



# Silkstone Common Junior and Infant School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 106589  
**LEA** Barnsley  
**Inspection number** 277591  
**Inspection dates** 30 November 2005 to 1 December 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs Jane Hughes CfBT Lead Inspector

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Moorend Lane
<b>School category</b>	Community		Silkstone Common
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 11		Barnsley, South Yorkshire S75 4QT
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01226 790471
<b>Number on roll</b>	129	<b>Fax number</b>	01226 790471
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr R Stier
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	9 October 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr P Evans

---

<b>Age group</b> 5 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 30 November 2005 - 1 December 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 277591
-----------------------------	--	------------------------------------

---

---

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an additional inspector.

## Description of the school

This small, but growing, rural school has few children eligible for free school meals. A very small number of children are from minority ethnic groups. They speak fluent English. Far fewer than average numbers of children have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school received a Department for Education and Skills (DfES) Achievement Award in 2001. It is one of two in the local authority to be involved in the Sustaining Success initiative, part of a Leadership Programme for high performing schools.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This outstanding school provides excellent value for money. Inspectors agree with the school's written evaluation of its own performance but judge the grades chosen to represent this very strong picture as modest. Tenacious in its pursuit of high quality education for all, the school maintains exceptionally high standards. For the last two years, the school has produced the best value added results in the local authority. The school has successfully addressed issues raised at the last inspection. Children achieve exceptionally well. Standards are significantly well above average at the end of the Reception year, Year 2 and Year 6, although fewer children attain higher levels in English in some year groups. By the end of the Reception year, children reach, and usually exceed, the expected standards and this gives them a flying start to Year 1.

This is a close knit school family where children are quick to say how much they enjoy learning. Their attitudes, behaviour and overall personal development are exemplary. Attendance is high. First class care, guidance and support for children help them to make the most of every moment here. Teachers relentlessly challenge children to do their best. The stimulating curriculum engages children and creates increasingly independent learners. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive first class support and achieve equally well. The staff team creates a place to learn that lifts the spirit and promotes a 'can do' culture. Parents say 'It's just wonderful'. Governors pursue the same goals of high achievement and happy children. There is ample capacity for further improvement.

### What the school should do to improve further

The school has well planned strategies to raise standards still higher. The school is right to focus on:

- maintaining the drive to improve pupils' achievement in writing, particularly at the higher levels.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 1

Children achieve exceptionally well. By Year 6, children's attainment is much higher than average. Children start school with standards a little above average. They achieve very well and, by the end of the Reception year, most exceed the standards expected for children their age. Achievement in English, mathematics and science continues to be outstanding in all year groups. Children now achieve better in information and communication technology (ICT) because the school has a purpose built ICT suite and teachers are skilled in using the technology. Greater emphasis on play-based learning in the Reception class is resulting in better achievement for the youngest children. Relative weaknesses are addressed with enthusiasm by subject leaders. There is an unwavering quest for improvement among staff. Rigorous analysis of children's performance identifies specific aspects to be targeted. For example, the school has a

focus on descriptive writing this year and this is clearly evident in each classroom. High quality surroundings and first class resources add to the successful outcomes for children.

Irrespective of learning difficulties and/or disabilities, levels of attainment, ethnicity, gifts or talents, children here achieve equally well. They respond with determination to challenging targets. Many attain these and such success provides a spur for even greater efforts and impressive achievement.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Children's personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. They are so happy at school, as their high attendance reflects. Children respond positively to all aspects of their learning and say they particularly like the new ICT suite. They relish lessons and try their best. Younger children demonstrate high levels of independence as they select their own resources and choose activities. There is an overwhelming sense of care and respect in this true 'learning family'. Assemblies are uplifting occasions with smatterings of spontaneous applause. Sweet singing in two part harmony ensures the 'tingle factor' is never far away. Children show commitment to a high moral code and strive to improve the lives of others. They are increasingly aware of the diverse nature of modern society.

Children have a clear understanding of safe practices and healthy lifestyles. New exercises to reinvigorate minds during lessons are popular with younger children. High quality relationships permeate classrooms. Self-confident five year olds talk about their classmates' good points. School councillors share their ideas and successes with pride. Children are involved in Young Enterprise schemes and organise fundraising events. The school is increasingly famous for its melodic orchestra which not only busks in the town but also performs for the mayor.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Teaching is outstanding, reflecting the school's keen commitment to children's learning. Children learn and achieve exceptionally well and appreciate their teachers. They say 'Every day you come home and you've got so much in your head that you've learned that's invaluable'. Parents agree that teachers are skilled practitioners who bring out the best in their children. A current focus on children's writing is helping to make their descriptive poetry and prose more exciting.

All teaching staff ensure consistency of approach in lessons. Skilful teaching assistants provide invaluable support as they work with small groups of children. Outstanding support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities helps them to make excellent progress. Adults and children strive for mutually agreed, challenging targets. As one child observed, 'If you ask for a challenge, you'll get a challenge'. Meticulous

assessment procedures enable differently aged children in the same class to make similarly outstanding progress. Teachers have become skilled at incorporating ICT into lessons and children say they look forward to this. Children are confident as they manipulate images to make repeating patterns or compose melodies with verses and a chorus. Coupled with the high standards they achieve in English and mathematics, children's skills are well placed to secure their future economic well-being.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

There is a very high quality curriculum that engrosses children from the time they first step over the threshold. Broad and rich, it provides great emphasis on pupils' personal and social development. Carefully planned visits and visitors to school extend children's knowledge of their surroundings and provide ample stimulus for learning. The new ICT suite, along with interactive whiteboards and laptop computers, allow children to hone their computer skills across a range of subjects. The extended building means children have more room now to make the most of all the exciting learning opportunities staff provide. Much improved extra-curricular activities promote children's skills, particularly in sport and music, although the small school hall places some limits, particularly in the winter. The school orchestra is a delight, serenading children, as they eat lunch, with high quality musicianship. Teaching assistants add a high quality dimension to the curriculum. As a result, children's confidence and skills increase.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

There is outstanding care, support and guidance for children. Dedicated teachers and support assistants work seamlessly alongside conscientious administrators and caretaking personnel. They create a clean, welcoming and highly stimulating place to learn where challenge and high expectation are part of the daily diet. The school makes good use of outside agencies and local authority support to ensure the needs of all children are very well met. Teachers encourage children to care for each other and to collaborate in lessons in order to extend their personal and social skills. Effective links with other local schools help children to transfer to the next stage of their education with minimum upheaval. Child protection procedures are secure and vulnerable children receive all the necessary support. Lunchtime staff ensure children are happy and well supervised. They have a clear understanding of children's dietary and medical requirements and take a keen interest in promoting healthy eating.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The school benefits from the highest quality leadership and management. Undaunted by robust challenges that face a small school, the headteacher provides highly focused yet supportive leadership. Taxing targets are set and usually exceeded. His skills are held in high regard locally; national achievement awards bear testament to the school's

continuing success. The deputy headteacher, appointed since the previous inspection, has brought new skills to the senior leadership team. This functions very effectively to sustain high performance in all areas of the school. Energetic and skilled subject coordinators ensure that staff regularly evaluate their high quality work in an effort to improve still further. There is no room for complacency here. Correct and manageable priorities for development enable staff to focus on specific areas that will have most impact on children's achievement. For example, the much improved ICT provision occupies a firm place within the curriculum and rightly commands a high focus. A more recent priority is to raise the standard of pupils' writing. The school seeks affirmation from parents and pupils that it is providing just what they want. One parent commented 'Staff have an in depth knowledge of my children . knowing how to motivate them to learn and reach their potential'. The school listens carefully to its partners and often acts on their opinions.

Conscientious governors bring individual expertise into school, adding to its many strengths. The governing body has an impressive knowledge of the school's priorities and supports the school in its quest to provide 'excellence and enjoyment' for the whole school community.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
--	-----------------------	--------------

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	1	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	NA

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

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

I was delighted to meet you during my recent visit. Thank you all for being so friendly and telling me about your school. I particularly enjoyed our lunchtime chats!

There are many excellent things to be proud of in your school. Here are some I liked the most:

- you are so friendly to each other, and to visitors, and take great care of everyone
- Mr Evans and all the adults look after you very well
- you all make outstanding progress because your teachers prepare challenging lessons and you all work really hard
- everyone crams as much as possible into each day and no time is wasted
- the ICT suite and classroom laptops help make lessons fun and you say that you enjoy using them
- the school orchestra and your beautiful singing are truly inspirational.

This is what I have asked your school to do now so it will be even better:

- continue helping you to become even better at writing, particularly descriptive writing.

You could start by counting the number of 'wow' words in my report, as many of you told me you already enjoy this aspect of your English work!

I hope you continue to work hard and enjoy school. Congratulations on helping to make your school so successful.