

# Thornhill Junior and Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107616
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kirklees
<b>Inspection number</b>	336922
<b>Inspection dates</b>	30 September –1 October 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Clive Moss HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	345
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs J Evans
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Ann Midgley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	0 May 2007
<b>School address</b>	Edge Lane Thornhill Dewsbury WF12 0QT
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at teachers' planning, pupils' work, the school's data on pupils' progress and records on individual pupils, minutes of governors' meetings, reports on the school, the results of surveys of parents and pupils carried out both by the school and for the inspection, including 79 parental questionnaires returned for the inspection.

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

- the effectiveness of the school's work to improve the progress made by different groups of pupils
- the progress of pupils at Key Stage 1
- the effectiveness of the school's work to promote good attendance.

## Information about the school

The school is larger than average. It serves a community with above average levels of social and economic disadvantage and a high proportion of pupils come from areas that are amongst the most disadvantaged nationally. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is three times the national average. Almost one quarter of the pupils has special educational needs and/or disabilities and the proportion has increased since the last inspection. The school includes a special resource for pupils with significant special educational needs and/or disabilities, which currently accommodates 19 pupils. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is less than half the national average, but this has also increased since the last inspection. The proportion of pupils whose first language is not or is believed not to be English is less than half the national average. The proportion of pupils who enter or leave the school at times other than the usual was above the national average in two out of the three years from 2006 to 2008. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is in the Reception Year.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Thornhill Junior and Infant School provides a good education for its pupils. It has some outstanding features, including the curriculum and the very high levels of care, guidance and support. These features, in particular, enable pupils to make good progress and reach above average standards of attainment overall by the end of Year 6. Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 have improved each year since the last inspection (and actually over a much longer period) and were above in 2008, for the first time. Results for 2009 show further improvement.

Pupils enjoy being at the school very much. This is shown by their excellent behaviour in lessons and around the school, in what they said to inspectors and in their responses to questionnaires. Pupils' behaviour makes a significant contribution to the very welcoming and orderly atmosphere at the school. Pupils feel happy and safe at the school. They say that the rare examples of bullying that occur are dealt with quickly and effectively by the staff. Exclusions are rare. Pupils' attendance is average. The school is very thorough and diligent in its efforts to promote good attendance and in challenging parents who request holidays during term time. While this has not been popular with all parents, overall, parents are strongly supportive of the school. They wrote many highly complimentary comments about the school, which were echoed in conversations with inspectors. It was not unusual, for example, to read, 'Thornhill J&I is a fantastic school. All the teachers are excellent and work very hard with the children.'

A rich, broad and varied curriculum captures the interest of the pupils very well. This is complemented by good quality teaching. Examples of outstanding teaching were seen during the inspection and the headteacher is rightly determined to raise the proportion of lessons that are outstanding. Teachers use assessment information well to build on the knowledge, skills and understanding acquired by pupils as they move through the school, but there is not yet a sufficiently close match between the learning experience of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the start of Key Stage 1.

The headteacher and senior staff have shown commitment and determination in bringing improvements to the school. They enjoy the support of a well-organised governing body. The staff are highly motivated and work together very well. This is reflected in the school's achievement of the Investors in People standard. The school's capacity for further improvement is good. Self-evaluation is accurate and draws upon careful monitoring of what is happening to pupils, with a sharp focus on their progress and the standards they are reaching. The school has taken various actions that contribute to promoting community cohesion, but has not developed its work based on a clear analysis of need in relation to the different strands of the community in which the school is located, the United Kingdom community and the global community.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
  - raising the proportion of lessons that are outstanding to 75% by the time of the next inspection
  - ensuring a closer match between the learning experience of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the start of Key Stage 1
- Complete the work begun to promote community cohesion by:
  - undertaking a more precise audit of the pupils' needs in relation to the different strands
  - devising plans for an appropriate set of actions to meet the identified needs
  - evaluating the impact of the actions taken on outcomes for the pupils and the community.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

In the lessons seen during the inspection, pupils showed a desire to learn and interest in the subjects being taught. Pupils concentrate well and make good progress with the work they are set. They sustain their concentration, even when they find the tasks difficult. There are no significant differences in the progress made by different groups of pupils at the school, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The different groups of pupils make equally good progress in lessons as a result of the attention given to their needs by teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils also provide good support to each other during lessons, which enables those experiencing more difficulty to keep up. Parents commented positively on the progress made by their children in surveys undertaken both by the school and for the inspection.

Using the national measures as an indicator, the amount of progress made by the pupils at Key Stage 2 was in the top 26% of schools in 2008. For mathematics, it was in the top 20% and in the top 14% for English. In 2008, the proportion of pupils who reached the more challenging Level 5 in their tests was significantly higher than might have been expected, given their starting points. Overall, boys do better than the average for boys nationally and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also do better than the average for these pupils nationally. In 2009, an even higher proportion of pupils attained Level 4 and the national indicators again show pupils making good progress.

The pupils are polite, friendly to each other and visitors, and very willing to engage in quite mature discussions and conversations. They show a remarkable degree of respect and support for each other, and this makes a vital contribution to the school's ability to integrate all its pupils into the life of the school, including those with significant special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has used the social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) programme well. The programme has led to pupils being more able to resolve problems and issues responsibly, resulting in the excellent

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relationships witnessed by the inspectors.

The pupils demonstrate good knowledge about how to stay safe. Many make sensible choices to eat healthily and they participate readily in sports and physical activities at breaks, lunchtimes and after school. This has been recognised through the school's achievement of the national Healthy School's award at the highest level. Pupils are closely involved in running the school's healthy tuck shop, and clearly see this as their business as much as the school's!

Pupils respond well to the varied opportunities provided at the school to undertake jobs and other responsibilities, such as acting as librarians and helping the youngest pupils. By making these jobs the subject of an applications process, controlled by the school council, the school increases the contribution the jobs make to pupils acquiring skills and attitudes that will stand them in good stead in later life. Despite the school's considerable efforts to promote good attendance, the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent doubled in 2008.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

## How effective is the provision?

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

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In the best teaching seen during the inspection, teachers' expert skills ensured that no time was lost and enabled pupils to concentrate for lengthy periods of time. Teaching assistants are deployed well, so that teachers are able to adapt lessons to meet the needs of individual pupils. Teachers use a good range of strategies to support learning and they focus on ensuring these strategies have demonstrable impact on pupils' progress. Pupils' progress during lessons is monitored carefully, so that teachers are able to give the pupils a clear indication of what they have done well and how they need to improve. Teachers have good knowledge of the needs of their pupils, using detailed and comprehensive information that tracks the progress and attainment of pupils to plan purposeful lessons. Most parents say that the teaching is good. Pupils have a general understanding of how well they are doing when asked, but are sometimes vague about how they can improve. They know their targets for improvement, but are not always able to describe them confidently.

The curriculum provides many and varied opportunities for pupils. When asked if they liked being at school, two pupils said, 'It's better than being at home!' and 'Yeah, you get to do lots of activities!' Such comments were typical of the things pupils said to inspectors. The school has attained the Artsmark Gold standard, the result, in part, of a sustained, strong commitment to music. Many pupils learn to play instruments. This provides them with opportunities to perform, in school and elsewhere, that notably increase their self-confidence. Pupils who returned during the inspection from a residential visit to Cliffe House and a day in Whitby to study aspects of history were able to reflect on these experiences when talking to inspectors and describe how, for example, they had learned to be more independent. The school has organised its own 'careers event', with many professions and trades represented, to help raise the aspirations of Year 6 pupils as they prepare to move onto secondary school. The curriculum is augmented by such activities regularly and frequently. Provision for pupils to learn about healthy living is extensive. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn about other communities, for example, through the recently formed 'twinning arrangement' with another, very different school. The curriculum is adapted very well to meet the needs of particular pupils and, accordingly, plays a vital role in enabling pupils with a very wide range of abilities and backgrounds to be included fully and make good progress. The school's buildings and grounds are well kept and make a very important contribution to pupils' enjoyment of school. In particular, the grounds are used well to support pupils' learning, as, for example, when pupils were involved in planting a small orchard.

The inclusive ethos is fundamental to all the work of the school and is reflected also in the outstanding level of care, guidance and support provided to pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has ensured that very close connections between the main school and the special provision for pupils with higher level learning needs and difficulties have brought benefits to pupils throughout the school, and the pupils show a high degree of care and respect for one another. Pupils are well aware of how to get help, if they need to, and show considerable trust in the staff. Those pupils with most need have regular access to a professional counsellor.

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Pupils know they are listened to and valued as individuals. As a result they grow in confidence and thrive at the school. Procedures for health and safety and risk assessments are carried out thoroughly. The very high standard of care provided to pupils is a significant factor in pupils feeling safe, their enjoyment of school and, consequently, the good progress they make.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b> Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	<b>2</b>
	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Senior leaders at the school are well motivated and demonstrate sustained commitment to improving provision at the school. Systems for monitoring the quality of the school's work are firmly established and focus clearly on measuring pupils' progress. As a result senior leaders have a good understanding of the areas of strength and relative weakness at the school, and ensure that all groups of pupils make similarly good progress. Well-targeted work to improve pupils' reading and writing has helped to improve both the rate of progress pupils make at Key Stage 2 and their results in national tests. Performance at Key Stage 1 has fluctuated, but remained broadly similar to what it was at the last inspection.

Clear systems result in the day-to-day management of the school running smoothly. The school has achieved the Financial Management Standard in Schools. Policies and procedures for safeguarding, including clear roles and responsibilities, are in place, clearly understood by the staff, and include health and safety checks and detailed risk assessments. Almost all parents think their children are kept safe.

The school makes good use of pupils' views to identify areas for improvement. For example, the school council was consulted on what the school should do for newly arrived pupils. The work has been recognised by the recent award to the school of the national Investors in Pupils standard. The school has good knowledge of the views of parents and carers and surveys these frequently. The surveys carried out by the school show high levels of satisfaction with the work of the school, which are reflected in the survey carried out for the inspection. The school has demonstrated considerable commitment to working with parents and is constantly seeking ways to involve more of them in the life of the school. As a result, for example, there is an increasingly effective parent/teacher association and the proportion of parents attending parents' evenings has risen significantly. The school continues to work closely also with a broad range of external agencies and other partners, including the education psychology service and



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speech and language therapist, to the clear benefit of pupils.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of personal skills, attributes and abilities below those expected for their age, particularly in relation to their communication, language and literacy development. They make good progress, in part as a result of teachers' effective use of good resources. Teachers focus activities well, so that even children with the highest levels of need are able to take part. Individual children's progress is monitored well and this has enabled teachers to reduce gaps in the skill levels of boys and girls, for example. The Early Years Foundation Stage is led well and managers are fully a part of the whole-school drive for improvement. The school holds the Effective Early Learning award for its work. Recent improvements have resulted in better communications with pre-school settings, which are improving transition to the school. Other improvements to assessment systems mean that children's needs are identified early and effective strategies put in place to support children's good progress. Links with parents are very positive as a result of a combination of strategies to encourage parents to be involved in the education of their children, including home visits to provide support.

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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

### **Views of parents and carers**

Parents are highly supportive of the school. Many agree strongly that their children enjoy school and are kept safe. A substantial majority think that their children make good progress and that they are kept well informed as parents. Predominantly, they think that the teaching at the school is good. Only a small minority of parents raised any concerns and these usually related to individual and particular events. Of those parents who responded to the inspection survey, a very small minority thought that the school did not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour, but inspectors witnessed excellent behaviour by pupils and were told by them that the school deals very effectively with misbehaviour.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Thornhill Junior and Infant 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 79 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 345 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	84	66	43	34	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	81	63	44	34	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	67	52	58	45	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	73	57	49	39	2	2	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	82	64	45	35	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	83	66	38	30	3	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	78	61	46	36	2	2	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)	57	46	63	50	3	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	69	54	53	41	5	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	55	44	58	46	6	5	5	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	58	47	53	43	10	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	68	54	58	46	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	80	63	45	35	2	2	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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



Inspection of Thornhill Junior and Infant School, Dewsbury WF12 0QT

Thank you for talking to my colleagues and me and making us welcome when we visited your school recently. We spoke with you in lessons, around the school and in groups, looked at your work, read the results of questionnaires filled in by you, your teachers, and your parents/carers, and spoke with some of your teachers. Here is a summary of our main findings, which I hope will be of interest to you.

- Thornhill Junior and Infant School provides you with a good education. Some of the things it does are outstanding.
- You make good progress from your starting points when you join the school and the standards you reach by the end of Key Stage 2 are above average.
- Your attendance is satisfactory, but the percentage of pupils who are absent a lot has increased, despite considerable work by the school to encourage good attendance.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you told us that the few problems there have been were dealt with well by the staff. You help to make the school a warm and welcoming place in which to learn.
- Most of your parents think the school is doing a very good job.
- The school provides a wide range of activities that excite you and are helping you to learn more.
- The school provides you with excellent care, support and guidance, including those of you who need additional help, which you appreciate greatly. This helps you to get the most out of school.
- The headteacher and the staff at the school have a good understanding of what needs to be done to make things even better.

I have asked the headteacher and the staff to make sure that even more lessons are outstanding and to think of ways to make it even easier for the youngest children at the school to move into Key Stage 1. I have asked the school also to complete some particular pieces of work that should result in more opportunities for you to understand about different communities to your own. Many of you already make a very important contribution to the school and I am sure all of you will want to do everything you can to support the staff in making Thornhill Junior and Infant School better still.

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