

Nook Lane Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107058
Local Authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	324516
Inspection dates	28–29 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Kate Pringle

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	241
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr A Mettam
Headteacher	Mrs G Hodges
Date of previous school inspection	24 May 2006
School address	Nook Lane Stannington Sheffield South Yorkshire S6 6BN
Telephone number	0114 234 1097
Fax number	0114 285 1098

Age group	7–11
Inspection dates	28–29 January 2009
Inspection number	324516

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: 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 two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Nook Lane Junior School is of average size and is situated in the village of Stannington on the outskirts of Sheffield. Pupils are of largely White British heritage and come from a range of social and academic backgrounds which are broadly average. Few are entitled to free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who are taught in the main school is broadly average and the school benefits from an Integrated Resource Unit (IRU), which provides support for pupils with language and communication difficulties. The school holds awards for being an Eco school, for Investors in People, Healthy Schools, Activemark and Basic Skills.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This good school with outstanding features successfully promotes excellent standards of care and personal development. Pupils of all abilities achieve well, reaching standards which are above average. Staff changes since the last inspection have promoted a clear sense of direction with leaders who know well the school's strengths and areas for development. A high proportion of parents support the school and many praise its caring ethos. This is summed up in the words of one parent who is 'extremely happy that my children are going to a lovely environment to be nurtured and educated'.

From a broadly average entry, progress is good to the end of Year 6 where a higher than average proportion of the pupils attain standards above those nationally. Pupils did particularly well in mathematics and science in the 2008 national tests. However, there is lower achievement in writing, especially at the higher level. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. Pupils are also successful in other areas. From evidence seen, this is apparent especially in art, music, and information and communication technology (ICT) within the increasingly creative curriculum.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. They enjoy their time in school because they feel safe, secure and valued by everyone. They behave extremely well and are polite and considerate towards others. They have an excellent understanding of how to live a healthy life and take full advantage of sporting and other activities. Pupils relish the many opportunities to take responsibility such as through taking decisions in the school council, and make a significant contribution to community life.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The good knowledge teachers have of pupils' strengths and next steps in learning enable them to meet pupils' needs well as they offer appropriate challenge and enable pupils to succeed. All staff have high expectations for the care pupils show in their work and for good behaviour. This results in a calm and industrious atmosphere. The good curriculum ensures pupils develop literacy and numeracy skills systematically and thoroughly. An exciting range of visits, visitors, clubs and community activities contribute to pupils' rich personal development. Teaching and specialist support staff play a strong role in providing high levels of emotional and pastoral support and there are very positive links with pupils in the IRU. Pastoral care is highly effective and systems to track and guide pupils' progress ensure that support is well matched to needs with pupils consistently involved in the process.

The headteacher and senior staff provide clear leadership. There is a very strong and effective sense of teamwork and morale is very high. Self-evaluation processes are effective and the school plans well for future improvement. The governing body provides good support to facilitate change; however, its role in the evaluation of the school is yet to be fully implemented. The school has a good capacity to improve and gives good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve achievement in writing across the school, especially for those of higher ability.
- Increase the involvement of the governing body in school evaluation and assess governors' impact upon school performance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils enter Year 3 with standards that are broadly average, although there is some variation from year to year because of differing proportions of lower attainers and pupils who attend the IRU. Pupils' very good personal, social and emotional development prepares them well for learning. By the end of Year 6, attainment demonstrates an improving trend with standards above those expected nationally. Provisional results of the 2008 Year 6 tests in English, mathematics and science indicate that this pattern is continuing and resulted in the school meeting its

academic targets for Year 6 pupils. The exception is the achievement at the higher level in English, which was lower in writing. This impacted upon overall results. In contrast, significant gains are demonstrated in mathematics and science with many more pupils achieving at the higher levels. Attainment in both subjects is at significantly higher levels than those of previous years. Overall, the progress of pupils from their start in Year 3 is good, and, although girls tend to outperform boys, the gender gap in attainment is closing, and standards of the present Year 6 are being maintained at above average. The lower attaining and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make equally good progress. This is because of the effective support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils really enjoy school where they are secure in the abilities of teachers and other staff to help with their concerns. Bullying is rare and behaviour is outstanding. Pupils respect others and this has a positive impact upon the ethos of the school and the learning that takes place. As a result, attendance is good and improving. Pupils understand how to engage in a healthy lifestyle and exhibit a real commitment to playing their part in developing a better world. They take full advantage of the opportunities in and after school to improve their fitness through the good range of sports activities provided. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They consider the thoughts and needs of others, especially for those whom they recognise as having different needs to themselves, and demonstrate exceptionally good social and moral skills. A good range of opportunities exist for pupils to work and interact with people of different cultures and they support a considerable range of charities, raise funds and find means of helping others locally, nationally and internationally. However, there are few opportunities to build on these and enable pupils to develop real friendships. The 'Job Shop' provides a way for all pupils to contribute to the community and increase their levels of responsibility. They recognise their developing skills as they support others through their roles including, playground leaders, reading buddies, music and library monitors. Members of the school council are very proud of their achievements and know that they are a very real voice for the pupils they represent as they guide the school towards future improvements. The above average standards that pupils attain and the very good social skills they develop mean that they are well prepared for future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good which enables pupils to make good progress. Teaching is generally good or better, although some teaching is satisfactory. Pupils are enthusiastic learners as a result of the supportive environment, good quality of resources and the high expectations of teachers and support assistants. In the best lessons, teachers match stimulating activities very well to pupils' abilities and capture their imagination as they link subjects successfully across the curriculum. Where lessons are satisfactory, teachers demonstrate a tendency to over support pupils which limits independent learning and activities are less well matched to pupils' needs. A particular strength of the school is the well implemented strategies which ensure exemplary behaviour and provide a good atmosphere for learning. Pupils respond well to one another and relationships with staff are very good. The role of homework to support learning helps to engage most parents successfully in their children's learning through the effective use of ICT and the 'Learning Platform'.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides an effective curriculum which stimulates pupils' interests. They are eager to learn and the strong emphasis on personal, social and emotional development effectively increases their confidence and self-esteem. The increasing focus upon a creative and practical approach to learning is developing meaningful links across the curriculum. For example, the use of the 'Learning Platform' is used constructively to combine historical role play with literacy and ICT, which is an area of real strength of the school. The practical approach to learning in the IRU ensures that pupils are well motivated as they act out roles and learn new skills. Learning opportunities for French and Spanish are well embedded and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of different cultures. This is enhanced by the residential week in France for Year 6. The very good provision of lunchtime and after-school activities is enthusiastically supported by pupils of all ages and abilities. Strong connections with visitors from the community, other schools and further education colleagues extend pupils' experiences and provide extended opportunities to improve skills and knowledge for future success.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Outstanding pastoral care contributes significantly to pupils' enjoyment of school and their personal development. Consequently, pupils feel valued and secure and they flourish due to the nurturing of pupils' emotional well-being. The necessary safeguarding procedures meet current government requirements. Systems to keep pupils safe are robust and staff promote these conscientiously. There is a very high quality of support for vulnerable pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for those in the IRU. Robust tracking, monitoring and evaluation help these pupils to become active participants in their own learning. Since the last inspection, leaders have paid close attention to the charting of pupils' progress and the rigorous systems now in place impact successfully upon the range and quality of support to improve individual achievement. The development of pupils' knowledge of their targets and next steps in learning contribute greatly to their understanding of their individual abilities and how they can progress further.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher leads a team of knowledgeable and able staff who work well together. Her vision and strong leadership motivates and enthuses colleagues. The delegation of responsibility and accountability enables all to play their part in leading and managing the work of the school and gives them a clear focus by which to continue the improvements in standards and achievement. Self-evaluation is secure and priorities for development are systematically monitored and analysed by senior leaders. Initiatives to raise achievement have proven very successful, particularly in mathematics and science. However, in English, and writing, in particular, they are yet to demonstrate equal progress. The work of all to promote equal opportunities and embrace diversity is outstanding and the resulting partnerships are extremely successful. These, together with strong links within the local community and good partnerships with external organisations contribute to good community cohesion. The way in which the school is developing policies shows that it realises the importance of forging consistent links with other cultures to further extend present provision. The governing body contributes well to the development of the school and their considerable expertise is used to the benefit of many aspects of leadership. They are active in the outcome of developments; however, they do not yet have a direct enough involvement in school evaluation or realise their potential to impact on performance through greater challenge.

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.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
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	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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/or disabilities make progress	2

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	2
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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	2
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 welcoming Mrs Hughes and myself to your school. We did enjoy the days we spent with you.

We feel that your school provides you with a good education because it is led and managed well and we believe that the care provided for you and for your personal development are outstanding. We found you polite and courteous at all times and it was a real joy to see how well you all get on together. We were particularly impressed by your very good behaviour and interest in lessons. It is obvious that you enjoy your learning and we were pleased to see that your attendance is good and continues to get better and better. We think that you achieve well and that by the time you leave in Year 6, your standards are above average. Teachers work hard to help you understand how your targets help you to progress and improve.

To improve your learning further we have asked the school to help you all but especially those of you who are quick learners to make better progress in writing. We also want the governors of the school to work more closely with your school leaders helping them to evaluate how well your school performs.

We did appreciate talking to you about your work and watching you learn. We trust that you will keep doing your best and help your teachers to continue to improve the school. We wish you well for the future.