

Herringthorpe Infant School

Chatterton Drive, Rotherham, South Yorkshire, S65 2JW

Inspection dates 15–16 January 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- At the heart of this improving school is a shared determination to make sure that each pupil receives the best possible start to their school life.
- All pupils make the progress expected of them and the majority do much better than this. As a result, attainment is typically above average by the time pupils leave Year 2.
- One reason why pupils learn exceptionally well is that so much of the teaching is outstanding.
- Pupils benefit from a wide range of engaging activities, which fire their imaginations. Expectations of what can be achieved in lessons are very high.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and the way in which they approach their learning is impressive. They work very hard, press on when it is difficult, and take pride in their achievements. They encourage one another to do their very best.
- Attendance has risen since the time of the last inspection. However, despite on-going improvements, school leaders are aware that attendance is not yet as high as they would like. They have clear plans in place to help make sure attendance improves still further.
- The headteacher has a very accurate view of how successful the school is becoming and plans in meticulous detail for further improvements.
- Staff training is given a high priority and teachers are always eager to find ways to improve their practice.
- Governors have considerable expertise and a keen insight, providing a great deal of support. They are knowledgeable about what is going well and what can be improved further. This enables them to ask searching questions of leaders to make sure the school is doing as well as it can.
- This is a very safe and caring school where all are valued and respect for one another is high.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons or small group activities, of which three were conducted jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, senior leaders and school staff.
- Inspectors talked with pupils about their work in lessons, looked at books, listened to pupils read and met with a group of pupils from Year 2.
- Inspectors took account of 10 responses to the on-line survey (Parent View) and a recent school survey. Inspectors also spoke to a number of parents during the two days.
- Inspectors took account of the 29 questionnaires returned by members of the school staff.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, looked at progress data, performance management information, records relating to behaviour and safety, as well as documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Jim Alexander, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Edward Price	Additional Inspector
Keith Bardon	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized infant school.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium fund is average. The pupil premium is additional government funding provided for children in local authority care, those from service families, and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average.
- The school has gained the Warwick University Award for Enterprise (Platinum).
- The headteacher is a local leader in education (LLE) and supports improvement in a number of other local schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Keep a careful watch on the improved strategies to increase attendance to make sure actions taken are successful.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Children start the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are below those typically expected and for many their skills are much lower. Regardless of their starting points, children get off to a flying start and are soon making much better than expected progress. This prepares them well to start Key Stage 1.
- By the end of Year 1, most pupils read as well as they are expected to for their age. Those that struggle a little more with their early reading skills are given extra support. This is helping them to quickly catch up with where they should be for their age.
- Progress in reading, writing and mathematics is excellent. The proportion of pupils who make expected progress is high and a large proportion of pupils do even better than this.
- By the end of Year 2, attainment in reading is average. Attainment in mathematics and writing is above average. This represents outstanding progress from pupils' individual starting points.
- The most able pupils are continually stretched and challenged and an increasing proportion is reaching the higher levels in national assessments by the end of Year 2.
- The pupil premium is used in a variety of ways, for example, to provide opportunities for pupils to work together on activities in small groups, or with one-to-one support. These activities are carefully designed to captivate pupils' attention from the start and leads on to excellent learning. This is helping pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, for example, to make excellent progress. As a result, those that may have had gaps in their knowledge or understanding are now doing just as well as others in the school.
- The school has an increasing number of pupils from minority ethnic groups, a large proportion of whom are from Pakistani families and some also have English as an additional language. These pupils are also quickly engaged in fun and exciting work. As a result, they too make outstanding progress from their starting points.
- Due to accurate assessment and well-planned support, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs also make exceptional progress in their reading, writing and mathematics.
- Staff are successful in making sure all pupils get exactly what they need to ensure their success and happiness at school.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught to learn and play very well together. They thoroughly enjoy learning through play both indoors and outside. Staff are skilled at asking the right questions to prompt children's thinking. Children are also encouraged to make decisions for themselves. One boy explained, 'I am off to get my wellies on and check to see if our chickens have laid any eggs today'.
- Teachers in Year 1 and Year 2 also share their excitement and passion about learning with their pupils and provide fun and exciting work for them to do. Pupils respond very positively and soon make excellent progress in the time available.
- Teachers plan meticulously to ensure pupils are learning productively in every lesson. When working on a variety of different activities in a Year 2 lesson featuring aspects of space travel, pupils' enjoyment and learning was clearly reflected in the high quality of the work produced by pupils of all levels of ability, including the most able.
- Pupils are helped to think for themselves and also to encourage one another to solve problems together. Because of pupils' excellent attitudes to learning, no time is wasted and much is achieved in lessons.
- In the majority of classes, highly-skilled teaching assistants work alongside teachers ensuring that any pupil who needs support receives prompt attention. However, in some lessons they are

not as involved as they could be, particularly at the start and end of lessons.

- Pupils have been taught to explain clearly what they are finding difficult. Teachers listen carefully and ask the right questions, guiding pupils to find solutions for their own problems. In this way, activities are reshaped during the lessons so pupils make the best use of their time.
- Pupils are also very good at encouraging one another to try their best. For example, one Year 1 pupil sat back and said, 'this is hard, I don't think I can do it'. Their friend leant over the table and whispered, 'I'm sure you can. Have a go. I can help if you like'.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Their excellent attitudes to work are impressive. They are attentive to what teachers say, quick to settle to their work and show great determination, even when tasks are designed to be challenging. They confidently use technology to support their learning successfully.
- Pupils show an impressive level of maturity and self-reliance. They are helped to see that there is 'a real pleasure in learning'.
- Pupils take a pride in what they do. For example, the presentation of their written work is very high. Classrooms are also well presented and kept tidy.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils have been provided with a range of strategies to keep themselves safe and understand, for example, the safe use of the internet.
- Pupils are well aware of the different forms of bullying, but say that 'it doesn't really happen at our school'. Indeed, well-kept school records confirm that incidents are very rare and always well managed.
- Playtimes and lunchtimes are very happy occasions and well-structured opportunities are available to keep pupils happily entertained. Older pupils are very good role models for younger children in school.
- Pupils told inspectors that the excellent behaviour seen in and around the school during the inspection was typical of behaviour normally.
- The school is a calm and peaceful place and this helps pupils to feel safe and secure.
- Attendance has improved since the time of the last inspection and is now in-line with the average. Pupils are rarely late for school and arrive well prepared for the day.
- Pupils with particular behavioural needs are supported to manage their own behaviour well.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage benefit from very positive relationships established with adults. Children feel safe and secure and soon grow in confidence.
- All parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire say their children are safe and happy at school.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The dynamic headteacher is committed to ensure every pupil receives the best possible education and care. To this end, she has fostered the leadership skills of her staff team.
- The headteacher is exceptionally well supported by a highly effective deputy headteacher. Their crystal-clear plan and uncompromising drive for improvement is shared by all staff.
- Astute delegation of roles provides staff with frequent opportunities to lead changes and improve the school's work. For example, middle leaders who are responsible for improvements in reading, writing and mathematics regularly check on the quality of teaching in their subject across the school and keep a close watch on the progress pupils are making in their work.
- The deputy headteacher is responsible for leading the work to support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. She also takes a leading role in managing how the pupil premium funding is used. It is as a direct result of her diligence and care that these pupils are

making such remarkable progress.

- A comprehensive process to check the performance of staff is firmly established and regular meetings to check on pupils' progress enable teachers to be held to account for the pupils' achievement in their class.
- The new Primary School Sports funding is being used to provide more clubs for pupils to attend as well as improve the quality of teaching in physical education (PE) lessons. While this is still at an early stage of development, more children are attending clubs than ever before and staff speak positively about the training they are receiving.
- While leaders recognise attendance has improved they are keen that further improvements are made. Procedures to follow up any non-attendance are rigorous. Ambitious targets for improvement have been set and plans agreed with governors. The main aim is to reduce the number of holidays taken during term time. Leaders now need to keep a careful watch on how these plans are being implemented to ensure their success.
- Leaders ensure that a broad and rich range of activities are provided to enhance the subjects that are being taught in lessons. Herringthorpe was the first infant school in the country to hold the Warwick University Award for Enterprise. This achievement has been acknowledged by a visit from the Duke of York, a representative from the Department for Enterprise and Lord Young in 2013. The school were also featured on the BBC News. These opportunities give pupils a very memorable experience of school life.
- The local authority has full confidence in the school's leadership and considers it only necessary to maintain a light-touch monitoring role. The headteacher is highly regarded and supports improvement in a number of other schools locally.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are very committed to the school and the community. The recently appointed Chair of the Governing Body leads effectively. Governors attend relevant training, for example, to support those recently elected and new to their role. Governors visit the school regularly and as a result they are aware of the school's strengths and weakness. For example, they have a good understanding of how the pupil premium has funded the numerous activities to support eligible pupils and the impact this is having. Governors understand the progress made by pupils and how Herringthorpe Infant School compares with other schools nationally. They are fully involved in the arrangements to check the staff's performance and ensure that teachers meet their targets before they are eligible for movement through the pay scale. They make sure that current safeguarding requirements are met and regularly reviewed.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors. A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.

School details

Unique reference number	106851
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	431370

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	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	283
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs T Cartlidge
Headteacher	Mrs L Pepper
Date of previous school inspection	26 January 2009
Telephone number	01709 828959
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