

Heaton Avenue First and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107668
Local Authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	324617
Inspection dates	15–16 October 2008
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	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	219
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 V White
Headteacher	Mrs M Lee
Date of previous school inspection	16 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Westcliffe Road Cleckheaton West Yorkshire BD19 3EP

Age group	3–9
Inspection dates	15–16 October 2008
Inspection number	324617

Telephone number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This smaller than average school serves a mixed catchment area of Cleckheaton. Pupils leave school at the end of Year 4. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals and the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are below average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need is well below average, though the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average. The school has an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The school holds the Healthy Schools Award, Activemark and the Investors in Pupils Award. All classes have pupils from mixed-age groups.

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. Every aspect of its work has significant strengths, and these lead directly to the excellent progress pupils make in the time they spend here. The views expressed by three parents encapsulated the views of many: 'My son has made phenomenal progress'; 'I am truly impressed'; 'Overall a fantastic school.' The school gives excellent value for money. Areas requiring improvement are trivial because the school identifies them quickly and eliminates them rapidly.

Pupils' personal development and well-being is outstanding because the school sets very high standards for personal respect and understanding from the very beginning. The solid foundations laid in the EYFS continue throughout the school. Pupils show their understanding through their excellent behaviour around the school, through their appreciation of others, their patience, and their tolerance. Pupils say they love coming to school, because, 'Everyone has a friend here.' Their outstanding rate of attendance confirms this. They find learning interesting and exciting. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and understanding are excellent.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Lessons are enticing and exhilarating, and regularly demand that pupils think for themselves. Well thought out tasks challenge pupils of all abilities to find solutions to problems at the very limits of what they know and can do. Expectations are high, the pace of learning is rapid and consistent from lesson to lesson, and progress is fast. Consequently, standards are high and achievement is outstanding.

The curriculum is innovative, well thought through, and its effects on pupils' learning are remarkable. Traditional subjects are skilfully woven together with the core skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). This is now being extended by focusing on developing the key skills of problem solving; working together; communication; being confident with numbers; using ICT; and evaluating and improving their own performances. Pupils' thirst for learning grows as they move through the school. Their self-confidence and self-esteem rise quickly.

The school takes all aspects of safeguarding very seriously, and meets current requirements. Staff know pupils well, and close links with parents ensure that any personal issues are dealt with quickly and sensitively. Assessment systems are rigorous, reliable and well understood by staff, parents and pupils. The information they provide informs the challenging targets set for individual pupils. Pupils are proud when they achieve a target, as confirmed by a pupil in Year 2 who said, 'I got my last week's target for spelling, so I can have another one this Friday.'

Leadership and management are outstanding. A well balanced leadership group with a full range of complementary strengths is driving the school forward under the expert leadership of the experienced headteacher. The school is very self-critical, and keeps a close eye on the progress being made by every pupil. Its evaluations are accurate, and this allows it to intervene quickly and effectively in response to any arising issues, however minor. It has an outstanding capacity to secure further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

When children start the EYFS, their knowledge and skills are broadly at the level expected for their age, though there can be significant variations from year to year. By the time they join Year 1, many are well beyond the nationally expected levels. This is because outstanding

teaching and a vibrant curriculum help them to develop personally and socially very quickly. They make excellent progress.

The well established system of home visits before children start in the Nursery eases the transition from home to school, and children settle in quickly. They thrive in the welcoming and exciting atmosphere. Relationships are excellent as children play and learn together. They show independence and are confident to explain what they are doing, as they work happily in a safe, caring and stimulating environment both indoors and outside. Adults continuously and efficiently track and measure what children know and can do. The information is regularly presented to parents in an individual 'Profile of Achievement' recording photographically and in writing, both by teacher and child, the progress the child is making. Parents say they value and treasure this record. The information is used outstandingly well by teachers to plan tasks and activities which are well matched to each child's particular strengths and weaknesses. This ensures that the specific needs of all children are met well, and that no child underachieves.

Leadership and management of the EYFS are excellent. The strong emphasis on the personal and academic development of the individual child is underpinned by rigorous arrangement for ensuring the welfare of all children.

What the school should do to improve further

This high performing school knows itself extremely well. The very few minor issues identified by inspectors are already acknowledged, and being rapidly addressed, through the school's development planning process.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Standards are high. Achievement is outstanding. Children enter the EYFS with skills and understanding that are broadly typical for children of their age. Because provision in the EYFS is outstanding, they get off to a flying start and make very rapid progress in all aspects of their development. This progress continues through Years 1 and 2. In 2007, pupils' standards at age 6 were above average. Since this group of pupils had below average starting points, this shows outstanding progress. Inspection evidence shows that standards at age 6 in 2008 were much higher than in 2007, and that standards continue to remain at high levels in Years 3 and 4. Inspection evidence further shows that a significant number of pupils who left school aged 9 at the end of Year 4 in 2008 had reached standards normally reached by 11-year-olds in English and mathematics. No group of pupils underachieves.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual moral social and cultural development is outstanding. Their behaviour is exemplary. They have positive attitudes to learning and to each other. They fully understand the value of keeping a healthy diet and taking regular exercise. Each day, pupils are involved in 'Wake up and Shake up' sessions where they engage in rapidly changing and energetic exercise which not only promotes good health, but also sharpens up their concentration. Pupils report that they feel valued and cared for, a view confirmed by their parents. They say that the very few incidents of bullying are minor, and dealt with firmly and fairly. They take on responsibility, and can be trusted to complete appropriate tasks without direct supervision. Members of the democratically elected and active school council were very proud and excited

to explain their role in the interview process for a new member of staff. Pupils make a strong contribution to the wider community through their support for various charities. They talk with confidence about different cultures around the world, and are developing links with schools in Tanzania. Because their personal and academic standards are high, pupils are well placed to take full advantage of the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

In all classes, relationships between adults and pupils are excellent, pupils behave impeccably and they have first-rate attitudes to learning. Lessons are well planned with clear indications for pupils outlining what they are going to learn. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge, and use this innovatively to ensure that lessons are enjoyable and stimulating. They probe pupils' levels of understanding with questions that always seek an explanation. Classroom assistants give expert support to those pupils who might require additional help to improve their understanding. In almost all lessons pupils are expected to work independently and think for themselves. In these lessons the pace of work does not slacken, and challenge is relentless. The rate of learning is high. Teachers make full use of detailed and reliable assessment information to provide tasks suited to the full range of pupils' different abilities and ways of learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The outstanding curriculum motivates pupils exceedingly well. It successfully promotes a widespread enjoyment of learning. A strong focus on using well founded enquiry and investigation skills helps pupils to make very rapid progress in a wide range of subjects. Links between subjects are very successfully exploited by skilful teachers, and this enables pupils to see a purpose in their work. The school seeks continuously to make its curriculum ever more interesting and accessible to pupils of all abilities, thus ensuring very rapid progress in each year. An excellent range of visits and visitors, after-school clubs and strong links with parents and outside organisations enrich pupils' experiences and bring learning to life.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Parents and pupils are very appreciative of the excellent personal care the school gives. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust and meet current requirements. The school pays due attention to health and safety procedures and risk assessments, which are regularly evaluated. The school has outstanding links with partner schools, and aspects of its work are role models for other schools within and outside its own area. A rigorous and regularly updated assessment system tracks the progress pupils are making closely. Teachers make maximum use of the information provided to ensure that all pupils receive the right level of support and guidance to reach the challenging targets set for them. Very close and productive links with parents support the very effective use of information gathered through accurate assessments of pupils' work. Outside professional agencies are used without hesitation to support those pupils who require extra help.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The considerable expertise and experience of the headteacher and the deputy headteacher is used outstandingly well to maintain the very clear drive towards fulfilling the school's motto: 'Inspire, Create, Enjoy'. A strong team spirit and very high staff morale have created an open and supportive environment where teachers can be innovative in accelerating pupils' learning.

The school evaluates its overall performance rigorously and objectively. All staff are fully involved in monitoring and evaluating the quality of their work through peer assessment and embedded performance management systems. Leaders at all levels carry out a regular and frequent cycle of detailed evaluations, down to the level of the individual pupil. This allows the school to set challenging individual targets based on need, and which ensure that no pupil underachieves. Pupils from Year 1 onwards speak with enthusiasm about their targets, which are set well above age-related expectations, and often exceeded. The school's provision for community cohesion is outstanding. It reflects several years' development in ensuring that all pupils who pass through the school have awareness of and respect for the different cultures and traditions of others in different parts of the world.

Governance is outstanding. Governors understand and take their responsibilities very seriously. They give very generously of their time in supporting the work of the school. They challenge the performance of the school at all levels, and are fully conversant with the many strengths and very few minor areas for development the school has.

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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 ¹ reached by learners	1
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

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	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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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**

Inspection of Heaton Avenue First and Nursery School, Cleckheaton,
BD19 3EP

Thank you for the very friendly welcome you gave my colleague and I when we inspected your school recently. We were very impressed with how well you all get on together and how polite and friendly you are.

Heaton Avenue is an outstanding school. Everything it does is aimed at helping you to make the very best progress you can. Because you reach high standards in what you know and can do very quickly, it is clearly doing these things exceedingly well.

We found the following things to be especially good.

- The Foundation Unit is a outstanding and gives a flying start to your learning, and sets the standard for how well you behave, and work hard and apply yourselves in lessons.
- The high quality of teaching expects you to think for yourselves, and sets work which inspires you to learn as well as you can.
- What you learn about in lessons is interesting and exciting, sparks your curiosity and enjoyment of learning, and gives you an excellent understanding of the world in which you live.
- The excellent leadership of the school ensures that everybody, including you, understands how they can help you to get better, quicker.
- The outstanding care and guidance given to you helps you develop rapidly and safely into responsible, hard-working, young people.

All of you can help the school to keep up these high standards by continuing to come to school often as you already do. May I wish you all good luck for the future.