

Slaithwaite Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior and Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107711
Local Authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	324630
Inspection date	20 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Fiona Gowers

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	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	137
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	Mrs Ros Batley
Headteacher	Mrs Elaine Bradley
Date of previous school inspection	3 July 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Holme Lane Slaithwaite Huddersfield West Yorkshire HD7 5UG
Telephone number	01484 222586

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	20 January 2009
Inspection number	324630

Fax number

01484 222586

Age group	4-11
Inspection date	20 January 2009
Inspection number	324630

© 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 two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated in detail the following issues: achievement and standards; the level of challenge provided by the teaching and learning; the improvements made since the last inspection and the capacity of the school to improve further. Evidence was gathered from the school's own self-evaluation; published national assessment data and the school's own assessment records, policies and minutes; observation of the school at work; interviews with members of staff, pupils and governors and analysis of parents' questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average village Church of England primary school. The proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal is broadly average. Most pupils are of White British heritage. There are a few pupils from minority ethnic groups and of these very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The school provides for the Early Years Foundation Stage in one Reception class.

The school is a National Trust Guardianship school. The school has received the Silver Eco Schools Award, the Investors in Pupils Award and the Healthy Schools Gold Award.

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 and improving school. It has a number of outstanding features. It is very popular with parents, who typically comment: 'All we have is praise for this school. It always feels a very happy place to be.' The excellent leadership of the headteacher and the school leadership team has been the key factor in the significant improvements made since the last inspection. They lead a very committed staff team, who are united in their efforts to improve the school further.

Pupils get off to a flying start in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). They make excellent progress and standards are often above age-related expectations when they enter Year 1. Standards throughout school fluctuate a little because of the differing starting points of small numbers taking the national tests. Standards have risen rapidly in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. They are consistently above average in English and mathematics and sometimes well above the national average. In particular, the proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels in English at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 has risen significantly following a whole-school initiative to improve the quality and content of pupils' writing. Standards are consistently exceptionally high in science. Evidence suggests that pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 are on track to reaching the school's challenging targets.

All groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, achieve well because they receive excellent guidance and support in their learning, good quality teaching and the curriculum meets their needs effectively. Academic guidance is highly effective. This is because pupils are fully involved in setting their own targets in their Learning Journals and considering how they can do even better. Displays and the marking of pupil's work also consistently provide further guidance. Lessons are well planned and learning activities meet the needs of different groups of learners. Good quality speaking and listening activities help pupils explore their ideas and learn from each other. In some outstanding lessons teachers are skilful in ensuring that activities get pupils thinking. In such lessons pupils have the opportunity to further improve their key skills, such as literacy and numeracy, in exciting and creative ways across the whole curriculum. However, occasionally, such opportunities to improve pupils' key skills further are missed and this can slow the pace of learning. The curriculum has several very strong features, which make a very significant contribution to pupils' thinking skills and personal development, and add interest and enjoyment to learning. In particular, pupils greatly benefit from learning in the woodland area and carrying out science activities.

Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and lies at the heart of the school's work. As a result, pupils' personal development is outstanding and their behaviour is exemplary. They develop a great deal of respect for each other and for those of other faiths and cultures through work in school and communications with pupils at a school in Uganda. Pupils clearly know how to stay safe, fit and healthy, and really enjoy growing and eating produce from their allotments. A strong quality of care permeates the school. Safeguarding requirements are met and excellent relationships help pupils feel very safe and secure, confident they would find someone to help with a problem. Pupils greatly enjoy all the school has to offer and as a result, attendance levels are consistently above average. Pupils feel that they have an important part to play in decisions made at school. As a group of older pupils agreed: 'Our opinions always count.' They work extremely well in teams and carry out a wide range of roles of responsibility in school with a great deal of maturity, making an excellent contribution to the school and wider community. For example: as part of the Smile Squad by helping others deal with issues that may arise; the Green Team by strongly encouraging all at school to recycle

and conserve energy; and the school council by actively canvassing the ideas of others, managing their own budget, as well as organising events in school. Initiatives such as the Climate Change project and the development of the woodland and wildlife areas foster pupils understanding of economics and sustainability. Such varied opportunities to take the initiative and problem solve prepare pupils extremely well for the next stage in their education.

The school's success stems from outstanding leadership and management. School improvement initiatives are so successful because they are underpinned by thorough self-evaluation and their impact is very carefully evaluated to ensure pupils gain the maximum benefit. School leadership is committed to the view that every child achieves their full potential. Governors give strong support and fulfil their responsibilities well. They are closely involved with monitoring the work of the school. In addition, the school develops a very strong partnership with parents, the community and a wide range of other agencies, such as the National Trust and environmental groups. In recognition of such strengths in leadership the school is increasingly playing a leading role working with other schools, with particular regards to the EYFS, the Forest Schools initiative and raising standards in writing. This is a school that knows itself very well and very clearly shows it has excellent capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The EYFS has continued to improve since the last inspection because of the exceptional leadership. The care and attention to children's welfare are outstanding. When they join the Reception class children's ability levels are in line with national expectations. Excellent relationships help children to settle very well and become fully absorbed in their learning. Children cannot wait to take part in a very wide range of stimulating learning activities. The use of the outdoor learning environment, in particular, is exemplary. This provides excellent support to all areas of learning and children's personal development. Children are strongly encouraged to explore things for themselves and ask questions, and staff skilfully intervene to move children on in their learning. For example, children had great fun working together to help 'Crispin Crow' build a cosy den for the hedgehog in their story. They were encouraged to consider what they were going to use to build the den and where the best place to build it would be. In this highly effective learning environment children make very rapid progress and become engaged and motivated learners. This provides an excellent foundation for learning further up the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the curriculum to provide even more opportunities for pupils to improve their learning of key skills across the full range of subjects.

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?	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?	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	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?	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?	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	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 friendly when we inspected your school earlier this week. We enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work. Your headteacher leads your school very well and makes sure you are happy and you learn well.

You should be very proud of the way you behave, because your behaviour is excellent. You also do a great deal to help others. Your work on the Smile Squad, the school council and the Green Team shows how very thoughtful and helpful you are. You work very hard to keep everyone happy and make a real difference to your school. You know how to stay fit and healthy and have fun growing vegetables in the allotments. We saw how much you enjoy coming to school and that you particularly like learning in your woodland area. You work very well in groups together, such as when you have the chance to build dens or take part in activities like the Bird Food project.

Your school is providing you with a good education. You make good progress with your work and reach above average standards when you leave at the end of Year 6. This is because you receive good teaching. You reach very high standards in science, in particular. Children in the Reception class make excellent progress because they have many exciting and fun activities.

Adults in school look after you extremely well so you feel very safe and confident about asking them for help. We have asked them to provide you with even more opportunities to improve important skills such as literacy and numeracy in more of your lessons.

We wish you well in the future.