

# Netherthong Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107660
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kirklees
<b>Inspection number</b>	287884
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Peter Jones

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	232
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Kate Prior
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 March 2003
<b>School address</b>	School Street Netherthong Holmfirth West Yorkshire HD9 3EB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01484 222487
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a school of average size serving a semi-rural area. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The school has experienced significant changes to its staffing since the last inspection. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The school has Healthy Schools status and Investors in People, Investors in Pupils, ArtsMark and ActiveMark awards.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school. It has some outstanding features, namely pupils' excellent personal development and the extremely rich and exciting curriculum the school provides. The school's motto is CARE, meaning 'consideration, affection and respect for everyone and everything.' Pupils live up to this aspiration admirably. They are kind and thoughtful towards each other and care deeply about world issues such as poverty and the environment. They are immensely proud of their school and its achievements and are appreciative of the efforts of all those who teach and care for them.

The school has high expectations of its pupils and the staff act as good role models. They treat pupils with respect and encourage them to express their opinions and to work together. Pupils are confident and articulate and present happy, smiling faces to those they meet. Parents say 'my child can't wait to get to school each day' and feel their children receive an 'extremely well rounded education.' Parents and carers are supportive of the school and many of them are skilled and enthusiastic volunteers, working alongside staff throughout the school. Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is consistently above the national average. Most take part in the very wide range of activities the school provides. The school is located in a stunning setting, with fields and woodland forming part of the school site. Its imaginative use of this 'outdoor classroom' greatly enhances pupils' enjoyment of learning and teaches them to respect and love nature. Behaviour is extremely good at all times. The local area suffered some of the heaviest rainfall for fifty years during the inspection. Pupils cheerfully accepted the restrictions this placed on their play and acted sensibly and with commendable self-discipline. Pupils' health and safety is a top priority and pupils say they are well cared for and kept safe. All pupils are made very aware of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle. They benefit from an extensive programme of sport and exercise which has gained the school the prestigious ActiveMark Gold award. The Healthy School status given to the school is a fitting tribute to its successful work to promote healthy eating. Pupils contribute to the community by raising funds for numerous charities. They are extremely willing to take responsibility to help staff and other pupils. The very active school council has helped the school become more efficient in its use of resources and has reduced its paper consumption considerably. This is also a good example of how the school seeks to make pupils' experiences reflect the real world. It ensures that they have opportunities to take part in realistic commercial projects as well as gaining high standards in the wide range of basic skills they will need for their future success.

The quality of teaching and learning is good and accounts for the good levels of achievement across the school. Pupils consistently reach very high standards and make good progress by the end of Year 2. Until recently, the progress of older pupils was only satisfactory. As a result of the successful introduction of a much sharper and effective system for setting targets and tracking progress, these pupils now make good progress. Children get off to a very good start in the Foundation Stage. They receive a well balanced and stimulating variety of experiences from well trained and attentive staff and helpers. All pupils in school benefit from the richness and breadth of the school's curriculum. As well as making impressive use of the environment, it includes innovative activities such as yoga, philosophy for children and peer massage to provide another dimension to their personal development. The school's care of its pupils is outstanding, and the core of its guidance and support for pupils is good. However, it does not always provide pupils with the advice they need for taking the next steps in their learning to make even better progress.

Leadership and management are good, with pupils having outstanding equal opportunities to achieve as well as they can. The acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher are leading the school well during the temporary absence of the substantive headteacher. The school has experienced a number of significant staff changes since the last inspection. These have been well managed to secure school improvement and to develop a strong team approach. The governing body is excellent. Its members are highly knowledgeable and extremely supportive and involved, but are also rigorous and objective in their checking of the school's performance. As a result of the joint leadership between the school and governors, the school's self-evaluation is very accurate, though it is modest in its judgement of its curriculum. The school has made a good improvement since the last inspection. Its overall good performance means that it has good capacity for future improvement.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that all pupils are fully aware of how they are performing and what they can do to improve their work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children enter the school with skills and abilities that are above national expectations. The good teaching they receive results in them making good progress to reach standards well above national averages by the end of Year 6. The school's strategies to improve pupils' progress between ages 7 and 11 are proving successful. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also make good progress as a result of the skilled and sensitive support they receive.

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

### **Grade: 1**

This aspect of the school's work, including pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. Pupils clearly enjoy school, and they respond extremely positively to the opportunities they are given to expand their experience and awareness. They learn about other faiths and cultures in assemblies and in lessons and from the many visits to different places of worship. The school also has well established and successful links with a nearby urban multicultural school. Pupils develop a first-hand understanding of important issues through visits by groups such as the Singing Children of Africa, which live long in their memory. As part of its work through Investors in Pupils, the school sets individual personal targets which focus on developing social and moral qualities and unique skills. Success in these areas is reviewed by each pupil's classmates and is celebrated just as much as academic success. Pupils' confidence and self-esteem is boosted, and they learn how to make judgements and treat each other with respect. Their sense of security and belonging is further enhanced by the Befrienders scheme, in which older pupils are trained to act as counsellors and give support to their fellow pupils. The school's Artsmark award recognises the school's success in developing pupils' cultural skills and awareness. There are a number of shows and recitals throughout the year which showcase the talents of all pupils.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

The very good relationships that exist between staff and pupils are at the heart of the school's successful teaching and learning. Pupils are well motivated and their excellent behaviour means everyone learns without unwanted interruptions. In the Foundation Stage, children experience a good balance between stimulating directed learning and activities of their own choice. The children are thrilled and excited with their learning because teaching is so well coordinated by the staff and helpers working in harmony. Teaching assistants throughout the school play a key role in supporting different groups of pupils. They ensure that those who find learning difficult achieve as much as possible. The school has been effective in tackling areas where performance needs to be improved, such as in mathematics. Its focused approach has resulted in standards quickly improving across the school. The most effective teaching generates a high level of interest. Teachers use a variety of strategies and make good use of resources such as interactive whiteboards and computers. There are excellent opportunities for pupils to extend their considerable speaking and listening skills through use of strategies such as talking partners. In a small minority of lessons, although the teaching is good overall, pupils capable of working independently are not given sufficient opportunity to do so. Their enjoyment and progress is lessened as a result.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 1

The school's outstanding curriculum contributes strongly to pupils' excellent personal development. The school ensures that pupils receive a good grounding in basic subjects but there is a strong emphasis on enjoyment and learning through a variety of experiences. The weekly integrated day for older pupils enables them to pursue in-depth learning of a number of subjects which develop confidence and extend their skills. They become capable and motivated independent learners. All staff fully exploit the great opportunities to enrich the curriculum offered by the school's superb site. Some staff are specially trained in forest skills and use the wonders of nature to motivate and inspire all learners. The school has developed a thematic approach to learning and makes good links between different subjects. This helps to make learning interesting and relevant for all learners. Pupils are given the opportunity to participate in an interesting and wide range of extra-curricular activities.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support is good with the school providing outstanding care for all its pupils. There is a family atmosphere within school which reflects its caring values. Pupils feel very safe and are confident that there is always someone known and trusted that they can turn to if they need advice or comfort. Most parents say that the school is welcoming and hospitable and keeps them well informed about their children. There are excellent links with outside agencies to ensure that pupils receive the specialist help they need. This includes the school's many gifted and talented pupils. Their particular skills and abilities are nurtured and developed through individual programmes. The school's child protection and health and safety procedures are well established and meet the latest local and national guidelines. Pupils are now set challenging targets and their progress is tracked and recorded. Marking is carried

out conscientiously, but pupils are not always given the advice they need to take their learning further and make more progress.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The school's leadership and management have introduced an effective programme of school improvement. The improved teaching and learning have begun to increase the progress of the older pupils. Standards in mathematics have also risen across the school. Staff have enthusiastically undertaken effective programmes of professional development to improve their expertise in many areas. The full impact of the school's work to bring improvement has yet to be realised. The school continues to build on its very good resources to the benefit of all pupils. Strategic planning looks to raise standards and achievement but remains committed to the school's aim of developing the whole child. The senior management team and subject coordinators check the work of the school regularly. Some aspects, such as the effectiveness of the school's academic guidance, are not scrutinised enough to ensure that pupils make the best possible progress. The school's outstanding governing body has put itself at the heart of the school's work. Its members spend a great deal of time in school, even contributing to lessons in some cases. They carry out their duties meticulously, but it is their passion and belief in the school's future that is most impressive.

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## Annex A

## 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>
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### 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>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
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	2
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 Netherthong Primary School, Holmfirth, HD9 3EB

I am writing to you to let you know what we found out about your school after our recent visit. Thank you for making us very welcome and for telling us about your school.

You go to a good school. You learn well and make good progress in your lessons. Many of you told us how much you enjoy coming to school. You like your teachers. They take an interest in what you do in and out of school and try to make learning interesting. We could see how exciting it was to learn in your school's beautiful woods. You also enjoy taking part in the many musical, dramatic and sporting activities your school provides. We were very impressed that so many of you are learning to play a musical instrument. Your behaviour was excellent at all times. It was good to see how you all acted so sensibly and so cheerfully when the heavy rain kept everyone in school. Your school council works hard and has helped the school to reduce the amount of paper and other materials it uses. The progress of the older pupils is improving as a result of their hard work and the good teaching they receive. All the staff really care about you and look after you very well. They are always thinking of ways they can make Netherthong even better.

We would like you to be even better learners and so we have suggested something that will help. We would like your teachers to give you more helpful comments when they mark your work to help you improve even more. You can help by continuing to work hard and trying your best to follow the advice you are given. It will be worth the effort, and we know you can do it.