



Thorne Moorends West Road Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106691
Local Authority Doncaster
Inspection number 287588
Inspection dates 10–11 January 2007
Reporting inspector Rajinder Harrison

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	West Road
School category	Community		Moorends, Doncaster
Age range of pupils	3–11		South Yorkshire DN8 4LH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01405 812734
Number on roll (school)	375	Fax number	01405 740874
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs D Atkins
		Headteacher	Mrs Lynne Morris
Date of previous school inspection	5 November 2001		

Age group 3–11	Inspection dates 10–11 January 2007	Inspection number 287588
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large school. It is larger than average, with very few pupils from minority ethnic origins. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. An average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children's attainment on entry to the school is well below what is normally expected.

An acting headteacher has led the school since January 2006. Consultation is taking place to consider amalgamation with the other school in the village of Moorends. The school has a large number of temporary teachers.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. The quality of education has declined since the last inspection and the school's self-evaluation is inaccurate in many respects.

The pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Pupils feel happy and secure and enjoy school. Relationships are good and, while most pupils behave well, the school had a relatively high number of exclusions last year. The range of activities beyond the curriculum is good. The pupils know how to follow safe and healthy lifestyles and they have a satisfactory understanding of their role as young citizens.

Effective arrangements in the Foundation Stage enable children to make a good start to their learning; standards are just below the expected levels at the end of the Reception year. However, standards by the end of Year 2 are exceptionally low, and they are well below average at the end of Year 6. Pupils make inadequate progress and a significant number underachieve throughout the school. The overall curriculum is inadequate as there are weaknesses in the arrangements for promoting pupils' skills in literacy; standards are lowest in English. In addition, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are not provided for adequately: their progress is unsatisfactory.

Leadership and management are inadequate. With many key managers being in temporary positions, the school faces considerable problems with its staffing arrangements. The capacity to improve is therefore poor, as is the value for money the school provides. Supported effectively by the local authority, the acting headteacher and some key managers have begun to introduce appropriate strategies to bring about improvements and drive up standards. However, the collection and analysis of relevant data to monitor and evaluate the school's performance accurately have only recently started to take shape and therefore the impact of this work has been minimal. Progress has been further hampered because nearly half of the teachers are temporary, and the school has not been able to secure continuity and consistency in its work. So, while monitoring procedures have been introduced in the last year, the quality of teaching has not improved enough to raise pupils' achievement. Teaching and learning are inadequate.

While the school takes satisfactory care of its pupils, the arrangements for their academic guidance and support are inadequate; pupils are not always sure of how to improve their work. Pupils' progress is further affected by poor attendance. This has been below the national averages for some years.

What the school should do to improve further

- Establish stable staffing arrangements and ensure that leadership and management have a relentless focus on driving up achievement and standards throughout the school.

- Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils of all capabilities are fully challenged and understand how to improve their work.
- Improve curricular arrangements for literacy and the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- Improve attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Standards are well below average and many pupils underachieve. In the Foundation Stage, most children start with skills and knowledge that are well below the expected levels in all the areas of learning. Skills in literacy are particularly weak. Children settle quickly and progress well. At the end of the Foundation Stage attainment is below the levels expected of children aged five, with literacy still the weakest area.

In Years 1 and 2, progress is unsatisfactory because teaching is inadequate. Standards were exceptionally low in reading, writing and mathematics in the school's 2006 national assessments. Mathematics is improving, following the introduction of appropriate strategies to raise achievement, but overall standards remain well below average because of significant weaknesses in the teaching of literacy.

In the national tests for Year 6 in 2006, the school failed to reach its targets, and standards in English bordered on being exceptionally low. Standards in mathematics improved slightly, when compared to the previous year, but overall standards remain well below average. Pupils' overall achievement is inadequate and standards are not rising quickly enough because teaching in these subjects is inadequate.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also make unsatisfactory progress because arrangements for their support are inadequate.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils say that they like the school. They enjoy helping by, for example, being play leaders or looking after the school garden. Pupils speak highly of feeling valued by staff, but some pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 voice their concerns regarding the high number of teachers they have had in the last two years and how this has adversely affected their learning and enjoyment of school.

Pupils understand the importance of following healthy lifestyles. They say that they like sport and many attend the numerous clubs and physical activities on offer. Pupils' attendance is, and has been for the last four years, below the national average despite significant improvements. Attendance figures are brought down by the many parents who take their children on holidays in term time. This has an adverse effect on these pupils' progress. While most pupils behave well in classrooms and around the school, overall behaviour is satisfactory, with a significant number of pupils excluded last year because of their unacceptable behaviour.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. They benefit from strong international links to a Ugandan school, learning to respect and consider the needs of others. Residential visits for Years 5 and 6 have been successful in enhancing pupils' social skills. Pupils contribute satisfactorily to the local and wider community through charity appeals and participation in, for example, the Young Voice performance. They are enthusiastic about moving to the secondary school but the weaknesses in their basic skills set them at a disadvantage in this next stage and in their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

Although there are pockets of good and outstanding teaching within the school, for many pupils learning is disjointed and inadequate because the quality of teaching is inconsistent. As a result pupils have increasing gaps in their knowledge and understanding. Teachers plan activities that interest pupils but these often fail to challenge pupils of different abilities. In many lessons the pace is too slow for the more able pupils, who are often held back. The lower-attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities cannot always fully join in because work is too hard for them. Teaching assistants are deployed efficiently to support pupils who need extra help but, because teachers often do not refer to pupils' individual targets, work is not accurately matched to pupils' needs and many fall short of their targets.

Relationships between staff and pupils are good. Pupils' behaviour is generally managed satisfactorily and most pupils respond positively to explicit guidance and instruction. Those who attend school regularly want to learn and, when teaching is good, they take part very enthusiastically.

Work is marked regularly and often encouraging comments are added but advice to pupils on how to improve their work is limited. The introduction of individual targets and detailed arrangements for assessment are too recent to have had any significant impact on ensuring effective learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 4

The curriculum meets statutory requirements and is planned to meet the needs of most pupils but, because monitoring procedures are not rigorous enough to ensure effective classroom practice, overall curricular provision is inadequate. For example, appropriate strategies have been introduced to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities but in practice these pupils are not always supported adequately. Similarly, the more able pupils are not always challenged fully. Hence these groups often underachieve. In addition, insufficient emphasis on promoting pupils' skills in English, particularly speaking, an issue raised in the last inspection, has

led to pupils underachieving in English. Children in the Foundation Stage make a good start because learning experiences are well structured and fully engage their interests.

Visits out of school and many visitors, including authors and musicians, help to stimulate pupils and bring learning to life. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the recent introduction of themed events, for example writing and multicultural weeks, because they say such experiences help them learn so much. Many extra-curricular sporting and arts activities, which are very popular with pupils, contribute to their adopting healthy lifestyles and raise their awareness of the world beyond school. A satisfactory programme of personal, social and health education ensures that pupils understand how to keep safe and become helpful young citizens.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 4

The level of support, welfare and guidance provided for all pupils is undermined by the lack of a clear lead on the support for, and monitoring of, provision for vulnerable pupils and those with behavioural problems and learning difficulties. Because of this, pupils who need extra support, either for behaviour or in relation to their performance and progress, do not always receive the specific help they need. Systems to help pupils understand their learning, and for teachers to assess the learning, are not securely established. Pupils do not always understand what their targets for learning mean or how they are to achieve them.

Effective procedures for child protection are in place and appropriate checks are made on staff new to the school. Children settle very quickly into the Foundation Stage because of the very secure introductory arrangements, such as home visits. Health and safety arrangements are satisfactory.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

The school has considerable instability in staffing. Many key posts are temporary. The acting headteacher, supported well by some key managers, has made a good start in introducing strategies to combat significant areas of underachievement, but these are not yet sufficiently developed to drive up standards. Improvement has been further impeded because nearly half of the teachers hold temporary positions so the school has been unable to ensure consistency and continuity in its provision. In addition, as many subject leaders and key managers are new to their roles, improvements have been slow to take effect. These factors adversely affect pupils' achievement.

The school is developing a clear view of what needs to be done to speed up improvement, for example in monitoring teaching more robustly. However, there is currently not enough evidence of this having sufficient impact. The governors are kept informed, and they provide an adequate level of challenge to the senior leadership team, checking that strategies are implemented and monitored. A clear sense of common purpose is emerging among the school community, including parents, who

are increasingly involved in their children's learning. The local authority has provided a high level of support to strengthen the leadership skills of senior managers. However, all these recent changes have yet to improve teaching and learning sufficiently to raise achievement. As a consequence, pupils are not achieving as well as they should and have much ground to make up.

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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?	4
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	4
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	4
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	4

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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for talking to us. This is what we found out from our visit. We enjoyed meeting you and thought you were very friendly and polite. We would also like to thank your parents for filling in the form that gave us their views about the school. It was good to see that they are pleased with the school and feel that you are well looked after there. It was particularly interesting listening to you talk about your writing week, all the clubs that you go to and why fruit is good for us.

We found out many interesting things about your school in the short time we had there. These are:

- you like school and make good friends
- you like your teachers and other helpers and always try to do your best
- you are kind to each other and help each other whenever necessary
- you are learning to become fit and healthy
- your teachers organise interesting clubs and trips for you to take part in.

While these are some of the good things, it is our judgement that your school needs special measures to help to make it successful. Because of this inspectors will be coming back to see how well the school is doing. The school needs to make sure that:

- you have the same teachers all the time in your classes so that you reach higher standards, particularly in literacy
- your lessons are better lessons and they help you understand how to improve your work so that you learn more
- your literacy lessons improve and children who need extra help get it in all lessons.

You can also help by telling your parents how important it is for you to attend school regularly and on time.

We are sure you can do really well if you receive this help. We hope you continue to work hard and have fun at school.