

Featherstone North Featherstone Junior and Infant School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 108206 |
| Local Authority | Wakefield |
| Inspection number | 324723 |
| Inspection dates | 10–11 June 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Andrew Clark |

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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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 314 |
| 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 Mark Garland - Jones |
| Headteacher | Mr Colin Jackson |
| Date of previous school inspection | 20 February 2006 |
| Date of previous funded early education inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Date of previous childcare inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | Gordon Street Featherstone Pontefract West Yorkshire WF7 6LW |

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|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Age group | 3–11 |
| Inspection dates | 10–11 June 2009 |
| Inspection number | 324723 |

Telephone number
Fax number

01977 723 546
01977 722 685

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average. Pupils are from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils eligible for a free school meal is below average. The vast majority of pupils are from White British families. A small percentage of pupils from Eastern Europe speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The Early Years Foundation stage includes a Nursery and a Reception class. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools Award, Basic Skills Quality Mark, Inclusion Now, RM Excellence Award (for information and communication technology) and PE Activemark.

There have been significant staff changes since the previous inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Featherstone North Junior and Infants is a good school with outstanding features. Effective leadership, at all levels, leads to good achievement and above average standards. Children get an outstanding education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils' personal development and behaviour throughout the school are outstanding because of the wide range of stimulating activities and the good quality of teaching. Good care and guidance enable all pupils to thrive in a happy and inclusive community. Parents are wholly supportive and typically comment, 'This is a fantastic school with excellent teachers. Our children have blossomed since they started here.'

Children enter school with skills which are below typically expected levels. They get a flying start in the Foundation Stage. Pupils make good progress throughout school towards challenging targets and leave with above average standards. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of the well planned programmes to provide additional support. More able pupils succeed because they find learning enjoyable and increasingly challenging.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding. Pupils consistently behave with politeness and consideration to others. They are regularly praised for their attentiveness and thoughtfulness when on out-of-school visits. Attendance and punctuality are good. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to live healthily and take full advantage of exciting physical activities from line dancing to athletics galas and receive many awards and trophies. They take their many responsibilities seriously and show enterprise and initiative through leadership roles on the school council or organising charitable and sporting events.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Relationships are excellent and classrooms are friendly, relaxed and busy. Teachers increasingly make good use of accurate assessments to plan appropriate work. However, this is not fully consistent and, occasionally, work is not matched closely enough to pupils' needs to promote the highest levels. The curriculum is good. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is increasingly interwoven into other subjects to make learning relevant and meaningful, although this is not fully embedded. Pupils develop a good awareness of the social and ethnic diversity of modern life through exciting first-hand experiences such as links with a school in Tanzania. Care, guidance and support are good. Pastoral care of pupils is excellent and supports pupils' outstanding personal development. This is especially effective in promoting the progress of vulnerable pupils including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has rigorous systems to track pupils' academic and personal achievement. However, they do not consistently use marking to provide enough guidance for pupils to improve their own work at the fastest rates.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has enabled all staff successfully to take leading roles in bringing about improvements and raising achievement. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection. The headteacher's enthusiasm and leadership qualities play a prominent role in the drive to raise standards and are acknowledged and appreciated by staff, parents and pupils. Governors provide good levels of challenge and support because they are well informed and fully involved in school development. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion because of the close and effective links with parents and the local community. Equality of opportunity is good because of the support and

encouragement given to pupils of all abilities to access the full breadth of available activities. 'The teacher manages to treat my son as an individual and definitely gets the best from him,' is typical of parents' views. The school is held in high regard in the locality. Rigorous self-evaluation and strong development planning underpin the school's good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. A strong team led by a highly skilled and knowledgeable leader, knows their children's needs very well and together they ensure they thoroughly enjoy their first taste of school life. Parents agree saying their children come on, 'in leaps and bounds', once they start Nursery. There has been a consistent trend of rising standards. The strong and successful focus on children's personal development and their early literacy and numeracy, results in children who, though below expected levels on starting Nursery, enter Year 1 with often above average levels of skills needed to learn and play happily together. This represents outstanding progress in their personal development and well-being and supports children's next steps exceptionally well. Adults plan carefully together to provide many opportunities for adventurous play and for children to learn through investigation and exploration both in and out of doors. Children are looked after extremely well and blossom because of the outstanding care and support they receive. This supports children's growing confidence and self-belief. Effective leadership ensures rigorous assessment and monitoring to support children's next steps in their learning. Information is shared very well with parents and other education providers and this contributes very effectively to the progress children make.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the work set for pupils consistently matches their levels of achievement and learning needs closely.
- Make full use of marking to provide clear guidance to enable pupils to improve their own work at as fast a pace as possible.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' progress is good because teachers make increasingly good use of robust and accurate assessment procedures to set targets which are challenging and achievable. This has led to a good trend of improving standards. The school is increasingly effective at building on the rapid progress children make in the Foundation Stage. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average by Year 2. They are also above average in English, mathematics and science by Year 6. Standards in writing have risen due to a whole-school initiative following an in-depth analysis of pupils' achievement by the subject leader. Similarly, opportunities for problem solving in mathematics and science aimed at the more able and those identified as gifted and talented have had a good impact on their achievement. The school is now especially effective at identifying pupils who are not making the progress predicted from their earlier work and providing sharply focused support. As a result, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities progress well in all aspects of their work. The few pupils with English as an additional language also make good progress because of the specialist and intensive support they are offered at the early stages.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' highly positive attitudes and excellent behaviour contribute very well to their learning. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school because, in their own words, 'Learning is fun.' Pupils have very firm views on what constitutes a healthy balanced diet and how they can achieve it through school activities. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds regularly participate in school and local sporting events, taking a leading role in organising the town's gala sports. There are many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility in and around school and they always rise to the challenge. Pupils feel safe and valued. They have a very good idea of the dangers of drugs and alcohol because of their work with community police, fire and nursing projects. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is above average. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They have enormous tolerance and understanding of different cultures and faiths. They are inspired by the work and ideas they see around them and also by very motivating assemblies. They are well prepared for future learning because of their knowledge of their own learning and the life skills they have acquired.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Lessons are well planned to incorporate motivating and practical activities, with many opportunities for pupils to experiment, find out things for themselves and to share ideas with others. Pupils find learning enjoyable and comment, 'Lessons are really fun & teachers help us'. The purpose of the lesson is clear to pupils and they know what is required to succeed, whatever their ability. Work is usually well matched to pupils' needs through good use of accurate assessments. However, occasionally, teachers set work which is too difficult for less able pupils or not challenging enough for the more able. Relationships are extremely positive and classrooms are often stimulating places in which to learn. Skilful questioning enables teachers to determine how well pupils are learning and whether they require further help to make even better progress. Teachers make good use of games and competitions to engage pupils but a few opportunities are missed to use information and communication technology to bring learning to life. Well trained teaching assistants provide well planned literacy and numeracy programmes for lower attaining pupils and additional classroom support.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides an effective curriculum which meets the needs of all pupils. Recent improvements have been introduced to provide meaningful links between different subjects and this is contributing to rising standards. There is a strong emphasis on pupils engaging in the protection and development of their own immediate environment, for instance, as they plant trees and roses around the local vicinity and work with the local council. Global awareness is enhanced through cultural links with a school in Tanzania.

A very good programme of personal, social, health and citizenship education supports social and emotional aspects of learning which positively influence pupils' outstanding personal development and behaviour. A good range of visits and visitors extend pupils understanding of the wider world. The residential visits for Years 4 and 6 provide exciting opportunities for

pupils to engage with different communities enabling them to compare and contrast different environments and cultures. A close partnership with local colleges, schools and societies enriches pupils learning in many ways. The school provides an excellent range of very well attended extra-curricular clubs, including music, art and many other creative and physical activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This is a caring school. Pupils know that if they are unhappy or concerned there is always someone to whom they can turn. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive and typically comment that they consider their children are happy, safe and secure in school. Pastoral support is outstanding. Clear, detailed and well organised systems are in place and are carefully followed. As a result, child protection, health and safety arrangements and systems for safeguarding pupils and recruiting staff all meet current government requirements. Well established procedures effectively promote good attendance and excellent behaviour and this contributes considerably to the learning opportunities for pupils.

The school has good systems in place to identify pupils who are not achieving all they could and those who are exceeding expectations. As a result, all groups of pupils achieve well. Marking of work increasingly acknowledges what pupils have achieved, although this practice is not consistent across the school. Similarly, the next steps in learning are not always clearly identified. In the best practice observed, pupils discuss their work with each other and with their teachers and are given opportunity to act upon the advice they receive. This results in faster progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher works closely with the senior leadership team and together they have raised the expectations of staff and developed shared responsibility and accountability at all levels. There is a clear direction to the school's work. Priorities for development are identified and acted upon to help drive forward school improvement. School self-evaluation is good. There is good understanding of strengths and areas for development to lead to improvement. The systematic monitoring of teaching and learning by staff at all levels is well established. Occasionally, they are a little too cautious in introducing new initiatives, such as electronic whiteboard technology throughout the school, and this hinders the fastest pace of development. The improvement to tracking systems has successfully enabled staff immediately to identify and support pupils who are either underperforming or who need additional challenge. Governance is good. The governing body is well informed and works in very close partnership with the school fully holding the school to account for what it achieves. The school promotes inclusion and equality well as it works successfully with a range of partners to ensure that all pupils make good progress. The school effectively promotes community cohesion and the links with the immediate and wider localities are particularly strong. The developing links with Tanzania are providing pupils with good and widening opportunities to recognise and celebrate the similarities and differences between different cultures. The orderly, calm and settled ethos all staff promote ensures pupils grow in confidence and self-assurance preparing them well for their future lives.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

| | |
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| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
|---|----------------|

Overall effectiveness

| | |
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| 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 | 2 |

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

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|---|---|
| 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

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|--|---|
| 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 | 2 |

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? | 2 |

Leadership and management

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| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 2 |
| 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 | 2 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated | 2 |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion? | 2 |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money | 2 |
| 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 the warm welcome you gave the inspection team when they visited your school this week. You were helpful, polite and friendly which made our stay all the more enjoyable.

You attend a good school. You all work hard and make good progress in all your work to reach standards which are above average. The Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding and children in the Nursery and Reception classes have a super introduction to school life. Your teachers make learning fun and this helps you to make outstanding personal development. You eat healthy meals and take part in very many sporting activities. You take responsibilities through the school council and through your many classroom jobs which you have to apply for over the Internet. You care about your local environment and provide real support to those who are less fortunate than yourselves in a school in Tanzania.

You are taught well and your teachers are kind and helpful. Occasionally, the work set for you does not meet your needs as well as it could because it is too hard or too easy. You are given many interesting things to learn about and topics, such as the Ancient Egyptians, bring learning to life. The excellent range of clubs and many visits and visitors, especially your weeks away in Northumberland and Wales, make learning exciting. All staff take very good care of you and keep you safe. They set you targets to work to but sometimes do not use the marking well enough to explain how you can improve your own work quickly.

The headteacher and his staff lead and manage the school well. They know you very well because they are always round and about and the headteacher greets you and your parents at the school gate each day.

We have asked the school to make certain that the work set for you in every lesson is carefully matched to your levels of ability. We have also asked staff to use the marking to provide more guidance for you to improve your own work. You can help by working hard and staying happy and well behaved.