

Hoyland Common Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106624
Local Authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	309179
Inspection date	31 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Rosemary Eaton

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	382
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs J Wilson
Headteacher	Mr P Sylvester
Date of previous school inspection	26 April 2004
School address	Sheffield Road Hoyland Common Barnsley South Yorkshire S74 0DJ
Telephone number	01226 369640
Fax number	01226 741025

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' personal development and well-being; the curriculum and other activities; and the quality of care, guidance and support. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation, national published assessment data and the school's own assessment records, observations of the school at work, discussions with pupils and representatives of senior staff and the governing body, a scrutiny of school documents, and parents' questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average sized primary school. Pupils' home circumstances differ widely but a high proportion live in areas that are socially disadvantaged. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. When they enter the Nursery, children's skills vary but are mostly below the expectations for their age. A smaller than average proportion of pupils has learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Partly due to the closure of another local school, Hoyland Common has this year absorbed 46 extra pupils across all year groups. The school moved into a new building in February 2007. It provides breakfast and after-school clubs. A children's centre is due to open in April 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. 'Sometimes, we're having so much fun that we don't want to go home!' With this remarkable assertion, pupils illustrate the immense pleasure they take from being part of the school. Their enthusiasm shines out and is a key factor in their outstanding personal development.

Pupils relish learning because lessons frequently include highly enjoyable activities. For instance, pupils play games that involve solving real life mathematical problems linked to the stock market. Additionally, pupils are helped to understand how well they are learning and what they need to do in order to meet their personal targets. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 were delighted to see that they all judged that their questioning skills had improved in the course of their literacy lesson. Throughout the school, 'learning logs' encourage pupils to think deeply about their preferred styles of learning. As a result, they identify songs as a particularly effective approach because they are catchy and information 'stays in your head'.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Lessons are full of variety with lots of practical tasks and opportunities for pupils to work together, discussing their ideas and becoming increasingly independent. Systems to track pupils' progress are sophisticated. As pupils learn, their targets become higher. Despite the school's success, teachers never rest on their laurels but keep finding ways to move each pupil forward. The school's leaders contribute strongly to this process. Each term, the gains made by every class are considered by the entire teaching team. This enables teachers to find out about the most effective teaching methods and to share ideas for speeding up the progress of any pupils who seem to be faltering.

National test results and the school's own assessments show that standards are above average and pupils' progress and achievement are outstanding. By the end of Year 6, far more pupils than average reach the higher levels in English, mathematics and science. The school has noticed that in the 2007 Year 2 and Year 6 tests, boys tended to be rather more successful in mathematics than girls. A plan has been devised to improve the girls' results. For instance, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils talked together about the equipment they would use to investigate reflection. This approach was successful because rehearsing their responses gave girls more confidence to volunteer to answer questions. Those who did raise their hands enjoyed the teacher's praise. It is too early to see the full impact of this work on girls' achievement and standards.

Pupils are extremely keen to pursue healthy lifestyles. The good quality curriculum is very helpful to them. It offers, for example, wide-ranging opportunities for physical activities in lessons and through very popular clubs. Girls and boys speak with pride about their teams' victories in sports and athletics. Pupils are equally energetic in the playground and a few parents are concerned that behaviour is sometimes too boisterous. In fact, pupils behave well, often in an exemplary manner, and they feel very safe. They say that their friends look after them and are confident that teachers or the headteacher would help with any concerns. The school provides outstanding care, guidance and support with very thorough attention paid to safeguarding pupils. Particularly vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported very sensitively, enabling them to achieve exceptionally well. Pupils respond very positively to the good opportunities for them to take responsibility and contribute to their community. For example, 'pupil community wardens' work alongside groups such as the police and fire service. Recently, they helped to check the speed of traffic on the road

outside the school, speaking to drivers who the police had asked to stop. Pupils share the concerns of parents and governors about the hazards posed by the road.

The school has made exceptional progress since its previous inspection, as a result of outstanding leadership and management. A particularly effective feature is the way in which the headteacher encourages and enables staff to develop and use their own leadership skills. Consequently, senior staff show initiative and take responsibility for important developments such as monitoring how well teachers promote learning. Systems such as this provide an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas where further developments are needed. Information gathered, including the views of all staff groups, parents and pupils, feeds into plans to tackle priority areas. For example, staff are working hard to increase the links between subjects in order to enable pupils to consolidate their learning and apply it in meaningful contexts. As a result, Year 2 pupils used information and communication technology to create a poster to promote model playgrounds they had designed and made. They practised skills from a variety of subjects through this exciting and relevant project.

The enthusiasm, commitment and teamwork of staff mean the school has an outstanding capacity to continue to improve. Extremely high expectations for pupils' achievement and personal development help to ensure that they are prepared exceptionally well for their secondary school career. They develop a host of relevant skills and qualities, becoming confident and caring young people, who successfully live up to golden rules such as, 'Always try your very best.'

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The Foundation Stage gets children's education off to an extremely good start. They settle very quickly into Nursery routines and soon find out that learning is great fun. Throughout the Foundation Stage unit, excellent relationships with staff successfully encourage children to behave extremely well and work and play together harmoniously. The curriculum is planned with great care and imagination and provides exceptional opportunities for children to be independent learners. For example, a group in the Reception year used small models to retell the story of 'The Elves and the Shoemaker' whilst others served in the shoe shop. The secure outside environment is used to the full. On a blustery day, children wrapped up warmly and had great fun stepping into a plastic tray of paint and printing with the Wellington boots they wore. Activities led by staff, for example, to promote writing and mathematical development, are adapted sensitively to match each child's stage of development. Teaching and learning are outstanding and ensure that most children leave the Foundation Stage reaching levels in line with the expectations for their age. Staff are constantly alert to opportunities to extend children's learning; for instance, by asking questions that make them think hard. They make careful notes of each child's progress which contribute to attractive and informative books recording their achievements. Leadership and management are exceptionally good. The Foundation Stage leader uses assessments of children's learning extremely well in order to continually refine what they are offered.

What the school should do to improve further

- To further improve girls' attainment and achievement in mathematics.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is 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	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
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?	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Inspection of Hoyland Common Primary School, Barnsley, S74 0DJ

Thank you for being so welcoming and helpful during my short visit to your school. I would particularly like to thank the large group who attended the meeting with me and talked about the school. I found this very enjoyable and useful. I want to tell you what I found out about the school. Hoyland Common Primary is outstanding and there are many reasons for this.

You told me how happy you are and that learning is fun. I can understand why, because you do so many interesting things in lessons and through clubs and visits. I was especially impressed with your enthusiasm for sport and being active generally. As you know, this is helping you to be fit and healthy. The school takes great care to make sure you are all as safe as possible, so you are right to have such confidence in the staff.

You make exceptional progress during your time at school and reach higher standards than pupils in many other schools. This, plus your outstanding personal development, means that you are prepared extremely well for moving on to secondary school. You do so well because you are taught particularly well.

Your headteacher and the staff are always on the lookout for ways to make the school even better. They have noticed that the boys often do better than the girls in mathematics. I would like the school to help the girls to improve in this subject. I am sure that you all, boys and girls, will continue to work very hard and benefit from all that your super school has to offer.

I want to send my best wishes to each one of you.