

Knottingley Vale Junior and Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108177
Local Authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	309608
Inspection dates	10–11 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Don Mason

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 on roll	
School	175
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Barry Paterson
Headteacher	Mrs L Maskill
Date of previous school inspection	3 November 2003
School address	Ferrybridge Road Knottingley West Yorkshire WF11 8JF
Telephone number	01977 722485
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The pupils come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds and most are from White British families. Their attainment on entry to school is well below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average overall, but varies considerably from year to year as does the number of pupils in each year group. The leadership of the school is shared between the headteacher who works three days and the deputy headteacher who steps up to headteacher for the other two days. A new, purpose-built Foundation Stage Unit was opened in 2004.

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 that enables pupils to achieve exceptionally well academically and personally. The key to its success is the vision and energy of the headteacher and the deputy headteacher who are supported by a well qualified, enthusiastic team of teachers, support staff and governors. Parents are hugely supportive of the school. They appreciate the way they are encouraged to become involved in school life through regular curriculum meetings, and opportunities to join their children in initiatives such as weekly literacy workshops and the French cafe. One parent summed up the views of many stating, 'I have been over the moon with the education and self-discipline my children have all received.' Pupils speak with great pride about their school. They thoroughly enjoy their activities and are appreciative of the many opportunities the school provides for them. Their outstanding personal development is evident in the respect and care they show for each other and the way they carry out their responsibilities in school, for example, when Year 5 pupils host the luncheon club for elderly neighbours. These opportunities, and responsibilities such as playground buddies, reading partners and house captains, enable pupils to make a very positive contribution to the community.

The flying start children receive in the Foundation Stage is successfully built on in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 so that standards overall are above average at the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics and exceptionally high in science. This outstanding achievement is brought about by high quality teaching and an exciting curriculum which meets the needs of pupils, of all abilities, very well. Pupils enjoy the interesting, practical activities and have lots of opportunities to talk together about their work. First-rate relationships between staff and pupils and the very high level of care provided ensure that all individuals feel safe, adopt safe practices and know that someone will help them if there is a problem.

The school's exemplary self-evaluation processes provide an example of the outstanding leadership and management. Everyone is involved including governors and the school council. All aspects of the school's performance are regularly reviewed, strengths and weaknesses identified and action taken to ensure that the school maintains its high standards and continues to move forward. The school has a wealth of assessment information about the progress made by pupils in all subjects. This information is not clearly presented in a way that allows staff to check progress quickly and set new targets for pupils. This is a relative weakness in an outstanding school.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children receive an excellent introduction to their school life in the Foundation Stage and make good progress in most aspects of their learning. It is outstanding in their social and personal development. Parents are thrilled with the provision, one stating, 'My daughter looks forward to going to Nursery and comes home every day talking of new things she has learned.' Most children are working well within the expected levels by the time they enter Year 1. Exemplary planning ensures that the learning objective for every activity, undertaken by the children, is clear and that all adults know exactly how to assist the children in their learning. Children enjoy their work inside and outside and there is a very good balance of teacher directed and child initiated activities. Self-evaluation, by the staff, is thoughtful and effective. An illustration of this is that boys' achievement is improving because their reluctance to take part in some

'desktop' activities is being overcome by providing them outside. Most pupils are working within the expected levels by the start of Year 1. The excellent quality of children's experiences gives them a very secure basis for their future learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Compile a concise, summary record of attainment so that pupils' progress towards meeting challenging targets can be easily checked.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

The outstanding start in Foundation Stage is successfully built on throughout the school with the result that standards at the end of Year 6 are above average overall and exceptionally high in science. This represents excellent achievement. There is some variation in standards, as seen in national test results, because of a higher than average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties in some small cohorts. The excellent support provided for these pupils ensures that they make as much, and often better, progress as their peers. Standards in English and mathematics have improved in the last two years due to improved teaching, particularly in writing.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school life, participate enthusiastically in everything on offer and attend well. Their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is outstanding overall. High expectations from staff and reward systems promote the pupils' thorough understanding of the rights and responsibilities of their membership of the school community. Their behaviour is outstanding. Pupils have a keen understanding of how to lead healthy lives and keep themselves safe. This is evident in their enthusiastic participation in sporting activities, such as 'wake up and shake up' and 'Fitbods', and their appreciation of healthy school meals and packed lunches. Pupils attain above average standards in the basic skills and make good progress in information and communication technology (ICT). In addition, they have many opportunities to work in pairs and teams and discuss their work. By these means, pupils develop skills which will serve them extremely well in the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons. This is because the teachers provide interesting activities, set work which meets their learning needs very well and do not spend too much time talking to the whole class. The purposes of lessons are made clear and pupils are regularly asked to reflect on them, and their achievements and what they need to do next. Progress in writing has improved significantly because pupils undertake practical activities and thoroughly discuss ideas so that when they come to the writing activity they are enthusiastic and able to experience success. Year 2 pupils, for example, eagerly wrote instructions for making fruit 'smoothies', but only after they had washed, tasted, blended real fruits and had an extended discussion about them. A large number of well trained support staff help teachers to ensure that pupils, especially

those with learning difficulties, get the support they need. The new interactive whiteboards, and work in ICT, are well used to promote pupils' interest and enhance their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Curriculum planning is exemplary. Topics make very good links between subjects and are taught in half-term blocks enabling pupils to study themes in depth. The activities provided are interesting and meaningful. Consequently, the curriculum provided contributes very well to the enjoyment, personal development and achievement of pupils of all abilities. The effectiveness of the curriculum was illustrated very well in a Year 1 'Three Bears' assembly. Work in a number of subjects, including literacy, numeracy and ICT, was linked seamlessly and presented very well. The pupils' progress and enjoyment was obvious for all to see. Lessons in science, and personal, social and health education promote pupils' very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. The curriculum is very well enriched by educational visits to art galleries, museums and theatres, visits from artists and crafts people, and after-school clubs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pupils achieve very well and make outstanding progress in their personal development because of high quality pastoral care and good academic guidance. Their self-esteem is enhanced by positive encouragement from the staff, awards, special assemblies and inter-house competitions. Pupils with learning difficulties are provided with intensive support, in small groups, by well qualified staff ensuring that they achieve well. Policies to ensure pupils' safety are securely in place. The academic guidance provided for pupils is good, especially in writing where they are given regular, clear advice about their achievements and how to further improve their work. The discussion of progress towards meeting the lesson's learning objectives is a very strong feature of teaching. Moreover, pupils are developing good skills in evaluating their own work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

A key factor in the success of the school is the ability of the headteacher and deputy headteacher to motivate and support all members of staff. Newly qualified teachers are given very good support in developing their skills. Subject leaders enjoy the considerable responsibility placed on them and appreciate the training, time and resources provided to enable them to carry out their leadership role effectively. Successful action, informed by the school's outstanding self-evaluation, has been taken in the last two years to raise standards in English and mathematics. This has been achieved by improving the teaching of these subjects and providing intensive support for those pupils in danger of falling behind. Pupils make good progress towards achieving the challenging targets set for them. The school has a wealth of assessment information about its pupils. The key information is not always readily accessible and this makes checking progress a time consuming activity.

As a result of excellent day-to-day management, the school provides a calm, friendly and purposeful atmosphere which is appreciated by parents, pupils and visitors. The school has close contacts with parents and strong links with local schools and outside agencies to promote pupils' development. Governors know the school very well because they meet regularly with

staff and the school council. Consequently, they are able to provide strong support and appropriate challenge. The capacity of the school to continue to move forward is outstanding and is illustrated in the improvements since the last inspection and recent improvement in achievement in English and 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	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	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?	1
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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
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	1
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 Knottingley Vale Junior and Infant School, Knottingley, WF11 8JF

The inspection team enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for being so helpful and friendly. We particularly enjoyed visiting your classrooms, seeing the work you were doing and talking to you about your school. You are proud of your school and have every right to be so.

We agreed that your school is giving you an outstanding education. You make outstanding progress in your work and standards at the end of Year 6 are above average. Standards in science are exceptionally high. You behave in a mature and thoughtful manner and your attendance is good. You tell us, and we could see for ourselves, that you enjoy your lessons because of the interesting activities and the many opportunities you have to talk together about your work. You show great appreciation for the many after-school activities and special events which the teachers provide for you, especially the sporting events and the responsibilities which you take on in school. You get on well with the adults in school and they take very good care of you.

The teachers have been working very hard to improve your progress in English and mathematics by providing you with more interesting activities and more advice about how to improve your work. You are becoming enthusiastic writers because the practical activities and discussion make you eager to put your ideas on paper.

Your headteacher and deputy headteacher, and all the adults in school, work very well together on your behalf. The teachers have so much information about how well you are doing that it is difficult to quickly check how well you are doing in meeting your targets. We think they need a simpler summary of your progress so that they can help you as much as possible.

You can help too by continuing to work hard, do your best and look after each other as well as you do now.

We wish you very well for the future.