

# Norton Free Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107106
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sheffield
<b>Inspection number</b>	324528
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 May 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.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	211
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 Ian Auckland
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr R Barron
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 June 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>	Matthews Lane Norton Sheffield South Yorkshire S8 8JS

<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 May 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	324528

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**Age group** 4–11

**Inspection dates** 5–6 May 2009

**Inspection number** 324528

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is an average sized primary school. The school serves an area of social advantage, however, pupils come from a range of social backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average and the proportion with a statement of special educational need is average. The school has the Healthy Schools award. Fewer children leave or join the school during the school year than is usual. Children enter the Reception class in the Early Years Foundation Stage in the autumn and spring terms. There is a separate out-of-school provision on site, which is privately managed and was not inspected as part of this inspection.

## 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 where pupils are well cared for and where their personal development is good. Standards are broadly average and pupils make satisfactory progress. Recent initiatives in developing writing and using data to inform planning and improve learning are beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' progress. Nevertheless, application of these strategies remains inconsistent across school. Pupils enjoy especially the good range of activities, which enrich their learning. The overwhelming majority of parents support the work of the school. As parents say, 'Children enjoy school because the teachers are kind. It is a very welcoming school with a friendly safe environment'. Children enter school with skills which are in line with national expectations for their age. Test results at the end of Year 6 are typically broadly in line with national averages and represent satisfactory progress for pupils. Evidence seen during the inspection indicates that pupils currently in Year 6 are in a good position to achieve targets which have been adjusted to be more challenging.

Satisfactory teaching makes clear to pupils what they will learn, although teachers do not always check closely enough that pupils have succeeded in their work. Increasing use of targets and some good marking allow pupils to know what they need to do to improve their work; this is beginning to improve achievement, especially in Year 6. However, not all pupils know their targets or how to take the next steps in their learning. Pupils are engaged in a range of activities, but not all activities are well matched to the pupils' age and ability. Occasionally, teachers miss opportunities to allow pupils to learn together. Strengths in learning are the ways in which pupils focus on independent tasks and take pride in their work, and the way teachers increasingly encourage pupils to develop their writing skills in subjects other than English.

Good relationships and sensitive support from a caring staff promote pupils' good personal development. Pupils know there is always someone to turn to, if they need help. Attendance is good. Pupils' behaviour is good, especially when they are actively involved in their learning and this contributes to their enjoyment of school. Pupils take on responsibilities readily, for example, as school council members or playground helpers. Pupils develop a good understanding of how to keep healthy and stay fit, as the school strongly promotes these areas of learning. Pupils' average standards and the school's strong focus on pupils' personal development, and on enhancing their skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), gives pupils a satisfactory preparation for their future economic well-being. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is based on the school's Christian teachings and a clear understanding of faiths and cultures other than their own.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a satisfactory understanding of the school and what needs to be done to improve it further. However, strategies for improvement are applied inconsistently across the school and therefore their impact is weakened. A growing understanding of what represents national expectations in the standards achieved by pupils is having an impact on the progress of the current Year 6. Governance is good, because governors support the school well and have clear plans for its future development. Based on the improvements made since the last inspection and a developing focus on initiatives to raise achievement, the school has satisfactory capacity to improve.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory and improving. Children enter Reception with skills in line with national expectations for their age. They make satisfactory progress and enter Key Stage 1 with average skills. They make good progress in their personal development, but progress in reading and writing is less rapid. The school identified this and there is now a strong emphasis on teaching letters and sounds. However, opportunities to develop children's early writing skills are missed.

Children enjoy good relationships with adults and with each other. Effective procedures are in place to prepare children for their entry to Reception. This ensures they settle quickly. Children behave and cooperate well in a safe, secure and supportive learning environment, which promotes their welfare effectively and meets government requirements. Teachers are well supported by the teaching assistants and everyone is committed to continuing the recent improvement in provision. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The tracking of children's progress has improved, so that adults have a clear understanding of children's learning needs and planning is increasingly well focused to meet them. Recent improvements to the learning environment have allowed a greater balance of activities between those directed by teachers and those selected by the children. Now, children access a wide range of learning experiences, for example, the jungle activities they enjoy in outdoor play and making a healthy 'Jungle Juice'. The positive views of parents are evident in comments such as 'My child really enjoys school. She likes the teachers and teaching assistants and has made good friends. She enjoys learning and is encouraged to do this both at school and at home.'

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the school's best practice in matching tasks and activities to pupils' needs is consistently applied in all classes.
- Ensure that pupils always know clearly what they need to do to take the next steps in learning.

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

The standards reached by pupils are broadly average and achievement is satisfactory. From starting points that are in line with the expectations for their age, children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and also in Years 1 and 2 so that, by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils achieve standards which are typically in line with the national average. Test results in 2008 for seven-year-olds and unvalidated test results for 11-year-olds showed that standards were average. This represents satisfactory progress for these pupils. Data held by the school indicate that the current Year 6 pupils are working towards achieving more challenging targets set for them in English, mathematics and science. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress as a result of very effective interventions to meet their needs.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are encouraged to think deeply about spiritual and moral issues, so that they are polite, helpful and support one another. Pupils feel safe and well cared for. They speak of their school with loyalty and pride and this is reflected in above average attendance. They enjoy school and their behaviour is good around school and in lessons, especially when they are actively involved in their learning. The Healthy Schools award shows pupils' good awareness of the need to eat healthily and to exercise regularly. Pupils make a significant contribution to the school community through the school council. They have a high profile in the local community through annual performances and links with the church. Recently, pupils organised a charity 'fun run' to raise funds for those less fortunate than themselves. Their enterprise skills are developed well through this work. These and the other skills they acquire, allied to average standards, mean that pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the next phase of their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

In the school's best lessons, teachers encourage positive relationships, pupils behave and listen well and they focus strongly on their work, in which they take great pride. Teachers plan lessons that have a brisk pace and a range of interesting activities, so that pupils make rapid progress. In these lessons, pupils enjoy hands-on learning experiences, for example, researching Tudor monarchs on the internet or practising their German language skills by buying fruit in a market. Teachers use questions well to ascertain what pupils have learned and to extend their thinking. In less successful, though nonetheless satisfactory lessons, work is not always well matched to meet the needs of pupils, particularly the most able, and there is insufficient challenge. This means that pupils occasionally become restless and make satisfactory, rather than good, progress. Sometimes, teachers miss opportunities to allow pupils to discuss ideas with 'talk partners' or in groups and so miss the benefit they could gain from using pupils' skills and confidence in speaking. Teachers do not always assess closely enough that pupils have understood the work they are doing, resulting in their progress being impeded. Teaching assistants support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities well and this contributes to the good progress they make. Occasionally, this support is used less well when pupils are listening to the teacher.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

There is a strong focus on the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, including the recent introduction of letters and sounds to develop reading in Key Stage 1, although this has not yet had an impact on standards in reading. Topic work in history and geography fosters an enjoyment of work in the humanities and increasingly teachers are creating opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in subjects other than English. However, this is not yet embedded across the school and has yet to impact on standards in writing. The provision for ICT is satisfactory. The school is beginning to incorporate ICT more fully in subjects across the curriculum. Provision for religious education is strong and includes promoting an understanding of faiths and cultures other than Christianity. Links with a nearby school, which has an ethnically diverse population, contribute strongly to Norton Free School's good provision for community cohesion. Pupils enjoy the opportunities provided to learn German and lessons in physical

education and art lead to good achievement in those areas. A good programme of enrichment activities, including trips to the Bishop's House to study Tudor history and to an environmental centre, promotes pupils' enjoyment in learning. A diverse programme of extra-curricular activities, including the school musical and a range of sporting activities delivered by outside agencies, is enjoyed by many pupils.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils benefit from the good quality care and guidance provided by all the staff. Pupils' safety is given the highest priority and all procedures related to safeguarding and child protection meet current requirements. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support in school, which is enhanced by effective links with parents and outside agencies. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well planned and their progress is monitored carefully, resulting in these pupils making good progress. Improved transition arrangements are in place, so that pupils are increasingly well prepared for their move to a variety of secondary schools. Assessment of academic progress is satisfactory and improving. The quality of marking, although often good, is inconsistent across school, as is the quality of the targets set for individual pupils. As a result, pupils are not sufficiently clear about how to improve their work or how to take the next steps in their learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The experienced and well-respected headteacher has created a positive and caring environment, in accordance with the school's Christian teachings. Well-supported by the deputy headteacher, he has tackled the areas for improvement from the last inspection and is determined to raise standards. Initiatives have been introduced in the use of data to support planning and to help pupils see how to improve their work, along with changes in the curriculum to promote writing. While there is evidence that these initiatives are having an effect in some classes, they are not yet applied consistently across the school and have yet to impact on standards. The headteacher's commitment to shared leadership has given accountability to all leaders and they are beginning to focus initiatives more clearly on raising standards. The school's self-evaluation and its setting of challenging targets are satisfactory. Recent improvements in this area of the school's work have rectified earlier shortcomings and are now enabling pupils to make improved progress. The school improvement plan includes appropriate strategies that reflect the commitment to further improvement. The school's promotion of community cohesion is good. There is a clear policy and strategies to monitor the initiatives that have been implemented. Governance is good. Governors support the school well, have a clear view of what the school needs to do to improve and have recently presented more challenge to the school in order to raise standards. The overwhelming majority of parents supports the school and the way it cares for their children and helps them to enjoy their learning.



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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

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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	2

<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>	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	2
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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?	2

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	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**

Inspection of Norton Free Church of England Primary School, Sheffield,

S8 8JS

On behalf of the team, thank you so much for making us welcome when we inspected your school. Norton Free Church of England Primary School is a satisfactory school. The staff care for you very well. They help you to enjoy your learning because they try to make your lessons fun and effective, although sometimes opportunities are missed to allow you to work with your friends. The staff encourage you to know what you need to learn in each lesson, however, not all of you know your targets or how to take the next steps in your learning.

The team was impressed by the pride you take in your work. You behave well, despite some of you becoming restless in some lessons, and you look after one another admirably. You are 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 appreciate the activities the school provides for you, such as visits and sports activities. 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 satisfactory. Leaders and staff know what needs to be done to make the school better and their work is making the school gradually become more effective for you. I have asked your teachers to do two things to make your school even better.

- Make sure that more lessons are as good as the best, with teachers matching tasks and activities to your needs consistently in all classes.
- Make sure that you know clearly what you need to do to take the next steps in learning.

You can help by continuing to do your very best, as I am sure you will, and by continuing to attend regularly. Thank you for all your help and I wish you every success in all you do in the future.