

# Scissett Church of England Voluntary Aided First School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107743
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kirklees
<b>Inspection number</b>	324642
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 January 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gill Hepworth

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–10
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr B Kirkham
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs E Watson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 April 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>	Wakefield Road Scissett Huddersfield West Yorkshire HD8 9HR

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<b>Age group</b>	4–10
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 January 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	324642

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Scissett Church of England First School is much smaller than average. It serves the village community of Scissett. Almost all the pupils are of White British heritage and they have a range of socio-economic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) comprises one Reception class. Pupils in Years 2, 3, 4 and 5 are taught in mixed-age classes. The school has received the Investor in People award, the Healthy Schools award and the Sports Activemark award.

The school's breakfast and after school clubs are run by a private provider. A separate report on 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: 1

'What a fantastic school.' is a statement reflecting many parents' very positive views of this outstanding school. It is an extremely happy and welcoming school where pupils thoroughly enjoy all aspects of their education. Parents particularly appreciate the approachability and excellent communication of the headteacher and staff. This strong partnership with parents and carers, along with other community links, contributes significantly to the high quality of education that pupils receive. Adults are highly motivated and passionate about the school and work tirelessly for the benefit of all pupils. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to expand their knowledge in out-of-school activities. With this in mind, it provides the best experiences that can possibly be offered for every pupil.

The school's success stems from its strong sense of purpose and outstanding leadership and management. The headteacher and senior leadership team, exceptionally well supported by the governors, form a great partnership and set high standards in the continual drive for improvement. This is not a school that rests on its laurels. The ethos of high expectations and striving for even more for pupils, is what gives the school its special character and accounts for its sometimes modest self-evaluations. In the EYFS, children get off to an excellent start because of the outstanding provision. All groups of pupils make outstanding progress relative to their starting points which vary from year-to-year because of the small numbers in each year group. By the end of Year 2 standards are consistently above, and sometimes well above, average. This rate of progress continues in Key Stage 2.

Outstanding teaching and learning ensure that children get off to a wonderful start to their education in Reception and that they build exceedingly well on this throughout Years 1 to 5. The enthusiasm and high level of commitment of staff ensure that pupils love their lessons and that learning in mixed-age classes is never a problem. Outstanding care, guidance and support ensure that procedures for protecting and safeguarding are in place and that pupils thrive. The school tracks pupils' progress meticulously and takes swift action if learning shows any signs of slowing down. Pupils know what their learning targets are and the marking of their work helps them to know how to improve.

An outstanding curriculum ensures that pupils develop a thirst for learning and make outstanding progress in their personal development and well-being. Pupils' behaviour is excellent and their attendance is above the national average. They know how to stay healthy and were keen to say how safe they feel at school. Pupils make an excellent contribution to their school and the local community. Older pupils watch over younger ones. The school council speaks maturely about its role in improving facilities in school. Pupils' outstanding progress in basic literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills prepares them well for their transfer to middle school. Since the last inspection the school has grown from strength to strength, continually striving to meet the changing needs of pupils. The school is in an excellent position to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 1

Children's skills on entry to the Reception class vary from year-to-year but they generally match national expectations. Children settle very well into school because of the high levels of care and support provided by the staff and older pupils. They enthusiastically take part in a very

wide range of stimulating activities, both indoors and out. The area buzzes with purposeful play, as many activities are based on 'real life' experiences. Children proudly explained that they were learning to read a nursery rhyme about, 'Miss Polly who had a dolly'. The exciting experiences motivated them to work very hard on related activities. Given the high quality of teaching, children flourish, make rapid progress in their learning and develop very positive attitudes. The EYFS leader provides excellent leadership. Adults continuously assess how well children are doing and they rigorously use the information to provide appropriate challenge for different needs. Although varying from year-to-year, children's skills are above national expectations by the time they enter Year 1. This represents excellent progress in one year because they make exceptionally good progress in personal development and communication, language and literacy skills. Parents appreciate all that the EYFS has to offer, typically commenting, 'Staff are sensitive and understanding of the needs of the children.'

### **What the school should do to improve further**

The school's leadership has clearly identified what it needs to do to sustain improvement. Consequently, there are no further issues to add.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

From their starting points, pupils make excellent progress in Key Stage 1. Since the last inspection, above and well above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been sustained at the end of Year 2. The school's data and pupils' books confirm that pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 maintain this rate of progress towards challenging targets. All groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make excellent progress because of outstanding teaching and learning and an exciting curriculum. The more able, and gifted and talented pupils, have the help they need to reach the highest possible levels in the National Curriculum, even when this means completing work that is well beyond what is expected for their age.

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

### **Grade: 1**

The atmosphere throughout the school is one of enjoyment and enthusiasm. Pupils work extremely well together because they are immersed in a community that really does have children's learning at the heart of everything it does. In lessons, pupils show excellent attitudes to work and clearly enjoy being at school. Attendance is higher than average and pupils participate with great eagerness in activities both in and out of lessons. Behaviour is exemplary, not only in lessons but at playtimes and in the dining room, where a calm social atmosphere prevails. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They understand very well how to keep safe and healthy and are proud of the Healthy School Award. Pupils have a strong voice in the school and express their views confidently. They take on many roles of responsibility and this gives them very good opportunities to gain the knowledge and skills they will need in future workplace situations.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 1

Pupils make excellent progress because the quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Pupils are motivated and eagerly undertake challenging tasks. Above all, lessons are interesting, exciting and good relationships help create a positive learning environment. Questioning effectively challenges pupils and helps build on their previous learning. Teachers make excellent use of ICT to enrich and extend pupils' learning. Teaching assistants work closely alongside teachers, contributing very effectively to pupils' progress. In the lessons visited during the inspection, pupils were always busily involved in their work and exceptionally well behaved. Classrooms are bright, stimulating environments. Marking of work is thorough, clearly showing pupils how well they have done and what they must do to improve.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 1

The curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of diverse learning experiences that helps them achieve highly both academically and in their personal development. It has been thoughtfully planned for the mixed-age classes. The basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT are promoted well. The school is very proud to have won recently a national ICT competition. Creative and imaginative activities feature prominently in the planning of lessons so pupils have many opportunities to take part in drama and practical work. Provision for music plays a big part in enriching the curriculum. The wide range of after-school learning activities appeals to the interests of many pupils, as well as broadening their horizons. The balance between acquiring essential knowledge and skills and practising them in other subjects is struck extremely well. For example, the themed approaches introduced across the school increase pupils' enjoyment in lessons as well as adding challenge.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 1

An ethos of care is at the heart of the school and pupils report that they feel safe. It is a warm, bright and happy place to be. Pupils are confident that they can always ask for help when needed. The very high level of pastoral support for all pupils is reflected in their excellent personal development. Child protection procedures are in place and government safeguarding requirements are met. Regular health and safety checks are undertaken and risk assessments made in advance of all school visits. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are quickly identified and appropriate support is provided for them. All pupils contribute to assessing their progress towards targets. The school has very rigorous arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and for tracking their progress. Communication with parents is excellent and the school helps them to support their children.

## Leadership and management

#### Grade: 1

The school is led excellently by the headteacher who has high expectations and a first-rate ability to drive the school forward. The deputy headteacher, staff, parents and governors all

give their full support. Pupils' well-being is at the heart of the school's development. There is a substantial sense of commitment and teamwork on the part of adults working in the school. As a result, all groups of pupils make excellent progress. The school has a very clear idea of its own effectiveness because of its procedures to seek out the views of parents and pupils. It uses these views very effectively to identify areas which could be improved further. The impact is seen in pupils' excellent progress and personal development. The school has a good understanding of what is required to promote community cohesion in a local, national and global context. Pupils work hard to support a range of charities both in the immediate locality and abroad. They have also enjoyed working with the 'countryside officer' and some disabled adults in seeking to improve an aspect of the local area. Teaching and the curriculum are used well to help pupils learn and understand about other communities. Links with a school in a very different area are developing. The professional development of staff is closely linked to staff's individual needs and the development of the school. The school's self-evaluation is rigorous and leads to improvement and high achievement. Governors are very supportive of the school. They also challenge and hold it rigorously to account for the standards pupils attain.



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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 <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
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

<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>	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

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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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?	2
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 Scissett Church of England Voluntary Aided First School, Huddersfield, HD8 9HR

I would like to thank you for the warm welcome you gave me. I very much enjoyed talking to you about your work, speaking to the staff and joining you in lessons.

This is what I judged to be particularly good about your school.

- You make excellent progress in all your classes. In Year 2, you reach standards that are higher than those usually found in primary schools. These high standards continue throughout Key Stage 2.
- Those of you who are in the Reception classes get off to an excellent start because the adults plan lots of fun things for you to do.
- Your classrooms are very busy places, where it is good to see you all working hard and trying to do your best. It is clear you really enjoy school.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you should be proud of the way you look after each other.
- You have very good knowledge of healthy eating and taking lots of exercise to keep yourself fit.
- Your teachers make lessons exciting and you know what to do next in order to improve your work.
- You have an exciting curriculum which is made even better by the visits, visitors and many extra clubs that you attend. I was impressed with how many of you play musical instruments and also how well you play.
- You feel safe in school and adults take very good care of you.
- Your school has excellent systems for checking that you make enough progress every year.

Your headteacher and staff work together extremely well and have a very clear idea of what needs to be done to make sure Scissett First continues to be an outstanding school. You can help by continuing to come to school regularly and keeping up your hard work.