



Limpsfield Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107040
LEA Sheffield
Inspection number 277691
Inspection dates 20 March 2006 to 21 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Jane Hughes CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Jenkin Avenue
School category	Community		Brightside
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		Sheffield, South Yorkshire S9 1AN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0114 2430925
Number on roll	226	Fax number	0114 2430925
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr P Price
Date of previous inspection	10 January 2000	Headteacher	Mr J Bainbridge

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This average sized school serves a mixed community with pockets of real social disadvantage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. A higher than average proportion of pupils is from minority ethnic groups with an average number speaking a language other than English as their mother tongue. The proportion of pupils designated as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) is below average. The school has the following awards: Achievement Award 2002; Basic Skills Quality Mark 2 2006; Healthy Schools' Active Mark 2004; and Artsmark Gold 2002.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and improving school that provides satisfactory value for money. The school is too generous in some aspects of its self-evaluation but is now clear about linking evidence with impact on pupils' achievement. Standards of attainment are below average by Year 6 but pupils' achievement is improving. There is a commitment in school to make things better and the correct priorities have been identified so that this can happen. There is evidence that recently implemented strategies are having a positive impact on pupils' attainment and achievement, as seen in pupils' much improved performance in mathematics and science in 2005, and in English this year. The school now needs to use data more effectively to provide greater clarity for leaders about its performance. Stimulating teaching includes some outstanding features, although there needs to be a stronger focus on reminding pupils how to improve their writing skills in all their work, not only English. The rich curriculum offers pupils diverse opportunities to gain in self-worth through performance and creative arts. Walls overflow with examples of pupils' best quality work and they appreciate that their work is valued so publicly. Pupils' personal growth is strong. Attendance is average and well promoted through effective mentoring. Pupils enjoy school and behave well in lessons. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The charismatic headteacher evokes a strong ethos of care and guidance. This nurtures pupils' well-being so they flourish and become well-rounded individuals set for future success. The school has addressed effectively the issues from the last inspection and has the capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' achievement, particularly in English, by giving pupils better guidance and opportunities to use and improve their writing skills in other subjects.
- Improve the analysis and interpretation of assessment information to identify and monitor improvements.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Inspection findings judge achievement and standards as satisfactory overall, although the school judges them as good. Most pupils join the school with below average skills, with many particularly weak in writing. Some pupils also present very challenging behaviour and disaffection from school. In 2005, the school achieved its best ever results in mathematics and exceeded its targets. Standards in mathematics and science in Year 6 were broadly average and this represented satisfactory progress in these subjects. Pupils' current work confirms that these improvements have been sustained. However, because too few pupils reached expected levels, progress and achievement is only satisfactory overall. The school missed its targets for English and pupils' achievement was very low. Standards remained significantly below average in English because pupils' attainment in the writing element of the tests was far below

expectation, However, there are now signs of improvement. Standards in pupils' work have risen this year and pupils' attainment in English is getting closer to the average. Inspection evidence and the school's own data show pupils' achievement is improving. This is due to the school's hard work in constructing a new English programme of study, which better reinforces the skills pupils need to develop. More pupils are now on track to reach higher levels in 2006. Pupils with LDD make satisfactory progress as do those from minority ethnic groups and those eligible for free school meals.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Inspectors judge pupils' personal development and well-being to be good, although the school's judgement is outstanding. Pupils really enjoy coming to school and say it is fun. One school leaver wrote, 'I have had the best time ever'. Pupils respond well to the many lively activities the rich curriculum offers and take pride in producing their best work. They listen attentively to teachers in lessons and behave well in class and around the building. More boisterous behaviour and less self-control is evident outside, although pupils generally respond well if adults intervene. The new lunch menu and fruit tuck shop are big hits and pupils appreciate a whole range of nutritious foods. Pupils join in extra-curricular activities with gusto and are very appreciative of the camping opportunities and other visits. These build their self-confidence. One parent summed up the comments of many with, 'each child is given self-esteem by the bucketful'. Although pupils regularly and happily express their opinions to staff, there is no school council to channel their ideas into action. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They become caring members of the community, offer help gladly to younger pupils and display an increasingly spiritual element in their eye-catching creative work, which is carefully displayed around the school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. There is a developing strength in the use of assessment in English that is helping to raise pupils' rates of progress. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and comment carefully so that pupils are clear about how they can improve their work. Even so, more attention could be paid to promoting pupils' literacy skills through marking in other subjects. Lessons are well planned with teachers achieving a consistency of approach by sharing their planning. Success in lessons is based around good relationships between adults and pupils. Staff help pupils to build their self-confidence through constant encouragement, engrossing activities, and the creation of a good learning atmosphere. Pupils show a sense of enjoyment and concentrate well when teachers are working with the whole class, as when pupils discuss how to improve the quality of their descriptive writing. The best teaching gives pupils chances to work independently, in small groups and as a whole class. This was exemplified by a class of Year 3 pupils developing note-taking skills where the good

pace was interspersed with well-judged changes in activity. However, in a few lessons, too long is spent on the same activity so that pupils' attention drifts. The diagnosis of what pupils with LDD need to succeed, coupled with good levels of adult support, enables them to make satisfactory progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good, meets national requirements, and continues to develop. Improvements have been made to teachers' planning, leading to improving standards. The needs of gifted and talented pupils are taken into account, as are those for pupils with LDD. The school has a recognised strength in the arts, which are used to make learning fun and relevant to pupils' individual needs, as well as providing good cultural experiences. Visits pupils make and visitors to the school, such as the Young Shakespeare Company, are used well to help bring interest and breadth to pupils' experiences. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 take part in a residential school camp that helps them respond to different challenges and develop their social skills. The school has increased its range of out of school clubs in response to parents' comments. An enticing range of opportunities encourages pupils to make healthy exercise part of their daily lives and to be increasingly aware of safer life choices. Pupils could cope with more formal opportunities to shape the school community such as through a school council, which would also hone skills useful in the workplace.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Staff show good levels of care, guidance and support for all pupils. They give equal weight to the emotional well-being of pupils as to their academic needs, an aspect valued by pupils and parents alike. One parent said, 'there is a spiritual element to the care'. Staff understand the care individual pupils need. Effective support and mentoring staff help pupils to overcome difficult personal hurdles. Pupils say the headteacher 'wants this to be a happy place'. Behaviour management is consistent in lessons. However, the school grounds have lots of awkward spaces and more supervision is needed at lunchtimes to continue to promote good behaviour. Good links with other agencies ensure pupils get the right support. There are effective programmes to help pupils settle and to prepare them for secondary school. Child protection and risk assessment procedures are thorough. Pupils are taught about healthy choices and the 'fruit tuck shop' is popular. Teachers set pupils targets in English and mathematics and these are used well in class. However, there is insufficient collation of this information to guide whole school evaluation.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management are satisfactory, although the school judges them as good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a firm understanding of the

school's main priorities even though some judgements about the school's current position are too generous. There is a strong commitment to raise standards and accelerate pupils' progress without losing sight of the overarching ethos of 'developing the whole child'. Although the school made a good start by improving standards and achievement in mathematics and science last year, the decline in English attainment has proved far more difficult to halt. Commendably, the school looked with determination beyond its own expertise for ways to address this issue two years ago. The English team leaders developed a new programme of study this year and evidence of improved standards is visible in pupils' work. Nevertheless, leaders need to have a clearer overview of current attainment, achievement and predicted progress. The data the school collects need to be presented in a more accessible format. The school has recently developed a team coordination approach to subject leadership and this works well. Governors fulfil effectively their statutory responsibilities and ensure the school spends its money wisely. They have a better understanding of the school's priorities. Previously, they did not always hold the school to account with sufficient rigour but they now play an active part in challenging the school's work. The school liaises well with other learning partners to meet the needs of all pupils. Parents are loyal supporters of the school and feel their opinions are welcome and valued. A good number are 'reading volunteers' and are helping to improve pupils' reading skills.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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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?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
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
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
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
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
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
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
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

Thank you for making our recent visit to your school so enjoyable. You were all so helpful and made us feel very welcome. We enjoyed meeting and speaking with you. Here are some things we like about your school. You'll see that we agree with you about lots of things.

- Limpsfield is a warm and friendly place that really tries to help each one of you make the most of every day at school, whatever your problems.
- Your passion for the creative and performing arts is clear for all to see in the eye-catching displays of your work all around the school. The massive prints of your extended writing are great fun to read.
- You listen carefully to your teachers, try hard in lessons and answer lots of questions - you also asked us quite a few which we enjoyed!
- The separate community computer suite and public library within the school help your school to play an important part in the local area.
- The school organises lots of fun activities, productions and trips for you and we know you enjoy these very much.
- Mr Bainbridge knows what the school needs to do next to improve. He, along with your deputy headteacher and all the staff and governors are working hard to help you to do the best you can.

This is what we have asked your school to do now to make it even better. See if you can think of some ways to join in with their efforts.

- Help you to do even better in English, mathematics and science.
- Carry on improving your writing skills as you have done this year.
- Look at ways to improve your writing in lessons like science.
- Look even harder at all the information teachers collect about how well you learn so you can become even more successful learners.

Carry on working hard and enjoying school!