

Sprotbrough Orchard Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106707
Local Authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	324446
Inspection dates	26–27 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Fiona Gowers

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	183
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr D Banks
Headteacher	Mrs J Ryf
Date of previous school inspection	14 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Field House Road Sprotbrough Doncaster South Yorkshire DN5 7RN
Telephone number	01302 853655
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Age group	3–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This smaller than average infant school serves an area with some levels of social and economic advantage. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. Most pupils are of White British heritage and very few are learning to speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, although the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. Early Years Foundation Stage provision consists of a Nursery and Reception classes. Most children join the school in the Nursery at three years of age.

The school has achieved the Activemark Gold and Healthy Schools Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is a school of outstanding quality. On entering Orchard Infants, visitors are instantly struck by the very well-organised, vibrant, stimulating learning environment. Standards are extremely high and the school strives for excellence in all it does. It fully meets the aim 'to make school a happy, caring and exciting opportunity for children to develop their full potential.' Every child is valued, made to feel special and totally included in all activities. Pupils say they love coming to school and this is reflected in their very good attendance. The vast majority of parents very much appreciate all the school provides, typically referring to the 'very happy atmosphere' and commenting that the school has 'just the right balance between excellent learning opportunities, promoting good behaviour and fun!'

Expectations are high throughout school and pupils grow in confidence and self-belief. Adults clearly gain much pleasure from working in the school and seeing pupils flourish. The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. The focus is always on providing learning activities that will both interest and challenge pupils. As a result, pupils' overall achievement is outstanding. Children get off to a flying start in their learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage and then into Key Stage 1. This means that by the end of Year 2 pupils meet their very challenging targets and consistently attain well above average standards. Additional well-tailored support enables pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to achieve as well as others in the school.

The school provides a highly effective curriculum. Learning experiences are rich, diverse and exciting. Pupils often arrive at school full of anticipation, wondering what they are going to learn that day. As a result, they are highly motivated learners and their behaviour is exemplary. A group of pupils agreed, 'We like to work hard, because it gives us a chance to learn loads of new things!'

The quality of care and support is excellent. Very positive relationships throughout school help pupils to feel very safe and secure and to develop outstanding personal skills. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They work and play together very well. They clearly know how to keep safe and show high levels of care and concern for others. They have great fun keeping fit and healthy, for example at the very popular 'Strictly Come Orchard' dancing club! Academic guidance is very effective and is used to extend pupils' learning further. In addition, the school develops a very strong partnership with parents, particularly encouraging them to share books with their children. As all groups of pupils make such rapid progress, academically and in their personal development, the school clearly and amply fulfils its mission: 'Together we lay quality foundations for our children's future.'

Much of the school's success is due to outstanding leadership and management. The headteacher is an inspirational leader and is very well supported by the deputy headteacher. School leaders have skilfully built a strong team of staff who are totally committed to school improvement. The needs of pupils remain central.

There is always a strong focus on promoting enjoyment in learning as well as sustaining exceptionally high standards. The school does not rest on its laurels and has a very clear view of how it wants to improve still further. However, new school initiatives are adopted only after very thorough evaluation, if it can be shown that they will directly benefit pupils. In particular, the school ensures that it makes a very effective contribution to community cohesion. The school plays a leading role with other schools, particularly with regards to training for art,

physical education and the development of a creative curriculum. Governors are extremely committed and their professional expertise enables them to very effectively support and challenge the school in its determination to improve further.

Such strengths in leadership, alongside the impressive track record since the last inspection, clearly show that the school has outstanding capacity to sustain the rapid rate of school improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

When they join the Early Years Foundation Stage children's skills are generally a little above those expected for their age, although there is a wide spread of ability. Children make very rapid progress in all areas of learning because they enjoy a wide range of stimulating learning activities. There is a very good balance between adult-led activities and opportunities for children to explore things for themselves. For example, a group of children were thoroughly absorbed in performing a story with puppets they had made. Children are very much encouraged to be independent, creative and imaginative in their learning. Adults sensitively intervene to stretch and challenge children further and move them on in their learning. The care and attention to children's welfare are outstanding and fully meet requirements. Children settle very quickly into Nursery. Very positive relationships, together with clear routines and a very well-organised environment, help children feel very safe, happy and secure. As they move into the Reception classes, children benefit greatly from working alongside older pupils in school. They develop a real thirst for learning which provides a very firm foundation for learning in Key Stage 1. When they enter Year 1, children's skills are often significantly above age-related expectations, indicating outstanding achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Leadership and management are outstanding. The leader is an excellent role model. She leads a strong staff team who have very high expectations and develop a very strong partnership with parents. Parents very much appreciate this very positive start to their children's education, typically commenting: 'My child has a real enthusiasm for school life. I am extremely pleased with their progress.'

What the school should do to improve further

The school has accurately identified its priorities for improvement so there are no further ones to add.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

All groups of pupils make exceptional progress in Key Stage 1. By the end of Year 2 standards are consistently well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 is consistently and significantly above average in all subjects. However, it is particularly high in reading, reflecting the school's strong emphasis on pupils enjoying 'sharing' books together. The most recent school data confirms that pupils currently in Year 2 are set to continue this trend of exceptionally high standards as they are on track to reach their extremely challenging targets. Achievement is outstanding for all groups of pupils because they receive high-quality teaching and greatly enjoy a fun and challenging curriculum, which motivates them to learn and gets them thinking. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve as well as others in school because they receive very sensitive, well-targeted support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils are very proud of their school. A group of them agreed: 'We like everything at school. We do loads of fun activities, the children are nice and the teachers are very kind!' It is no surprise that attendance levels are consistently high and behaviour is exemplary. Pupils take a great deal of interest and initiative in school life. They regularly discuss how they can improve their school further and how they can help each other, such as when they staff the 'Friendship Stop', explaining, 'We all look after each other here!' Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils think deeply about their own and others' experiences. They express their views with confidence but also learn to listen and respect the views of others, including those of other faiths and cultures. Pupils confidently explain how to keep safe, fit and healthy. This is extremely well promoted by the curriculum from the Nursery onwards. The very rapid progress pupils make in their basic skills and the high-quality teamwork fostered in classrooms prepares them very well for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Staff have very high expectations and provide a wide range of lively and practical activities that meet the needs of all pupils very effectively. Learning activities are very carefully planned around an integrated topic and resources are of high quality. Pupils enthusiastically relish the high level of challenge provided and make excellent progress. As a result, pupils greatly enjoy their lessons and they focus for extended periods of time. They are encouraged to explore ideas with a partner and explain their understanding. A group agreed, 'It helps us think and work things out that we didn't know before.' Opportunities for younger pupils to work alongside older pupils support their learning very well. Pupils with additional learning needs make very good progress as a result of the highly effective and extremely sensitive support they receive from teaching assistants. Information and communication technology is also used extensively to promote effective learning and skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The very well-planned, integrated curriculum contributes, in great measure, to the outstanding progress made by pupils. Teachers effectively plan links between subjects, with a very good emphasis on providing practical, first-hand experiences that make learning more relevant and exciting. There is very strong consistency in planning across all classes. During the year, all pupils have access to the same six excellent topics with many linked to out-of-school visits. These broaden learning beyond the norm, with pupils given very regular opportunities to explore learning through art, music, dance and other creative activities. Throughout the school the very good use of role-play and constructional play enables pupils to extend and apply their learning. For example, a recent initiative to provide more opportunities for pupils to explore imaginative ideas together through a play-based activity has resulted in them enthusiastically producing high-quality extended pieces of writing. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is extremely well supported through activities such as circle time and 'philosophy for children'. The strong emphasis on healthy eating and physical education makes a substantial contribution to pupils' personal development and well-being.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Staff and governors ensure that their shared, very strong vision of a safe, happy school where pupils can learn very effectively is achieved. There are excellent relationships between pupils and adults. Pupils' welfare is a priority for the school and pastoral support is very strong. Vulnerable pupils are exceptionally well supported and an expanding network of support agencies is used to help these pupils to flourish. The school knows its pupils very well and ensures that it meets all their needs by carefully tracking their progress and working very closely with parents and carers. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are also very sensitively supported because their needs are very well met in the classroom and they benefit from excellent additional literacy classes. Academic guidance is outstanding. Teachers mark work alongside individual pupils to help them assess their own work. They make very good use of praise and clearly explain how pupils can improve their work. There are clear and established procedures to promote child protection, and safeguarding procedures meet requirements. Health and safety arrangements, including risk assessments, are effective. Careful arrangements are also in place to ensure a smooth transfer to junior school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. School leaders are utterly determined to provide the very best for pupils. They have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and a very clear view of how they want the school to improve further. Leaders and managers are very successful in promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating any discrimination. Everyone's contribution is encouraged and valued. New initiatives are only adopted if they benefit pupils. All staff are fully involved in initiating school improvement and receive high-quality training to ensure pupils gain the maximum benefit. Management systems are simple yet highly effective. Very strong teamwork provides many opportunities for staff to learn from each other's strengths and share the best practice in school. This leads to consistently high-quality teaching and learning in the classrooms. The school makes a very significant contribution to the development of community cohesion. The wide range of visits, visitors and creative activities enrich pupils' multicultural experiences and underpin their high levels of respect for others, including those of other faiths and cultures. In addition 'philosophy for children' activities very effectively teach pupils to value the views and opinions of others, even when they differ from their own. The school is continually seeking how to improve further and actively seeking partnerships with other schools and with specialist consultants. Governors know the school very well and are extremely supportive, amply fulfilling their role of 'critical friend.'

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Annex A

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?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for being so friendly when my colleague and I inspected your school. We really enjoyed talking to you, and joining you in lessons, in assembly and at dinnertime and playtime. You should be very proud of yourselves because you are very polite and well behaved. You work and play together very well and you are very good at helping each other. Your parents told us they are very happy with the excellent way adults at school look after you and we agree with them.

We could see how much fun you had making your puppets, writing stories and producing beautiful artwork. You really enjoy the sporting and dancing activities at school every day and also going to the 'Strictly Come Orchard' dancing club! We hope you had a good time at the school disco.

Orchard Infants is an outstanding school. You make excellent progress with your work throughout school and reach much higher standards than in most other schools by the time you leave at the end of Year 2. This is because you receive excellent teaching and enjoy so many interesting and challenging activities. You told us how much you enjoy coming to school and that you love working hard!

Your headteacher, governors and all the staff are an excellent team and work tirelessly for your benefit. They know exactly what needs to be done to make sure Orchard Infants continues to be an outstanding school.

Keep working hard and enjoying your school!