

# Sandhill Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106583
<b>Local Authority</b>	Barnsley
<b>Inspection number</b>	355976
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 September 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Nigel Cromey-Hawke

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>	246
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Eileen Parry
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs J Hirst
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 February 2008
<b>School address</b>	Dearne Street Great Houghton Barnsley S72 0EQ
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<b>Email address</b>	sandhill.primary@barnsley.org

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 10 lessons, observing nine teachers and all classes. They also held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils, and parents and carers. They observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, including development planning, self-evaluation records, policies and performance data. Questionnaires from 34 parents and carers, 115 pupils and 23 staff were scrutinised.

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

- Whether the dip in pupils' performance since the last inspection has been recovered across all areas of the school.
- How robustly pupils' absence is being tackled.
- How well the curriculum and other actions to promote community cohesion are helping to develop pupils' understanding of, and contact with, the diversity of the world.

## Information about the school

Almost all pupils at this average size school are of White British heritage, and none speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion known to be eligible for a free school meal is above average. The school has Healthy Schools, Active Mark and Basic Skills Quality Mark awards. The school has suffered significant staffing disruption since the last inspection, including the secondment of its headteacher to support another school.

**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

Sandhill Primary is a satisfactory school. It is improving securely after a dip in achievement, following a period of lack of staff continuity. It has some good features, notably pupils' behaviour. The small number of parents and carers who returned the inspection survey are highly supportive of most aspects of its work.

Children gain a good start to their learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage as a result of the good teaching, welfare support, curriculum and leadership and management. Progress throughout the rest of the school has varied considerably since the last inspection, with evidence of underachievement in mathematics, while progress in science rose to very good. Overall attainment at the end of Year 6 fell to low levels in 2008. As a result of concerted action by the headteacher and staff, attainment has risen again and is now broadly average. Progress across the school is now at least satisfactory and in some cases good. Progress for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good and in some cases outstanding. Better use of assessment and target-setting, more frequent and accurate tracking of progress and higher expectations have resulted in dramatically improved learning for many groups of pupils across the school. Teaching is satisfactory and improving strongly. Challenging the more-able, getting a good match of activities to pupils' needs and promoting independent learning remain underdeveloped in some lessons, however. The curriculum is beginning to contribute to improved outcomes for pupils with its skills-based approach. It is strong in the promotion of sport and uses good partnerships to help to promote pupils' outstanding awareness of healthy living. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall, although their understanding of cultural differences is underdeveloped.

Pupils clearly enjoy their time in school and say they feel safe. This is as a result of the good care, guidance and support they receive. Pupils take on good levels of responsibility in helping to run the school, including membership of the school council. While the promotion of community cohesion is good at a local level, it is underdeveloped in a wider sense. Attendance is broadly average, but the school recognises the need to improve the persistent absence of a small core of pupils. The leadership and management of teaching and learning are satisfactory but recent developments are bringing about rapid changes for the better. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses through its accurate self-evaluation and leaders have devised appropriate plans for the future. Its capacity for sustained improvement is, therefore, satisfactory.

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

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- Further raise attainment by making the quality of teaching and learning consistently good or better across the school, especially in relation to the levels of challenge provided, the match of activities to pupils' needs and developing pupils' abilities to work independently.
- Improve attendance, particularly in relation to that of persistent absentees, by developing more effective strategies that will impact upon pupils and parents and carers.
- Broaden pupils' understanding of the richness of the wider world and their contact with it.
- 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**

In the best lessons, pupils are fully engaged and make good progress as a result of the good teaching. Here, pupils work well collaboratively and respond to the good range of activities provided for them that match their needs well. Pupils enter Year 1 with knowledge, understanding and skills that are broadly average. Past inadequate progress through Key Stage 2 in mathematics and the low number of pupils achieving at the higher Level 5 in Year 6 are now being tackled. This is a result of a programme of support and challenge, helped by more stable staffing. The good assessment system and lesson observations show that the vast majority of pupils now make at least satisfactory progress, and in Years 2 and 6 many make good progress. However, some weaknesses remain in writing. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress as a result of the good support and guidance they receive. Attainment by the time pupils leave is broadly average across most of the school and improving. As a result, the majority of pupils are on track to meet the challenging targets the school has set itself.

Pupils say they feel safe and well looked after. Behaviour is good and often very good within the better lessons. Attendance is average. The majority of pupils attend well but there are high levels of persistent absence from a core of pupils. The school takes this very seriously, including taking legal action, but strategies used so far have had limited success. As a result, the promotion of pupils' future economic well-being is no better than satisfactory. Pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles as a result of the school's very strong focus on this area. They engage in a wide range of healthy activities and act as health ambassadors by organising activities within other schools. Pupils also make a good contribution to the daily running of the school, through the active school council and by taking on responsibilities as buddies and monitors and helpers around the school. Local community involvement is good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory, helped by the good social and emotional aspects of the learning programme and the focus upon building pupils' understanding of others' behaviour. Pupils' awareness of the diversity of the modern world and their wider cultural understanding is underdeveloped but improving.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
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	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</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>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory across the school but improving as staff new to the school or their roles develop more effective practice. In the better lessons, good planning ensures that varied activities are provided that meet the needs of pupils and good pace and challenge from the teacher stimulates their interest. The school has developed good assessment practices since the last inspection; in the good lessons the results of this clearly inform teaching and help teaching assistants target support sessions well. Too many lessons lack this rigour; with activities not as well matched to the needs of pupils and insufficient challenge for the more-able. There is frequently too much teacher direction and limited independent working, resulting in a slowing of progress and loss of interest amongst some pupils.

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is well planned and has a strong focus upon skills development and literacy and numeracy. Considerable work has been undertaken within mathematics and writing in response to identified needs within these areas and the impact upon outcomes is beginning to be seen. There is a good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities, enthusiastically taken up by a wide range of pupils. Provision for

<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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more-able and talented learners is being developed and history and information and communication technology are growing strengths of the school.

Well organised arrangements for the care of pupils contribute to their good personal development and well-being, and support their learning effectively. Clearly targeted support for groups of potentially vulnerable pupils has resulted in significant improvements for many, especially for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Regular meetings help to track progress well. Transition into and out of the school is good. The work of the parent support adviser is especially valued in responding to any day-to-day concerns of pupils. There is a growing programme of family learning that is well supported by parents and carers. The impact of all this work is seen in the warm, harmonious atmosphere of the school and the positive relations between pupils and adults.

*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>3</b>
	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The talented headteacher has responded well to the challenges of recent years, having stabilised the staffing team and begun a drive to establish greater consistency in the quality of teaching and learning across the school. This vision is shared by the staff and governing body. There is a clear and well-coordinated drive towards improvement that is beginning to have an effect. Self-evaluation practices are shared among subject leaders and the school has a clear idea of its strengths and areas for future development. The promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory, but the school is working hard towards narrowing the achievement gap between groups of pupils. Discrimination is extremely rare and when encountered is dealt with well. The governing body supports and challenges the school satisfactorily. Safeguarding procedures are good, with good practice being evident in site security. Partnerships with other agencies are good especially through the school's sports links and provision of training for staff. Community cohesion is promoted well at school and local level but is satisfactory overall. The school has a set of planned actions it is putting into effect, but it recognises that pupils' understanding of the diversity of the modern world and their contact with it are, as yet, underdeveloped. The school engages well with parents and carers through numerous meetings and newsletters and its website.

*These are the grades for 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

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</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>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge, understanding and skills that are generally below those typical for their age. They settle well and enjoy their learning because of the good care they receive and the warm, positive atmosphere. Children's needs and interests are quickly identified and there is a strong emphasis upon developing their early writing and language skills, where they make especially good progress. Learning is well recorded by adults and good assessment practices ensure that children's development is tracked carefully. Teachers communicate this regularly to parents and carers, who are very supportive of the provision the school provides. Children make good progress as a result of the good teaching in an environment that caters well for their needs. Children leave the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are broadly average. Those children with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress because of the extra support they receive. The teachers plan a wide range of activities with a good balance between those that they direct and those that the children choose themselves. As a result, behaviour is good. By the time they leave the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are able to play and work together well. The outdoor area is well used but the school recognises that the ways in which activities here link with literacy and numeracy work in the classroom are not always clear and is taking steps to develop this. Leadership and management are good, although the school would like to involve parents and carers more extensively in supporting their children's learning. Staff training is up-to-date, safeguarding measures in place and good plans in evidence for driving further improvement.



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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**

The majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaires are highly supportive of the school. They consider it provides a safe and caring environment for their children and that it is largely well led and managed. A very small minority feel that the school does not deal with unacceptable behaviour well. Inspection evidence indicated that behaviour is good and well managed. A few parents and carers felt that the school does not help them in supporting their children's learning but inspection evidence indicated that overall this aspect of the school's work is good.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sandhill 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 34 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 246 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	22	65	11	32	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	19	56	15	44	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	10	29	22	65	2	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	11	32	21	62	2	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	16	47	15	44	1	3	1	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	38	14	41	7	21	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	14	41	18	53	1	3	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)	12	35	15	44	3	9	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	10	29	21	62	3	9	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	8	24	18	53	7	21	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	8	24	22	65	2	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	15	44	17	50	2	6	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	15	44	19	56	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.**



13 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sandhill Primary School, Barnsley, S72 0EQ

Thank you for the warm reception you gave me and the team when we inspected your school recently. You were enthusiastic about what you do. You told us a lot of interesting things about your school and you are clearly proud of it.

Sandhill Primary is a satisfactory school. The headteacher, staff and governors are helping the school to improve. You get a good start to your learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and make good progress there because of the good teaching and support you receive. Your progress throughout the rest of the school is satisfactory but improving, and by the time you leave in Year 6 you reach broadly average standards. You say you enjoy school and feel safe and valued. Your behaviour is good and your understanding of what it means to lead a healthy lifestyle is outstanding. Well done! Attendance, however, is no better than average, because a small number of pupils do not attend as regularly as they could. Teaching is satisfactory with much that is good. It has a clear focus upon the important areas of English and mathematics. The care, guidance and support provided by the school is good, with good support from teaching assistants, especially for pupils who find learning difficult. As a result these pupils make good progress. We have asked the school to consider the following things that will help it improve further:

- make sure that all your lessons are at least good
- help you to understand the wider world and to increase your contact with it
- improve attendance further, especially for those who are repeatedly absent.

You can all help by telling your teachers how best you learn and attending regularly. I wish you the best for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Nigel Cromey-Hawke

Lead Inspector

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