

Wath CofE (A) Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 106932 |
| Local Authority | Rotherham |
| Inspection number | 324489 |
| Inspection dates | 3–4 December 2008 |
| Reporting inspector | Philip Cole |

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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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 227 |
| 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 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr Paul Ryder |
| Headteacher | Mr David Silvester |
| Date of previous school inspection | 5 October 2005 |
| Date of previous funded early education inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Date of previous childcare inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | Barnsley Road Wath-upon-Dearne Rotherham South Yorkshire S63 6PY |
| Telephone number | 01709 760471 |
| Fax number | 01709 760515 |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. Almost all the pupils are White British. None of the pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Most of these pupils have learning or behavioural and emotional difficulties. The school's Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision consists of a Nursery and a Reception class. The school has achieved Healthy Schools, Activemark and a Sustainable Schools' awards

Key for inspection grades

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| 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 is improving. Although pupils' academic achievement is satisfactory, their personal development is good and the care they receive is outstanding. It is a popular school and almost all parents are very happy with its work. They are particularly pleased that their children are happy and enjoy school because of its warm caring ethos. Pupils share these views and feel safe and well cared for. They really appreciate the help teachers give them, especially to understand what they need to do to take the next steps in their learning. They are also pleased that their ideas are listened to and help to make the school better, for example, saving energy and improving the playtime provision.

Everyone gets on together very well and pupils' behaviour is consistently good. They eagerly take on responsibilities, for example, Year 6 pupils enjoy going to the local library with children from Reception so they can read to them. From an early age pupils develop a good understanding of what they need to do to keep fit and healthy and out of harm's way. Although pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, their understanding of life in multicultural Britain and the wider world is limited. Their good personal development provides a strong platform for learning and, together with sound basic skills and a developing understanding of enterprise enables them to face life's future challenges with confidence.

Children enter the EYFS with skills that are below those typical for their age and reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6. Achievement in the school is satisfactory overall. This is because the progress made by pupils varies between each key stage and because too few pupils reach the higher levels expected of them at the end of Years 2 and 6. Progress is consistently good in the EYFS, satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and, until recently, broadly satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Achievement in both Key Stages 1 and 2 is now improving and is clearly satisfactory as indicated by the school's assessment data. Progress has accelerated as a result of the outstanding guidance pupils are now given that enables them to understand the steps they need to take next in their learning and a better curriculum. Learning portfolios are used regularly with pupils to discuss their progress to identify their next steps and to enable their parents to be well informed about and involved in their children's learning. This is having a huge effect on progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are making the same satisfactory but improving progress as other pupils.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Lessons are purposeful, well managed and usually meet the needs of the average and lower attaining pupils well. However, the challenge and pace of lessons does not consistently stretch the higher attaining pupils. The good curriculum is regularly evaluated and fine-tuned to improve pupils' learning. The current focus on improving pupils' skills is boosting progress in science and has already enabled pupils to attain higher standards in writing. Good opportunities to be involved in clubs, community events and enterprise activities enrich pupils' learning. Excellent academic guidance, together with the high levels of care provided by all staff, robust arrangements to safeguard them and the work of learning mentors ensure that pupils are exceptionally well looked after.

Leadership and management are satisfactory and improving as the effectiveness of the recently restructured leadership teams develops. Leaders provide a clear direction and the actions they have taken have led to improvements, for example, in English, where weaknesses were evident. School self-evaluation is sound and strengthening as monitoring systems become more robust but still tends to be overgenerous, particularly when evaluating the effectiveness of teaching

and pupils' achievement. The school provides satisfactory value for money and has a satisfactory capacity to make further improvements.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children achieve well. They enter Nursery with skills below those usually expected for their age and make good progress across the EYFS to meet the goals set nationally at the end of Reception. Provision made for learning is good across the EYFS. Staff plan activities carefully and take full account of children's interests, what parents tell them and what the children need to learn. There is a good balance of learning opportunities, inside and outside, between adult-led activities and those that children choose for themselves. Adults support children's play skilfully by encouraging and extending their learning and they teach the activities they lead well. The resources in the unit are used flexibly to ensure that all the children's needs are being effectively met. Key workers have established good links with parents who feel well informed and are becoming involved in the children's learning, for example, organising and managing book exchanges. Children in the EYFS benefit from the same excellent care found across of the school. Leadership and management are good and have ensured that the requirements of the EYFS have been implemented well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and improve achievement in Key Stage 1 and 2, especially for the pupils capable of reaching the higher levels.
- Ensure that teachers consistently challenge all pupils across the full range of ability in their classes, particularly the higher attaining pupils.
- Ensure that pupils have a better understanding of their place in a multicultural society and of the different ways of life around the world.

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

By the end of Key Stage 1, standards are consistently in line with national averages and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils' progress is satisfactory from levels of attainment which are broadly as expected when they enter Year 1. Until recently, progress in Key Stage 2 has been slower than progress in Key Stage 1, particularly in English and science. Inspection evidence indicates pupils in Key Stage 2 are currently making faster progress and are now achieving satisfactorily. Standards are average overall. Pupils' progress in writing and science has improved because of the schools' focus on developing writing and improving their investigational skills in science. Although a good proportion of pupils reach the average levels in the tests at the end of both Key Stage 1 and 2, too few of the most able pupils reach the higher levels expected of them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils clearly enjoy school because, 'there are so many good things', including lessons, clubs, and the many visits they make. They really appreciate the help they are given by their teachers and their assistants, including the learning mentors, and the care shown by all adults in the school. As a result, they feel safe and secure. They know what they need to eat and the importance of exercise if they are to keep fit and healthy. They enjoy exercise and mostly eat healthily at lunchtimes. Pupils take their responsibilities very seriously, for example, as 'eco-worriers', reducing energy use and heating bills, or as playground leaders. They are keen to help others through their fund-raising activities. They also enjoy participating in church and community events and have a good understanding of their place in the local community but are less clear about life in a diverse, multicultural Britain or of what life is like in the wider world. Pupils' involvement in environmental and enterprise activities and good overall personal development means they are well prepared for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers make clear to pupils what they will be learning and what is expected of them by the end of the lesson. This ensures that lessons are businesslike and purposeful. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and ensure that those who may have problems in this area are successfully involved in learning. Teachers usually cater for the needs of average and below average attaining pupils effectively through their careful explanations and steady pace in lessons. Teachers are less successful in ensuring that higher attaining pupils are consistently challenged by the tasks they are given and the pace of their learning. Variations in the effectiveness of teachers' questioning to encourage pupils to think for themselves also limit the overall impact of teaching on the progress that the most able pupils make in lessons.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school's curriculum has been modified in response to weaknesses identified in pupils' learning. This is ensuring that programmes are better matched to what pupils need to learn in order to improve. Last year's emphasis on developing writing skills paid dividends in raising standards in English and the current focus on investigational skills in science is leading to improved progress in this subject. The school uses visits and visitors very well to stimulate pupils' interests and to promote their learning. A good range of out-of-class time activities, including gardening, art, craft and 'eco' clubs as well as sporting activities enrich and extend pupils' learning experiences. Opportunities to engage in environmental and enterprise activities, supported by local businesses, as well as programmes that help them look after themselves are successfully promoting their personal development and well-being.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding feature of the school because all adults give a high priority to ensuring pupils' welfare and safety. Staff work hard to ensure there are very supportive and caring

relationships. Learning mentors make certain that those pupils who need it are given a good breakfast and collect pupils who would otherwise miss lessons. Robust arrangements are in place to safeguard pupils and ensure their safety and well-being. The school works effectively with parents and external agencies to support vulnerable pupils. Academic guidance is a particular strength. Regular assessments are made in order to keep a close eye on every pupil's progress and to support those who may need extra help. Excellent portfolios give a vivid portrayal of the learning journey of pupils in a format that enables each pupil to see where they have come from and to understand where they need to go next. The portfolios are the basis for regular learning conversations between pupils and teachers and for the dialogue between teachers and parents. They generate meaningful targets for pupils and enable parents to engage in their children's learning. As a result, pupils are developing an excellent understanding of what they need to do to take the next steps in their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, provides a clear direction for the school resulting in rising standards and improving achievement. The school sets itself ambitious targets but does not always achieve them. School self-evaluation is satisfactory and improving but sometimes is overgenerous. This is because more weight has been given to local rather than national comparisons when judging achievement and standards and, although there are regular checks on teaching, the learning outcomes are sometimes judged too positively. The school promotes some aspects of community cohesion effectively, such as pupils' understanding and involvement in the local community but does not yet do enough to help them understand their place in the wider world. The supportive governors are more active in finding out for themselves what the school is like than they were at the time of the last inspection. However, they are still over reliant on the reports they receive and this limits their effectiveness as critical friends to the school.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

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| 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 |

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

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| 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? | 1 |
| How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed? | 2 |

Achievement and standards

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| 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

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|---|---|
| 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 | 2 |

The quality of provision

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| 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? | 2 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 1 |

Leadership and management

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| 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? | 3 |
| 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 Wath C of E (A) Primary School, Rotherham, S63 6PY

Thank you for making the inspectors so welcome when we inspected your school. We enjoyed talking to you about your work and what life is like in school. We judged your school to be satisfactory but improving and it has some good features. You told us about how much you enjoyed your lessons, the other interesting things that you are able to do and of how helpful and kind all the teachers and other adults are. You are extremely well cared for. We agree with you about the excellent portfolios that record what you have learned and that they are used extremely effectively by teachers to help you to understand what you need to do to take the next steps in your learning. Your behaviour is good and you get on well together. You know a lot about your school and the local community. However, we have asked the school to help you to learn more about the different ways of life in Britain and around the world.

The children in Nursery and Reception enjoy good quality provision and make good progress. Those of you in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 attain standards that are in line with the average for schools across the country and you are making satisfactory progress. We have asked the school to make sure that all of you reach higher standards and achieve better but particularly those of you who find learning easier. We did find that the progress you are making is now improving because of the stronger focus that has been placed on helping you to learn important basic skills in writing and science and because of the excellent help that the portfolios provide. In order to ensure that you all achieve as well as you can we have asked the school to make sure that all of you, in every lesson are stretched and challenged to do your very best.

Everyone in school, including governors, the headteacher, deputy headteacher, your teachers and their helpers works hard to do their best for you. Carry on behaving well and trying your best.