

Thorne Moorends West Road Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106691
Local Authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	356002
Inspection dates	4–5 November 2010
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	326
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Elsey
Headteacher	Mr Kevin Flint
Date of previous school inspection	23 September 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 18 lessons and observed 15 teachers. Inspectors held meetings with governors, staff, parents and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, policies, assessment and tracking systems, safeguarding procedures and pupils' work. Inspectors examined questionnaires from 82 parents and carers, as well as those from pupils and staff.

- How effectively the school meets the needs of higher attaining pupils.
- Whether pupils, especially boys, do well enough in writing.
- How successfully children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are developing their language and independence skills.
- Whether the school systems to promote pupils' regular attendance are effective.
- Whether leadership and management are ensuring sustained improvement during the current period of transition within the senior leadership team.

Information about the school

Thorne Moorends West is larger than average when compared to other primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is larger than average. Most pupils are of White British heritage and very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is slightly larger than average. The school has achieved Activemark and the Basic Skills Quality Mark. At the time of the inspection, an associate headteacher was supporting the school full time for one term, following the promotion of the previous headteacher in July 2010. A newly appointed headteacher takes up post in January 2011. There was also an acting deputy headteacher.

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

Thorne Moorends West is a good school. Since its last inspection, it has developed apace due to good leadership and management and committed staff who are keen to improve. Parents and carers confirm that, 'this school has made a tremendous turnaround'. The school's performance has improved in many key areas and several strengths have emerged. Most notable is the outstanding progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This strong track record of continuing improvement in key areas and the successful overcoming of barriers to improvement, as well as accurate self-evaluation show that leaders understand the school's strengths and areas to develop well. A core of strong middle leadership ensures security of succession within subject and aspect coordination. All these characteristics demonstrate the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.

Parents, carers and pupils hold the school in high regard. They agree that 'it's a great place'. Pupils learn and progress well and attainment is above average. Although outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are rising, the progress made is satisfactory and does not consistently match the good progress found elsewhere in the school. Throughout the school pupils behave well. Attendance levels are rising very slowly and still hover stubbornly at the national average. Parents and carers describe the school as a local asset and praise senior leaders for instilling ambition and pride in the school. They also recognise the very positive steer provided by the interim leadership team, led for one term by an associate headteacher. He has skilfully consolidated the school's strengths in preparation for the incoming headteacher while developing the self-confidence of staff. Within a limited time frame he, along with the acting deputy headteacher, has identified specific areas to improve and has successfully set work in motion to address these. The supportive governing body is involved well in school life. However, it does not sufficiently shape or challenge the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on recently improved outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - ensuring that the quality of the outdoor environment and resources reflect those found indoors
 - ensuring that all children are able to choose independently whether to learn and play inside or outdoors throughout sessions
 - ensuring that adults speak clearly and precisely to children.
- Raise levels of attendance by:

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- decreasing the number of absences linked to pupils going on holiday during term time
- introducing better systems and more incentives to encourage parents and carers to send their children to school regularly.
- Increase the impact on outcomes of the governing body by:
 - developing the rigour with which the governing body holds the school to account in all aspect of its performance and work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils usually bring positive attitudes into the classroom and concentrate well in lessons. They take pride in presenting their work with care. As 'work buddies', they enhance purposeful talk and so develop effective speaking and listening skills. At times, behaviour is exemplary. This is particularly apparent in good and better lessons where pupils engage well with lively teaching. Pupils are articulate and confident and respond well to teachers' questions as they explain their thinking and strategies. The only time that pupils' attention wanders is during occasionally overly long explanations which dilute pupils' enthusiasm for the task set.

Generally, children join the school with skills that are lower than expected, particularly in language and social skills. By the time they leave Year 6, pupils' attainment is above average in English, mathematics and science. They achieve well and thoroughly enjoy their learning. Overall progress is good but is inconsistent between classes and there are occasionally wide swings in rates of progress between subjects, especially reading and writing. Progress accelerates particularly in Year 6 where teaching is very challenging. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn outstandingly well as they benefit from high quality programmes of targeted support led by skilful teaching assistants. Higher attaining pupils generally progress well especially in the lessons which include sufficient challenge to meet their needs. In the past, boys have not been making enough progress in writing but increasingly practical activities are starting to enthuse boys to participate more readily in writing tasks.

Pupils show a very secure understanding of how to eat healthily and stay fit. Pupils say they feel very safe in school and know who to turn to with problems. The majority of pupils attend regularly and arrive on time. However, a small minority miss too much school, often because they go on family holidays during term time.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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

How effective is the provision?

Teachers ensure that pupils' learning targets for reading, writing and numeracy are personalised and on their desks. These are given a high profile and teachers usually refer to them in class, particularly in lessons where the quality of teaching is either good or outstanding. The targets have made a strong contribution to improving provision and practice throughout the school. Teaching assistants work very effectively alongside teachers to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Adults help to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills very effectively and this, in turn, adds value to their writing. Where teaching is occasionally less successful, pupils lose motivation, usually due to overly long explanations by adults. Although levels of challenge are high for older pupils, this is not always so for other year groups.

The school is progressing well in making the curriculum its own. Developing links between curriculum areas enable pupils to start making links in their learning. Established national and global contacts help pupils to understand more about how people in different circumstances live their lives. There are good opportunities for enrichment both in and out of school.

The school merits its caring reputation. Instances of exemplary care are especially evident within the provision for pupils whose circumstances have made them vulnerable as well as the high quality support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Behaviour management is generally strong. However, although the school continues to

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work hard to encourage parents and carers to send their children to school regularly, more remains to be done to accelerate the rise in attendance levels. Currently too many pupils are taking term time holidays and school-led incentives are not sufficiently engaging all parents to send their children to school more regularly.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Strong leadership and management over recent years set the school on a rapid upward trajectory. A keen sense of ambition for pupils, parents, staff and the local community continues to drive the school forward. During recent changes in leadership the school is being successfully led by an experienced associate headteacher, in conjunction with an acting deputy headteacher. Their effective partnership ensures that the school's strengths continue to develop and embed in preparation for the next headteacher. Morale is high and there is a strong sense of teamwork as staff work together to bring about new improvements. Sustainability is high profile. The inner quadrangle is a green area devoted to the raising of chickens, guinea pigs and rabbits. Pupils take turns to groom and care for the animals and to feed them fruit and vegetables left over from mealtimes.

The satisfactory governing body has provided effective support over recent years, particularly in response to personnel issues. New governors are relatively easy to recruit. Nevertheless, the governing body does not make a sufficiently robust contribution to school self-evaluation, to the setting of school priorities or to gaining a rigorous overview of the school's performance. As a result, the governing body is a limited catalyst for improvement.

Leaders and managers at all levels, along with governors, promote safeguarding very well with close attention to detail. Policies and procedures reflect careful practice that is evident throughout the school and is recognised as effective by parents, carers and pupils. Adults promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination well so that all groups of pupils make at least good progress. Increasingly, previous gaps in achievement are closing. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are particularly well served by strong practitioners and very well targeted interventions and so make first-class progress in their learning. The school pays close attention to the views of stakeholders. There is a strong commitment to the promotion of community cohesion and the school understands its context well. Efforts are made to help pupils understand the diversity of British society and, as a result, pupils are able to talk coherently about festivals such as Diwali as well as different religions. During the inspection, the school reverberated to the rhythm of enthusiastic Bhangra dance and drumming.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle well and enjoy their first experiences of school. Parents appreciate the effective induction process and confirm that staff provide useful guidance. Children make satisfactory progress by the end of Reception across the six areas of learning. Although their skills and attainment are rising, they fluctuate from year to year. Last year, a far larger proportion reached the national average in communication, language and literacy and in their personal, social and emotional development. At this relatively early stage in the year, there is insufficient evidence to show that similar outcomes are consistently sustainable. The indoor learning environment is enhanced by attractive displays of children's work and interesting role-play corners such as the 'dark caves'. These engage children's curiosity and wonder as, for example, they discover more about light, shadow and how torches work. There have been improvements to the quality of the spacious outdoor environment since the last inspection. Children are able to choose some occasions to learn and play outside, although these are overly prescribed by adults and limit children's developing independence. The outdoor environment is currently underused and does not fully support children's ongoing learning and development. Adults engage children well in conversation, although the everyday language they use sometimes lacks clarity or precision.

Staff care well for the children and have a thorough knowledge of their backgrounds. Adults are familiar with the learning and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff assess and plan effectively and key people track closely and record children's progress in individual records of achievement so parents and carers know the progress their children make. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is in flux with a new leader to be appointed next term. The acting deputy headteacher has a clear overview of the setting and fulfilled this role at the time of the inspection.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	3
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

One quarter of all parents and carers returned the inspection questionnaire. These demonstrate how highly supportive parents and carers are of the school and reflect feedback from the school's own surveys. A very small minority of parents and carers expressed disagreement across a range of questions or individual concerns. There was no underlying pattern to these. Inspectors investigated the school's provision in all these areas and their views are reflected in the main body of the report. Overall, parents' and carers' views are similar to those of inspectors.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Thorne Moorends West Road 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 82 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 326 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	55	67	26	32	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	54	66	26	32	2	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	53	65	25	30	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	52	63	23	28	5	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	54	66	26	32	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	47	57	34	41	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	43	52	39	48	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)	48	59	32	39	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	51	62	25	30	6	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	36	44	40	49	5	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	45	55	28	34	6	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	46	56	27	33	6	7	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	55	67	25	30	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 all 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). 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">■ 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 pupils' 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.



8 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Thorne Moorends West Road Primary School, Doncaster, DN8 4LH

Thank you for your friendly welcome when I inspected your school with my colleagues. We enjoyed listening to your views and were pleased to see how proud you are of your school and the way it has moved forward. You told us that your headteacher has given you confidence and 'shown you how to be better'. I am writing to tell you what we found out during the inspection.

We judge that Thorne Moorends West is a good school. You learn well and develop good skills for future success. Those of you with special educational needs and/or disabilities make outstanding progress because of the careful support and guidance you receive. You behave well, take good care of one another and understand how to live safely and healthily. You told us that teachers make learning fun and we saw that during lessons. Senior leaders are determined to make the school better still.

Part of our job is to identify if there is anything your school could do better. I have asked your headteacher and the governors to improve three elements within the school. First, to develop further the children's skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Second, to ensure that all of you attend school regularly. You can help with this by reminding your parents and carers how important it is for your learning not to miss any school at all. Finally, we have asked the governing body to check more closely how well the school is performing.

On behalf of the inspection team, I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Jane Hughes

Lead inspector

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