearly delineated responsibilities and accountability, has led to outstanding teaching and learning and a vibrant curriculum. All staff have a responsibility for school improvement and they thrive on it. The school knows itself extremely well and areas for further improvement are very clearly delineated in the school development plan. Some of the judgements the school makes about itself are modest, which reflects the very high aspirations the school has on behalf of its pupils. Governors support and challenge the school outstandingly well and their contribution has had an evident impact on school improvement. The school's contribution to community cohesion is well monitored and has had a very positive influence on the school's curriculum. Equality is strongly promoted. Parents are strongly supportive of the work of the school.

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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?	1
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

**Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

**Achievement and standards**

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which 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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

On behalf of the team, thank you so much for making us welcome when we inspected your school. Maltby Craggs Infant School is an outstanding school. The staff care for you extremely well. They help you to enjoy your learning because they make your lessons fun and very effective and they arrange many exciting activities for you to do. They encourage you to know what you need to learn in each lesson.

We were pleased to see that you work very hard and do your best. You care for one another in the playground. We think that you behave extremely well and you look after one another and others less fortunate than yourselves admirably. You are very polite and helpful and we enjoyed talking to you about your school. You told us that you look forward to coming to school because you enjoy your lessons and that you like your teachers. You said you appreciated the activities the school provides for you, such as visits and gardening. We understand why you feel this way. Your parents and carers like the school very much, especially the way in which your teachers care for you and help you to enjoy your learning.

The way your school is led and managed is excellent. Leaders and staff know the school well and their work is making the school become increasingly effective for you. We have asked your teachers to do two things to make your school even better.

- Ensure that the work you do in lessons is matched to your abilities especially for those of you who find their learning hard.
- Improve attendance.

You can help by continuing to do your very best – as I am sure you will – and by attending regularly.