

# Featherstone Purston Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108200
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wakefield
<b>Inspection number</b>	324722
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Derek Pattinson

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	140
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 D Taylor
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Pam Baldwyn
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 May 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>	Nunns Lane Featherstone Pontefract West Yorkshire WF7 5HF
<b>Telephone number</b>	01977 723550
<b>Fax number</b>	01977 723550

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<b>Age group</b>	3–7
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller than average infant school. It serves an area of below average social and economic circumstances. Most children are of White British heritage and live in the immediate area. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is similar to the national picture. The proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and from minority ethnic groups are lower than found nationally. The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is very small. Children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage in the term following their third birthday. The school has achieved a Healthy Schools' Award and the Activemark Award since the last inspection.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

'Purston Infants is the best!' is an apt parental comment about this outstanding school, which gives its pupils an excellent start to their education. In this inclusive setting, with its very positive climate for learning, children flourish. Parents are overwhelmingly positive and praise the school's 'lovely friendly atmosphere' and its 'enthusiastic, happy, approachable and friendly' staff. The school excels in successfully enabling pupils to achieve very well academically and personally. Staff, governors, parents and pupils rightly feel proud of this impressive school. The headteacher and deputy headteacher set the highest possible aspirations for the school and its pupils. The skilled leadership ensures a strong team spirit and a clear and rigorous focus on improvement. As a result, the school has effectively built on the successes of the last inspection and now provides excellent value for money.

The headteacher is increasing accountability and responsibility among staff, placing a significant emphasis on their induction and training. As a result, new staff quickly become very effective. This helps to explain why teaching is of the highest quality and pupils learn very well. Subject leaders are improving their ability to monitor all aspects of their subjects. However, they do not yet have sufficient precise information about strengths and weaknesses in their areas of responsibility. The strong and improved governing body holds the school to account and acts as a true critical friend.

Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Children start school with skills, knowledge and understanding that are mostly well below those expected for their age. By the time they leave Year 2, standards are mostly above average. Current Year 2 pupils are working above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The school undertakes rigorous tracking and accurate assessments of pupils' progress. These lead to successful actions to raise standards, most recently in reading, where standards had slipped to average in the past two years.

The curriculum is organised in exciting, creative and innovative ways. As a result, it helps bring learning alive. It gives considerable emphasis to first-hand experiences and important skills, such as in information and communication technology (ICT). Many visits and visitors add further quality and enrich pupils' experiences. As a result of these strong features, and because of the excellent relationships which exist at all levels, the school makes a very effective contribution to the development of community cohesion.

The quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding. All groups, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are very well supported. As a result, pupils excel in their personal development and well-being. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and lies at the heart of the school's work. Pupils know very well the importance of a healthy and safe lifestyle. They make an important contribution to school life, such as by serving on the school council. There are very good arrangements for guiding pupils on their academic performance. However, teachers' marking does not always help them to reach the next step in their learning. Because the school makes highly effective use of its resources, and the many different skills of its workforce, it provides excellent value for money.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 1

The Early Years Foundation Stage is very successful in laying down secure foundations for learning. From the moment they arrive in school, children's progress is carefully tracked to help

them make the best possible progress. Children's skills and understanding are mostly well below what is expected when they start school, especially in their language skills. They achieve very well, attaining levels that are close to what is expected nationally when they enter Year 1. Children settle quickly and flourish throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage in the very nurturing environment where they feel safe, secure and valued. All staff have high expectations and, through a wide range of carefully planned, exciting activities, strongly encourage children to explore for themselves and to ask questions. As a result, children make rapid progress in all areas of learning. Children are eager to succeed and they share their contributions confidently. For example, in a lesson on 'shapes' one child was quick to point out that when a sphere is added to a cone it looks like an ice cream! Teachers skilfully ensure that there is a very good balance, both indoors and outdoors, between activities organised by them and those initiated by children themselves. Strong teamwork among staff contributes to the positive atmosphere. An example of the excellent leadership can be seen in the very thorough assessments, which ensure that learning activities meet the needs and interests of children very well. Because approaches to implementing the curriculum are consistent across the school, transition into Key Stage 1 is smooth and seamless.

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

- Develop further the skills of subject leaders to enable them to identify more effectively what works well and what needs improving.
- Ensure teachers' marking always helps children to understand how to improve their work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Achievement for all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is outstanding. Reliable, accurate assessments show that children make rapid progress throughout the school from their well below average starting points. By age seven, pupils usually reach standards which are above national levels in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the gap between school and national data has been slowly narrowing since 2006, reflecting children's increasingly weak language skills on entry. As a result, provisional results for 2008 were close to national levels in writing and mathematics with reading dipping slightly below national standards for the first time. Immediately the school identified this, it implemented plans to drive up standards in reading, which are already proving successful. Tracking information reveals that standards for the present Year 2 are above what is typical nationally. Challenging targets are rigorously pursued and progress towards their achievement regularly evaluated. For example, the school has revised its targets upwards for the current Year 2 pupils to reflect the very good progress that they are making.

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

### **Grade: 1**

The school's personal development programme and work in assemblies contribute exceptionally well to children's excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are friendly, polite, thoughtful and caring. They learn about different faiths and cultures, which enables them to develop understanding of what it means to live in a multicultural society. They love school, and classrooms buzz with purposeful activity. Despite this, attendance is only satisfactory, although the school and governing body work very hard to promote it. Pupils say that they feel safe and secure and are adamant that there is no bullying. Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils

support one another, clearly know right from wrong, get along well together and work enthusiastically. They know how to stay healthy and enjoy the wide and varied opportunities for physical exercise, such as 'Wake up, Shake up'. The school council gives pupils a voice and works hard to get things done. Members are proud of the shed in the playground, paid for from funds they helped to raise. Community links are many and varied. For example, pupils raise money for charities, and sing and dance in the locality. The outstanding development of their basic skills helps them prepare very effectively for the next stage of their education and their later lives.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Teachers make an excellent contribution to pupils' outstanding achievement and the above average standards they usually reach. Parents praise staff's excellent relationships with the pupils, making comments such as, 'the approachable and helpful teachers really care about our children's progress and development'. All staff are enthusiastic, give pupils much encouragement and have high expectations of their work and behaviour. They use resources, such as puppets, very well to generate high levels of interest and involvement. As a result, classrooms are lively and exciting places where pupils are very well motivated and learn a great deal. Teachers share clearly what they want their pupils to learn so that they know what they must do to succeed. They use questions very well to develop and check understanding and provoke thought. All adults provide high quality support to pupils to help them learn. Very effective procedures to track pupils' progress underpin lesson planning and ensure staff have the necessary information to match work carefully to their abilities. For example, language sessions are very well planned and executed to enable pupils of all abilities to make very good progress.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The school's inclusive, exciting and increasingly creative curriculum contributes well to pupils' high achievement and outstanding personal development. Based around six themes, it successfully motivates pupils throughout the school and enables them to make the best possible progress. Innovative features, such as 'mix up', encourage choice and promote learning. Teachers make effective links between subjects and use practical experiences to add variety and bring learning alive, for example by encouraging pupils to grow, cook and eat their own vegetables from the school allotment. The development of important skills, such as in English and mathematics, is given strong emphasis. For example, pupils learn through role-play to speak in a range of situations, and to develop confidence and good speaking skills. ICT is a real strength and popular with pupils of all ages. A kaleidoscope of enrichment activities significantly extends learning. For example, the well attended after-school clubs, including French, sports and Fun Foods, add to pupils' enjoyment. Visits, including a residential visit to Hornsea for Year 2, visitors, such as rugby trainers and dance instructors, and themed events, such as a Health Week, help broaden their horizons.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 1

Outstanding pastoral care underpins the school's work and ensures that pupils are very well cared for in a safe, secure, happy environment. Excellent relationships at all levels help to explain why adults know individuals well and work extremely hard to meet their needs. Child protection, health and safety procedures and systems for safeguarding pupils all meet current government requirements. The exemplary provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities ensures that they make the same excellent progress as their classmates. Committed support staff contribute well to pupils' outstanding achievement. Pupils benefit enormously from the strong links forged with a neighbouring school and different agencies. Most aspects of academic guidance are effective and are embedded in the school's work. Senior leaders regularly analyse data and track pupils' progress, supporting them when needed to help them make the best possible progress. Pupils know their targets in literacy and numeracy; many can explain how they cross off each one as it is achieved. Teachers' marking almost always celebrates pupils' efforts and achievements. However, it is less consistent in helping them to reach the next steps in their learning.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 1

Outstanding leadership and management are key factors in the school's continued success. As a result, the strengths from the last inspection have been further improved upon, despite staff changes. The dedicated headteacher, ably supported by her deputy headteacher, knows the school very well. This is reflected in the school's accurate, if modest, self-evaluation, which takes account of staff, governors, parents and pupils. Strategic planning and organisation are of high quality. Professional development helps to ensure that priorities for development are rigorously pursued. This is a school that shows no sense of complacency. It rigorously tackles areas of relative weakness, such as in reading, indicating an excellent capacity for further improvement. Morale in the school is high and teamwork a real strength. Shared responsibility and accountability are rapidly developing but subject leaders have yet to make maximum impact to help drive up standards. Leaders ensure that equal opportunities are promoted very well, for example, by making sure that all pupils receive high quality help and support. Pupils themselves have a strong sense of common values and make a strong contribution to the promotion of equalities because they integrate so well, 'just like one big happy family', as one parent commented. As a result, the promotion of community cohesion is outstanding and underpins the school's work. Leadership is further enhanced by the governors, who are supportive yet challenging and play a full part in holding the school to account.

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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

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<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	3
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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
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**

Here is a great story for you to enjoy and it is all true.

Once upon a time, on a Wednesday and Thursday to be exact, I inspected your school. I'm sure you remember the man in the grey suit with glasses! I talked with many of you as well as with your teachers, headteacher and other grown-ups and looked at many things to help me decide how good your school really is. Some of you told me you think you go to a good school. I judge that you go to an outstanding school, which is much better than good! Here are some of the things which are outstanding about your school.

- You all make very good progress as you move through the school.
- You are really friendly and all adults take very good care of you so that you are safe and happy.
- You work hard, have good attitudes to school and behave very well.
- You know very well how important it is to stay healthy and keep safe.
- All adults make sure that everyone is treated the same and is able to do their best.
- Your lessons are often fun and you enjoy them very much.
- Your headteacher knows just what to do to make things even better for you.

I have asked the school to:

- make sure that the teachers in charge of different subjects know as much as they can about their subject so that they can help you to reach even higher standards
- make sure that, when teachers mark your work, they always show you how you can make your work even better.

Make sure that you come every single day so that you never miss any of the exciting things that the school plans for you. Keep up the good work so that your school will continue to stay an outstanding one.