

# Birley Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107096
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sheffield
<b>Inspection number</b>	287713
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Linda Murphy

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	553
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Neil Drew
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Harry Wood
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 March 2005
<b>School address</b>	Hayfield Crescent Birley Sheffield South Yorkshire S12 4XF
<b>Telephone number</b>	0114 2399002
<b>Fax number</b>	0114 2644956

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This large popular school attracts pupils from outside its immediate area, including a higher than average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, the number on roll is declining because of a general fall in birth rates across Sheffield. The majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is broadly average. The school has a Gold ActiveMark and an Eco Schools Award Silver.

## 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 with several outstanding features. It very successfully meets its aim to provide an enjoyable and good quality education for its pupils. As a result pupils prosper. Their personal qualities are outstanding because the school gives excellent care and guides pupils' all-round growth very well indeed.

The outstanding leadership ensures pupils' time at school is very productive. Pupils are thoughtful, inquisitive and mature beyond their years. They think positively of themselves and others. Rightly so, because their behaviour is first-rate and their attitudes to life are exceptional. This leads to harmonious relationships across school life. Pupils have a good understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle as reflected in the school's external award for sporting achievement and pupils' good healthy eating – often vegetables from the school's award winning allotments. The school nurtures pupils' awareness of environmental issues exceedingly well which shows the importance it places on developing pupils' contribution to the school and wider communities.

Children enter the Foundation Stage with low attainment in basic skills such as writing, reading and mathematics. Arrangements in the Reception classes are good and children achieve well, although most do not attain the standards expected by the end of Reception. The curriculum for these young children is lively. It is enriched by a variety of activities and plentiful adults to help them, which add much to pupils' understanding. A weakness is in the limited facilities to use the outside environment to promote learning. This takes away some enjoyment and limits opportunities for physical development.

Pupils achieve well in Years 1 to 6 because of the excellent monitoring of teaching and learning and the teachers' positive response to it. This means that, by Year 2, pupils' attainment has caught up to an average level. Despite the good progress pupils make at Key Stage 2, the standards in Years 5 and 6 are adversely affected by pupils' legacy of slow learning earlier on in their school life. Nonetheless, from being below average at Year 2 in English, mathematics and science, they have made good progress to attain similar levels to those found nationally. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are already working at generally higher levels than expected for their ages.

Teaching and learning are of good quality and provide plentiful challenges in small chunks of learning which keep pupils on their toes and eager for their next task. Questioning is of a high order and brings about some reflective thinking, in particular where the quality of teaching is the very best it can be. The pace of learning is usually brisk. It falters occasionally when the usually very well organised lessons lack some forethought in planning the use of resources.

In Years 1 to 6, the very effective curriculum supports pupils' learning well. It has particular strengths in the detailed planning which mostly matches work to the needs of different groups of pupils, including those who need a lot of extra help to make sure they learn as well as others. The needs of pupils with particular gifts and talents are met to an extent through the way the teaching groups are organised in English and mathematics, but the school is at an early stage of making sure these learners have as many opportunities as possible to excel.

Leadership and management are first-rate. The excellent talent the headteacher has in leading others underpins an exceptional structure to staffing and governance. A range of highly effective teams have very clear mandates for improvement. The teams, including governors, are very strong and exceptionally well led so that all play an important part in contributing to pupils' increasing achievement and their excellent personal development. This excellent leadership is

central to the improvement since the last inspection. For example, the quality of learning, the curriculum, pupils' personal development - including the good rate of attendance - and the care for pupils are all of a higher calibre than in 2005. The school is exceedingly well placed to improve further. It provides good value for money.

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

- Ensure that the children in the Reception classes have ease of access to good quality resources to promote their learning in the fresh air.
- Make sure that pupils' gifts and talents in all areas are successfully promoted.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children in the Reception classes make good gains from their low skills on entry. This good start is built on effectively so that, by the end of Year 2, pupils attain broadly average standards. By the end of Years 5 and 6 standards are also average. Even so, this represents good achievement for pupils in these year groups because they have had a lot of catching up to do. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are already attaining higher standards than expected. A focus on writing is paying dividends with standards showing improvement, particularly for boys. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress through the delivery of effective programmes to support their particular needs. Careful and strategic use of demanding targets impact well on pupils' achievement. The school mostly meets its challenging targets. In English and mathematics, the higher attaining pupils do well because the teaching accurately matches their needs. It is in other subjects where their gifts and talents are not yet fully met.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils leave, very ready for secondary school, with outstanding levels of maturity and thoughtfulness. They have a quiet and largely unassuming confidence: self-esteem is high. Many pupils express their ideas with certainty and give good reasons for their opinions. They are very tolerant of others and take it for granted that they should respect and value others' views. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils feel a sense of wonderment in the world from their studies in art, history, music and use of information and communication technology (ICT). Many practical activities, such as working on the allotments, give them a sense of pride. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They respond quickly to teachers and other adults, and their very good nature and happiness lend to easy relationships everywhere. Pupils are eager to attend school and the rate of attendance is good. Pupils contribute very well to the school and wider community. They take their responsibilities as part of the 'job squad' and school council very seriously. They feel very safe in school. By Year 6, they have a very balanced view of how to live healthily and avoid the dangers of drugs and alcohol abuse, although a few pupils still bring unhealthy snacks to school. Above all, they know that life is to be enjoyed and 'everyone should smile every day'.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

In a relaxed and purposeful atmosphere, pupils' different ways of learning are catered for well through a variety of lively teaching. A good range of tasks stimulate pupils' interest in learning, for example, through the use of ICT. Teachers set clear objectives so that pupils know what they are expected to learn. There are plentiful opportunities for pupils to share ideas and discuss their activities. This helps them to make a positive contribution to lessons. Pupils enjoy excellent relationships with each other and their teachers. Their behaviour is very well managed and pupils come to lessons very ready to learn. Their learning is seamless because the teaching assistants work closely with teachers and share the same high expectations of what pupils can do. Teaching assistants provide a lot of extra teaching to boost the rate of the slower learners. Questioning is clear and probing and pupils' response is often shared with partners so that all contribute by speaking in lessons. Very detailed planning underpins the teaching and learning and helps to make sure that no time is wasted. On occasion, the pace slows when the usual thoughtful preparation is lacking.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

'Ice breaker' activities really get the pupils motoring first thing every morning and set the tone for the day. The school has a well-judged programme of extra help for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities which successfully accelerates their achievement. There is a strong commitment to personal development and the learning of life skills is very effective, as seen in the high standards of pupils' behaviour. The curriculum meets the needs of most pupils well, but those who are gifted and talented are not always given work which allows them to achieve their very best. A good range of clubs and activities enriches pupils' learning. Pupils support these with great enthusiasm. Visits and visitors add much to pupils' enjoyment. The outdoor arrangements for children in the Foundation Stage do not match the stimulating activities promoted indoors. As a result, much of their outside play is limited by available resources.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 1

The needs of pupils, regardless of ability or social circumstances, are met very well throughout the school. Systems to support and guide pupils, particularly the most vulnerable, such as those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are very efficient. They are based on clear, concise policies which all staff promote. Pupils' health and safety, including child protection, are paramount. The achievement of all pupils is carefully tracked and monitored so that if any additional support is required it is quickly provided by a highly qualified and well organised team. Extremely well organised and managed arrangements make sure that pupils are safe and their welfare promoted very effectively. Outstanding behaviour is a way of life for pupils and steps to eliminate any bullying are effective. Pupils' attendance is carefully monitored, although this is rarely a problem as they want to come to school so much. The pupils' personal health and emotional development is very successfully threaded through many subjects. The very good involvement of outside groups adds much to pupils' learning. Above all, the respect that all staff have for their pupils makes this an exceptionally caring school.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 1

The statement, 'Little acorns to giant oaks', explains the school's aims for all its pupils. A key factor to success is the headteacher's creative and outstanding strategic vision. This is shared very well and understood by all. The influential and very effective senior leadership team and excellent planning have set the course for a fast road to improvement. Staff and governors have a very accurate insight into the school's strengths and weaknesses and expectations are high. From its excellent monitoring, the school regularly asks itself 'So what do we need to do next?' Next steps are always strongly focused on raising standards and promoting the personal development of all pupils. Discrimination is not tolerated: all children are fully included in all aspects. Very well organised systems for management underpin the school's work. The school works extremely well with parents and with other organisations to ensure pupils' well-being.

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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?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
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	3
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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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

<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>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<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>	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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	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	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 Birley Community Primary School, Sheffield, S12 4XF

Your school is a good school with some outstanding features. You are lucky to attend such a great school and are obviously very proud of Birley Community Primary.

There are so many good things to tell you about - where shall I start? Well let us start with the very, very best. Your headteacher leads the school brilliantly, with excellent help from other school leaders including governors. Your behaviour and attitudes are excellent. This sets you up very well to enjoy school and learn at a good pace. The teachers do a good job for you and ensure that the activities you are given are exciting and interesting. They make sure that you all know how to keep healthy and safe because all staff care for you exceedingly well. You have lots of extra clubs and activities, such as working on the allotments growing vegetables and fruit for lunch.

One of the next steps for the school is to make the Reception classes even better by making sure that the young children have lots of outside play. Also, to make sure that those of you who have extra gifts and talents have opportunities to do particularly well.

Thank you for your help with the inspection. I wish you all the best for your future.