

Dearne Highgate Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106581
Local Authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	336697
Inspection dates	13–14 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Jane Hughes

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	267
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs M Waldron
Headteacher	Mrs Sue Williams
Date of previous school inspection	7 July 2007
School address	Nicholas Lane Goldthorpe Rotherham S63 9AS
Telephone number	01709 892160
Fax number	01709 888169
Email address	s.williams@barnsley.org

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	13–14 October 2009
Inspection number	336697

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2009

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 17 lessons, held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils, and spoke to parents. They observed the school's work and looked at the school's self-evaluation, assessment and tracking information, records of lesson and subject monitoring, improvement plans, selected policies, pupils' work, safeguarding records, governing body minutes, 47 parent questionnaires, 68 pupil questionnaires and 21 staff questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the impact of leadership and management at all levels in driving the school forward, and challenging pupils of all ages and levels to reach their potential in terms of academic achievement and other key outcomes
- the achievement of higher attaining pupils in all key stages to determine the sufficiency of challenge offered by teachers
- outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in terms of the effectiveness of the provision, particularly for communication, language, literacy, personal, social and mathematical skills and whether children make rapid enough progress- how close attendance levels are to the national average and if there are effective systems in place to sustain them
- whether previously identified strengths in terms of Every Child Matters outcomes, curriculum, and care, guidance and support are still relative strengths, and their impact on outcomes for pupils.

Information about the school

In this large school, a larger than average percentage of pupils is known to be eligible for free school meals. Most pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. A larger than average proportion of pupils has special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school holds the Silver Healthy School award and Financial Management in Schools. It is an Investor in People.

The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises Nursery and Reception classes which operate as a unit. There are 26 part time Nursery places available each morning and afternoon. The school runs its own breakfast club each morning from 08.00.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Dearne Highgate provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and has some good features. It establishes strong partnerships with parents, carers and outside support agencies. Other strengths include the care, guidance and support the school offers all pupils, as well as pupils' good knowledge of how to live safe and healthy lifestyles. Parents confirm that the school takes good care of their children with comments such as, 'All in all, a very supportive and happy experience.' Weaker areas of the school's work include pupils' attainment in writing and mathematics, the impact of the governing body, and pupils' understanding of cultural diversity in Britain.

Senior leaders have effectively addressed the areas for improvement highlighted at the time of the last inspection. Self-evaluation is largely accurate, and school development planning now correctly identifies what needs to be done to move the school forward. Children now experience a more successful start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and this provides a catalyst for pupils' greater success as they move through the school. The tracking of pupils' progress, coupled with a clearer emphasis on teaching quality have helped to secure a significant rise in pupils' achievement and the standards they reach by the time they leave Year 6, although attainment remains low. These successes, when coupled with attendance rates close to, and sometimes in line with, the national average demonstrate the leadership's satisfactory capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment to at least broadly average, particularly in writing and mathematics by:
 - improving the quality of teaching from satisfactory to good or better
 - ensuring aspirational challenge for all, particularly higher attaining pupils
 - strengthening the impact of the monitoring of pupils' learning through more frequent, rigorous observations by leaders
 - developing the use of new technologies to support pupils' learning in all curriculum subjects.
 - Strengthen significantly the effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school by:
 - providing appropriate training opportunities to develop governors' skills
 - raising governors' awareness of the need to accelerate the rate of improvement in many key areas of the school's work

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

- increasing the rigour with which governors monitor and evaluate the school's performance, particularly pupils' attainment and learning.
- Increase pupils' understanding of cultural diversity by:
 - developing links with other schools and organisations with a mix of cultural backgrounds
 - increasing the opportunities for pupils to visit a range of religious buildings as part of the programme of curriculum enrichment.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils show that they feel secure in lessons as they are quick to volunteer answers. They are unperturbed if they make mistakes as they know this is how they learn. Pupils develop the skills of independent learners most effectively when teachers have high expectations, insist on quiet before explaining specific points, and make certain that pupils are provided with just the right levels of support. They respond very positively when lessons include areas of particular interest or a competitive element. Pupils' learning slows when they have to wait for adult support to help solve a problem rather than having the models and tools to persevere independently, and they waste valuable learning time. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Indeed, some of these pupils make good and very good progress when they participate in carefully targeted support programmes. Higher attaining pupils do not yet reach the levels of which they are capable, particularly in writing and mathematics, because adults do not expect enough of them. Pupils' attainment is rising rapidly by Year 6 and the gap between the school's performance and national averages continues to narrow due to the rigorous analysis of pupils' attainment and progress. Current standards in science, for example, are below average, but not significantly so. When pupils do not make enough progress, teachers can now pinpoint why and decide how best to support them. Older pupils' outcomes still partly reflect the inadequate start they experienced in the early years along with the lack of accurate assessment data at that time to move their learning on more rapidly. Many children still arrive with low level skills, particularly their social, language and mathematical skills. Now, however, young children make a more effective start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. As these children are starting to move through the year groups, their better starting points in Year 1 ensure that their more secure basic skills, particularly in language and literacy, underpin their learning and they are able to build on these more effectively.

Pupils enjoy coming to school, as reflected in their improved attendance. They say that the school is a friendly place with very little bullying. Pupils agree that, 'We learn a lot and the teachers help us when we get stuck. We also have fun.' Parents confirm this. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and a clear knowledge of why it is

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

good to eat fruit and vegetables every day and to drink milk and water. They enjoy physical activities at break and lunchtimes as well as after school clubs such as football. Pupils make the most of any opportunities to take responsibility in school and serve their school community. Pupils develop satisfactorily in terms of their future economic well-being. They work well together in teams, both in lessons and when organising daily fruit sales, and during whole school activities such as designing an enterprise as part of 'my money week'. Older pupils audit family picnic accounts in their mathematics lessons. Pupils take their personal targets seriously and discuss how to achieve these with their parents and teachers. They are becoming increasingly self-aware and self-confident in assessing their own strengths and points for development. 'Eco-warriors' raise whole school awareness of the planet's sustainability as well as the benefits to the school's budget in terms of saving energy. As a result of the school's careful promotion and speedy response to any absence, rates of attendance have risen since the last inspection. Almost all pupils arrive on time for lessons. Pupils develop a strong understanding of right and wrong and have a keen sense of justice and fair play. These pupils learn and live in a mono-ethnic community and their understanding of the diverse nature of modern British society is very limited. Currently, pupils do not enjoy a wide enough range of experiences to support their cultural development.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

How effective is the provision?

Adults use effective strategies and secure subject knowledge to maintain pupils' interest in their learning. Lessons are orderly because teachers use consistent behaviour management techniques and develop positive relationships with pupils. Teachers use praise effectively to raise pupils' self-esteem. Assessment information is carefully gathered and rigorously analysed so that all the adults can meet pupils' needs effectively. However, teachers do not provide sufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils, particularly in writing and mathematics. Not all classroom environments provide sufficient materials and models to develop pupils' independent learning skills.

Skilful teaching assistants work alongside pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and ensure they play an active part in lessons. The school makes a great effort to meet the individual needs of potentially more vulnerable pupils and all pupils are quick to model their thoughtfulness on the good examples set by adults to include all pupils fully in school life. For instance, specialist accommodation is provided when required so that pupils do not have to miss out on school-based education due to physical constraints.

Teachers make some use of interactive boards in classrooms but new technologies are under-represented in lessons and activities throughout the school. This limits pupils' opportunities for practising skills and extending their learning. The curriculum thus fails to ignite the interest of some pupils in their learning. Residential trips excite pupils and improve their skills and self-confidence. However, pupils have relatively limited involvement in community life. In particular, there are very few planned opportunities for them to find out about the diversity of modern British culture. Themed events such as the much-appreciated 'French Breakfasts' entice parents into school. These help parents and their children to learn more about different foods.

Caring staff at all levels ensure the safety and well-being of pupils. Parents value highly the effective induction and transition programmes. Specific support programmes, as well as mentoring and awards' systems for behaviour and attendance, successfully engage pupils who may otherwise miss large chunks of their schooling.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

The headteacher and other senior leaders have an accurate view of the school. Subject leaders now take on greater responsibility in terms of leading improvement. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher provide the ambition and drive to motivate the rest of the staff and to build on the school's continuing improvement. Together with the committed staff team, the leadership is tackling the key priorities identified in order to move the school forward at a faster rate. For instance, assessment and tracking procedures now provide accurate information and so enable teachers and support staff to provide the correct levels of support for pupils. As a result, standards rose again last year and the rate of pupils' achievement accelerated. The needs of higher attaining pupils are rightly a current focus. Governors are clearly supportive of the school and place pupils' well-being at the heart of the school's work. Nonetheless, the governing body does not hold the school to account with sufficient rigour for its academic performance, nor does it offer robust challenge to the school. Safeguarding arrangements are secure and meet current legislative requirements. Pupils and parents confirm that the school is a safe and friendly place.

The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination satisfactorily, although more needs to be done to ensure all groups of pupils reach their potential. Parents confirm that the school works hard to engage them in the life of the school. They feel that their voice is heard well by staff and increasing numbers enjoy the family learning courses on offer. School analysis shows that the children of these parents do better in their related learning as a result. Large numbers of parents come to breakfast club with their children to ensure they have a positive start to the day. The school knows its social context well and audits its impact on the local and wider community. It promotes community cohesion satisfactorily because its plans are detailed but still at an early stage of implementation.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3
---	----------

Early Years Foundation Stage

Nursery and Reception age children respond well to the happy and welcoming environment in the Early Years Foundation Stage unit. Key strengths include:

- a clear focus by adults on developing children's literacy and numeracy skills
- an interesting range of resources to support learning both inside and outdoors
- high quality pastoral care and guidance
- effective leadership of the unit
- the newly refurbished accommodation.

Children are keen to start playing as soon as they arrive with their parents and eagerly participate in activities throughout the day. Key workers ensure that children are secure in the setting and establish effective links with parents through daily discussions and clear written information and guidance. Practitioners monitor children's learning regularly and with care. They record and then share detailed observations of what individuals know, understand and can do so that the correct next steps are identified to move children on more rapidly in their learning. The relatively new leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage sets high expectations. The setting has moved on well since the last inspection and the higher quality provision better meets children's needs. Children now make more rapid progress from their much lower than expected starting points so that a far greater proportion are now working securely within the goals expected for children of their age, particularly in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, and communication, language and literacy, by the end of Foundation 2 (Reception). The percentage of children achieving a good level of development across all the areas of learning is also rising. Even so, children's skills overall are still below average, mainly due to weaker outcomes in calculating, by the end of Foundation 2.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Approximately one fifth of parents returned the inspection questionnaire. Most parents are satisfied with the school and confirm that the school meets children's needs well. A

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

small proportion of questionnaires contained criticisms but these were very few in number and covered a range of issues. Inspectors found no discernible trends and judge that these concerns were not representative of the school's overall provision. The school's own regular surveys of parents and pupils also provide positive feedback from parents.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Dearne Highgate Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 47 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 267 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	25	60	17	40	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	67	14	33	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	13	30	25	58	5	12	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	40	25	60	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	22	52	20	48	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	15	36	25	60	2	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	13	31	29	69	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	11	28	28	72	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	33	28	67	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	34	27	66	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	29	27	66	2	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	19	45	23	55	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	22	51	21	49	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



15 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Dearne Highgate Primary School, Rotherham S63 9AS

Thank you for your polite and friendly welcome when we inspected your school recently. This letter tells you what we found.

We judge your school to be providing you with a satisfactory education. There are some things that it does well and other things that could be better. We saw how kind you are to each other, the cheery way older pupils look after the younger ones, and how you all work happily alongside each other. Lots of you told us that Dearne Highgate is a friendly school and we agree with you. Young children in the Early Years Foundation Stage Unit do better now and standards throughout the school are rising. Your parents are making sure that more of you come to school regularly which is very important, so well done!

One reason for our visit was to see what your school could do to improve. We have asked your headteacher and the governors to:

- help you to reach higher standards in your work, particularly in writing and mathematics
- help the governors to check carefully what works well in school and what needs to be better
- ensure you learn more about the different groups of people who live in Britain and their cultures.

You can help your headteacher and all the adults by working hard and trying to keep your work very neat and well presented. One last thing – remember to come to school every day.

Good luck at the Voices festival!

Very best wishes for the future

Mrs Jane Hughes

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.