

Linthwaite Clough Junior Infant and Early Years School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107693
Local Authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	324626
Inspection date	2 October 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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	296
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	36
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jane Sykes
Headteacher	G Newton
Date of previous school inspection	19 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Chapel Hill Linthwaite Huddersfield West Yorkshire HD7 5NJ

Age group	3–11
Inspection date	2 October 2008
Inspection number	324626

Telephone number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards, progress across the school and teaching and learning. Evidence was gathered from national published data, the school's own assessment and evaluation records, observations of lessons, pupils' completed work and interviews with staff, two governors and pupils. The views of parents were also taken into account through the parents' questionnaire. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were justified. Such assessments have been included, where appropriate, in this report.

Description of the school

This is an average sized school serving the village of Linthwaite, which is in the Colne Valley close to Huddersfield. The school has provision for Nursery and Reception age children in its Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) unit. Nearly all the pupils are White British and none of the pupils from other backgrounds speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is in line with the average. The school has achieved Activemark Gold and Healthy Schools Gold awards. The headteacher is seconded to the local authority for three days each week to promote best practice in the EYFS. The deputy headteacher takes on the responsibilities of the headteacher on these days.

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 that enjoys an excellent reputation locally. 'All in all a fantastic school, my kids love it!' sums up the views of parents. Parents are right when they say that their children thrive because of excellent teaching, high levels of care and the exciting opportunities they have for learning. Most of all, the school's particular ethos very successfully promotes independence, self-confidence and respect for others. This strong ethos gets children off to a flying start in the EYFS and permeates through both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Pupils bubble over with enthusiasm when they talk about the school's special activities designed to make learning even more exciting (Confident Creative Learning - CCL) and the many clubs and visits they enjoy. They feel safe and secure and appreciate that the school takes on board the ideas they suggest through the 'ACC' (All Children Count, school council). Pupils are particularly proud of the 'Chill Out Room' and the activities they organise, such as the talent show that raises money for charity.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent and everyone gets on exceptionally well together. Pupils relish the many opportunities they have to work responsibly on tasks together. They have a good understanding of what they need to do to keep fit, healthy and out of harm's way. Pupils love physical education lessons. Attendance at the many sports based clubs is high and they mostly make sensible choices with what they eat. They are actively involved with the local community, for example, performing in a local home for senior citizens. Pupils have a good understanding of different cultures and ways of life through their visits to a linked school in the local authority, theme days and visits to different places of worship. Pupils' outstanding personal development provides a very secure platform for their learning and together with excellent basic skills ensures they are exceptionally well placed to face life's future challenges.

Children come into the EYFS with attainment below what is usually expected for their age. The standards reached by pupils when they leave the school at the end of Year 6 have risen strongly over several years from in line with the average to significantly above it in English, mathematics and science in 2007. Although provisional results show that standards dipped in 2008, they remained above average and the pupils made strong progress given their lower than usual starting points. Pupils exceeded the challenging targets that were set for them. The school's own assessments indicate that pupils are on track to achieve high standards in the future. Pupils who find learning difficult are given excellent support and make consistently good progress against their individual targets and often achieve exceptionally well in the national tests. Overall, achievement is excellent, with pupils in each key stage building very effectively on what they have achieved in the previous one.

Excellent teaching, together with outstanding guidance and support for their learning and an exciting curriculum, ensures that pupils make first-rate progress as they move through the school. Lessons always have a clear purpose that is shared with pupils and very successfully focuses their efforts. Great care is taken to ensure that work is closely matched to the needs of the different groups in each class. A particular strength of teaching and of the care of pupils is the excellent guidance they are given to improve their work and to take the next steps in their learning. Marking is thorough and regular, providing pupils with clear guidance on what they can do to make their work better. Every pupil has interviews each term to discuss their work in English and mathematics, and their personal development. Together with information from the rigorous tracking of their progress, these generate targets for improvement that are agreed with pupils and shared with their parents. This provision is very effective in helping

pupils take responsibility for their own learning. The school's imaginative curriculum is exceptionally effective in stimulating learning and in promoting personal qualities such as making the right choices, being responsible and working effectively, both independently and with others. The main vehicle for this is CCL. This provides pupils, for three sessions each week, with a menu of well-structured and purposeful activities from which they can choose. These promote impressive standards across the curriculum and provide pupils with many opportunities to work cooperatively and creatively together across the school. The school appears in national publications on curriculum innovation, which bears testimony to the effectiveness of this approach.

The headteacher is extremely well supported by the deputy headteacher, who successfully maintains excellent leadership and management while the headteacher is working for the local authority. The leadership team is extremely effective and fully involved in monitoring and evaluating the school's performance and in planning and implementing improvements. The school's monitoring of its performance is very thorough and accurate although, on occasion, its evaluations are too modest. All practitioners in the school are committed to its unique philosophy and play their full part in contributing to its success. The governors are equally enthusiastic and effective. They actively monitor the work of the school and are often involved in implementing developments to make it even better. Good progress has been made since the school's last inspection and the excellent strength in depth of leadership and management results in it being exceptionally well placed to build on its successes in the future.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children make excellent progress from starting points below the levels expected for their age to reach attainment that, overall, is above average by the end of Reception. The outstanding promotion of the children's personal, social and emotional development provides an excellent platform for their future learning. Children work and play together extremely well. They are very eager to learn, show great curiosity, sustain tasks well and relate confidently to the practitioners who they clearly love and trust. Practitioners take full account of what parents tell them and use this information together with their own rigorous assessments to plan for individuals and groups of children. Planning is excellent and leads to extremely well-focused, challenging and purposeful activities, whether they are adult led and/or ones that children choose. Leadership and management of the EYFS are excellent. All learning opportunities are very well resourced and adult-led activities are taught with great skill, which often results in very effective learning taking place in two or three areas of the curriculum. Practitioners ensure that children benefit fully from activities they choose for themselves by sensitively supporting and encouraging their play. Arrangements for new starters are exemplary and based on a close working relationship with private providers and parents. Any potential problems concerning transfer into Key Stage 1 are minimized easily because children from EYFS learn regularly with pupils from Years 1 and 2 during the CCL sessions.

What the school should do to improve further

- The school has a clear understanding, as expressed in its development plan, of what needs to be done to make further improvement.

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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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
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 Linthwaite Clough Junior Infant and Early Years School, Huddersfield, HD7 5NJ

Thank you for making me so welcome when I came to inspect your outstanding school. I really enjoyed talking to some of you in lessons about your work and with members of the ACC about what makes your school so special. You were so enthusiastic about everything in school, particularly CCL, your visits, clubs and what you have done to make the school better. The 'Chill Out Room' is certainly a hit!

I think that you have a good understanding of the importance of exercise, of healthy eating and of what you need to do to keep safe. You all get on extremely well together and your behaviour is excellent. I was particularly impressed with how sensible and responsible you are when you work on creative and confidence building tasks, whether you are doing this on your own or with friends.

You all work very hard and make impressive progress. This is because your teachers are excellent at what they do and you are given lots of interesting opportunities to learn. Your teachers and their helpers make your lessons fun, give you work that is very well matched to your needs but most of all give you lots of guidance on how you can improve. You told me how useful you found the comments that teachers made in your books, the interviews you have with them each term and the targets that result from these.

A major reason why your school is outstanding is the excellent work of the headteacher and deputy headteacher, staff and governors. They all share the desire to make your school an exciting place for learning where you all do your very best. It is no surprise that your parents are so pleased that you come to this school.