

Lydgate Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106999
Local Authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	324506
Inspection dates	14–15 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Terry McDermott

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	5–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	348
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 Simon Jones
Headteacher	Mrs Anne Cockburn
Date of previous school inspection	20 February 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Lydgate Lane Sheffield South Yorkshire S10 5FQ
Telephone number	0114 2662450
Fax number	0114 2678268

Age group	5–7
Inspection dates	14–15 May 2009
Inspection number	324506

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This much larger than average school serves an area of mixed social and economic circumstances to the west of Sheffield city centre. It has Early Years Foundation Stage provision for four Reception classes. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average but rising. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is below average. The proportions of pupils from a minority ethnic background or who speak English as an additional language, are broadly average, but rising. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average, but rising. Children start in Reception from at least 15 different pre-school settings. The school holds many awards including Activemark and the Healthy Schools Award.

There is a pre-school and after-school club on-site which are run by private providers. These were inspected at the same time as the school. A separate inspection report for this provision is available on the Ofsted website.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. It has outstanding features in the support and guidance it provides to ensure that pupils get off to a flying start in their personal development. Many parents note this and typically comment, 'My child took a little while to settle in, but the school dealt with this really well and my child received excellent care' and 'Children with special needs are included and cared for exceptionally well.'

When children enter the Reception classes, their skills and understanding are broadly typical for 4 and 5-year-olds, but there can be wide variations within cohorts and levels on entry are falling. Although outdoor facilities are not as good as indoor facilities in the Early Years Foundation Stage, overall provision is good throughout the school and pupils make good progress. By the time they leave at the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are consistently above the national average. They have been at this level for more than five years.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are excellent, because of the very strong focus throughout the school in supporting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils enjoy everything the school has to offer as shown by their excellent attendance. Pupils from many different national backgrounds are warmly welcomed and very quickly become part of the school.

Teaching and learning are good overall. The large majority of lessons quickly involve pupils in tasks which require them to think for themselves and then share what they have learned with their peers. Skills learned in other subjects are pulled together and applied in problem-solving activities based on a simple theme. In these lessons, pupils like taking control of their own learning and make rapid progress. In some other lessons, learning lacks pace when teachers spend too long explaining what the pupils are going to do, instead of letting them get on with it.

The curriculum is good. It is under review to ensure that it continues to meet the different needs of a changing school population. The 'Food for Life' initiative, and close links with outside agencies such as 'Water Aid', are increasingly helping teachers to link subjects together so that pupils can see the relevance of learning, and also promotes community cohesion at a global level. A wide range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors are memorable for pupils and enrich their learning experiences well.

Care, guidance and support are excellent. Staff know the pupils very well and have close links with their parents. Dedicated and experienced adults have high standards and role model their expectations clearly to pupils. Pupils say they know they can always speak to an adult in time of need. There is a clear sense of trust and confidence. The school's systems for measuring and tracking pupils' personal and academic progress are accurate, reliable and understood well by adults. They ensure that any underachievement is quickly identified and addressed.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and the senior leadership team set a clear steer for continuous improvement to the working of the school. Recent changes to the curriculum and to middle leadership have yet to show their full impact on standards. Middle leaders are beginning to take more responsibility for the quality of learning in their areas. Areas specified for improvement at the previous inspection have been successfully tackled. The school has good capacity for improvement, because it has succeeded in maintaining standards at the end of Year 2, even though attainment is lower on entry to the school.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress during their time in the Reception classes, because teaching is good and meets their individual learning needs well. Most leave Reception class with skills and understanding that are broadly typical for children of their age. There are effective links with parents/carers and several say they feel involved in their children's education, and that they are well informed about their child's progress. The planning of teaching is detailed and shared between all staff. It is based on accurate observations of what children have learned. There is a clear focus on helping all children to make good progress in their personal development and their learning. In lessons, children enjoy practical activities, such as using magnifying glasses to help them with attempting to count the legs on millipedes. Their behaviour is well managed and allows them to play and learn well, either on their own or with others. They take responsibility for choosing their own activities and have good relationships with adults and other children. Leadership and management are good. Strengths and areas for development are well known because weekly planning meetings and focus group work increase adults' knowledge about children's learning needs. There is a good team spirit across the four Reception classes and the provision runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Despite the school's efforts to improve the quality and effectiveness of the outdoor provision, this does not yet meet children's learning needs well enough because they do not have access to the space consistently enough throughout the day.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the consistency of teaching so that more lessons are of a good or better quality and help pupils to make even better progress.
- Ensure that the quality of outdoor provision available for the Reception classes equates more closely to that provided indoors.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress during their three years in school, so that by the end of Year 2 standards in reading, writing and mathematics are generally above average. All pupils make good progress because provision in Reception classes is good. It is sustained through Year 1 and Year 2 because teachers use their detailed knowledge of individual pupils to ensure that any underachievement is quickly identified. Short-term targets are accurately set and any signs of underachievement are robustly addressed, consequently no group of pupils underachieve. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because they are supported well by experienced and dedicated staff. Pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language receive skilful help to enable them to join in activities fully and to make good progress. Currently pupils are set to leave school at the end of Year 2, with standards that are above average in reading, writing, and mathematics.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils have an excellent awareness of how to live healthily and show an excellent understanding of how the way they live can affect the world they inhabit. They enjoy the many opportunities for physical exercise. Attendance is excellent. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural

development is outstanding. Pupils really enjoy school. They say they feel safe and that any bullying is dealt with quickly. Their understanding of adopting safe practices is excellent.

Pupils from different backgrounds get on well and respect each other. The behaviour of the vast majority of pupils is excellent, though in less challenging lessons some pupils can become restless and disengaged with learning. Assemblies are used well to enable pupils to reflect on their own and other people's experiences. Pupils have a keen sense of right and wrong. They develop confidence and self-esteem because their different achievements are valued, celebrated and rewarded. The school council members are proud of the part they played in persuading the headteacher to purchase colourful plates and bowls for the dining room. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider community by taking on responsibilities, such as stair monitors and through fundraising activities. Pupils make good progress in developing important basic skills to help them prepare for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good, but there are some inconsistencies in the rate at which pupils learn. All lessons are characterised by excellent relationships between pupils and adults, and pupils' good behaviour and attitudes to learning. The very best lessons are dynamic experiences for pupils. They move forward at pace, challenging pupils to work independently without direct supervision. In these lessons, tasks set by the teacher often link several different subjects together. Because pupils know they might be required to share how they work things out with their peers, they pay close attention to instructions and make serious intellectual efforts to work knotty problems through by themselves. In these lessons learning is rapid and pupils make outstanding progress. In the relatively weaker lessons, pupils spend too much time listening to overly detailed instructions. Opportunities to get involved and participate in practical learning are missed, learning is restricted and progress inevitably slows.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is well planned and increasingly creative. Cross-curricular activities enhance pupils' learning and make links between subjects. For example, in a dance lesson, pupils created movements and sequences to portray the life cycle of a butterfly observed and learned in science. Displays around the school reflect the many exciting activities that make learning fun. The curriculum makes an excellent contribution to pupils' awareness of adopting healthy lifestyles. For example, through the 'Food for Life' initiative pupils are taught about food sources, food production, food preparation and cooking skills. The social and emotional aspects of learning successfully incorporated in the curriculum through the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) programme make a significant impact on pupils' attitudes to learning, their relationships and their behaviour around the school. Special theme days, theme weeks, such as the annual International Week, and even a year long celebration of the school's centenary, help to nurture a sense of the world as a community. A good range of visitors to the school, educational outings and extra-curricular activities enhance and enrich the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

This is a very caring school that provides its pupils with excellent guidance and support. Child protection, health and safety procedures and systems for safeguarding pupils meet current government requirements. Pupils know that if they are unhappy, there is always someone to turn to. Pupils say, 'If anything troubles us we can always go to a teacher or other adult and they will sort out the problem.' The vast majority of parents are very appreciative of the excellent support and care provided by all staff. Good links with outside professional and other agencies enable the school to access further support if required. Procedures to identify and support pupils at risk of underachievement, those who speak English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very effective. Pupils are set challenging targets to help steer their learning. Teachers mark work well. They indicate what pupils should do next to improve, as well as acknowledging what they have achieved.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The clear leadership of the headteacher is well supported by the knowledgeable leadership group. There is a keen sense of team working throughout the school and staff morale is high. Recent changes now make middle leaders accountable for checking on the quality of learning in lessons, but this has only recently become systematic. It has yet to show its full impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning. School self-evaluation is largely accurate, if a little modest, because the school is realistic about its strengths and areas for improvement. The school pays close attention to ensuring that all forms of inequality are addressed rigorously and that diversity is recognised and celebrated. Its contribution towards promoting community cohesion is good. Governance is good: members of the governing body support the work of the school by attachments to classes and ask straightforward questions, which challenge the school about the achievement and standards of pupils. The school has addressed the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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?	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	2
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?	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	1
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

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?	1

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	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for being so nice and helpful to us when we inspected your school. We were really impressed with your good manners in the dining room and the way you help each other to work things out in lessons.

We found that Lydgate is a good school. It is very strong in the way it gives you excellent support, which helps you to develop really quickly into happy and confident young people.

We also found that under the good leadership of your headteacher, the teachers help you to move forward well in your learning about reading, writing, mathematics, science and all the other subjects you study.

However, the school could do some things better, which would help you to make even more progress than you do now. So we want the school to do the following things:

- make sure that more lessons are as exciting as the best ones we saw during the inspection
- make the outdoor area for learning for the Reception classes as good as the indoor area.

Please continue to be the happy young people you already are, and may we wish you all good luck for the future.