

Thorne King Edward Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106750
Local Authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	324457
Inspection dates	24–25 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Andrew Clark

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	300
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 John Coward
Headteacher	Mr Andrew Buxton
Date of previous school inspection	18 January 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	King Edward Road Thorne Doncaster South Yorkshire DN8 4BY

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	24–25 November 2008
Inspection number	324457

Telephone number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Thorne King Edward Primary School serves a former mining community in Thorne, near Doncaster. It is larger than average. It serves an area of significant social and economic disadvantage and a high proportion of pupils are eligible for a free school meal. The majority of pupils are from White British families and a small number are from Romany or Gypsy traveller backgrounds. Most pupils speak English as their first language. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision includes Nursery and Reception classes. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are new to the school since the previous inspection. The school has received a Healthy Schools award, Activemark, Basic Skills Quality Mark and an Inclusion Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Effective leadership is leading to rapidly increasing pupils' achievement at all levels. As a result, Thorne King Edward Primary is a good and improving school. Pupils are developing the skills needed to be very effective learners because of the good teaching and rich curriculum. Good care and guidance enable pupils of all abilities to develop very well in a safe and exciting community. Children make a good start in the EYFS.

Achievement is good and standards are average. Children start the EYFS with skills which are well below those typically expected for their age. By the time pupils leave Year 6, standards are average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' progress is improving throughout the school and they achieve well. Those with a learning difficulty and/or disability make particularly good progress. The achievement of the most able pupils is not quite as consistent as their peers because they are not always sufficiently challenged in some lessons.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Pupils are thoughtful and positive in their attitudes. They behave well and show tolerance, respect and care for others. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider community through the school council, playground leaders and several charitable activities they organise and manage themselves. Pupils understand traditions of the local traveller community, but their understanding of the cultural diversity of modern Britain is limited. Attendance and punctuality are good and have improved significantly since the previous inspection.

The quality of teaching and learning is good and improving. Since the previous inspection, the school has made significant improvements in analysing closely pupils' needs and setting them work which challenges them appropriately. Above all, they have developed very good strategies to develop pupils' ability to learn which is impacting positively on standards. Relationships are very good.

The curriculum is good. Wide ranging and high quality extra-curricular opportunities contribute well to pupils' personal development. There is good support for pupils with emotional and social needs and for those with learning difficulties. Good relationships with the community police and school nursing services ensure the programme for personal, social and health education is relevant and effective. Well developed links between subjects promote basic skills well.

Care, guidance and support are good and pastoral care is especially strong. The school establishes very good relationships with parents. Systems to track pupils' achievement are rigorous, and effectively used to provide good support for vulnerable pupils and raise achievement.

Leadership and management are good and improving quickly. The school has undergone a very significant change in its approach to raising achievement and building a secure base for increasingly rapid change. This is the direct result of the headteacher's clarity of vision and the action taken to create a senior management team which is effective. The quality of self-evaluation and development planning assure the school's good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The provision in the EYFS is good. Effective leadership and management ensures that children thoroughly enjoy their first taste of school. They settle quickly as a result of the high quality

care and support they receive and soon develop an understanding of how to behave, learn and play together. This strong emphasis on supporting children's social and emotional needs is a significant factor in the good progress children make. From very low starting points, children achieve well and enjoying their learning which is both varied and engaging. Although standards are below average when children start Year 1, there has been a marked trend in bringing standards closer to nationally expected levels in all areas. Good teaching and carefully planned stimulating activities spark children's curiosity and support their learning. One child, for example, excitedly counted the stars as he lit them up with his torch in the role-play room. Children are encouraged to make independent choices and develop the skills needed to support their next steps. Assessment procedures are robust and used well to support all children's needs. Parents value the good start their children get in this happy and safe unit. 'My child has been given a great, secure start to her learning', is very typical of their views.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the level of challenge for the more able pupils.
- Extend pupils' awareness of the multicultural society in which they live.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The school meets the challenging targets it sets for pupils. There is a good improving trend in the achievement of all pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties and/ or disabilities achieve particularly well because of support which is very well matched to their needs. By Year 2, standards are below average but there is a good trend towards the national average, despite a dip in the 2008 national test results. By the time pupils leave Year 6, standards are average in English, mathematics and science. The school is providing support for the most able pupils through imaginative use of the curriculum, but they are not always challenged enough in some lessons. There is no significant difference in the achievement of girls and boys. Pupils from the travelling community achieve well during their time in school as their progress is closely monitored and supported.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy lessons because, as they report, 'teachers teach you how to learn'. They establish good relationships with adults and other children and behaviour is good. Pupils feel safe and cared for and there is very little bullying. A small minority of pupils find it hard to manage their own behaviour at playtimes but the school has effective systems to support and guide them.

Pupils develop good self-awareness and self-esteem because their achievements are recognised and celebrated in lessons and well planned assemblies. Social skills are well developed through public performances, residential visits and opportunities to work with different groups of children and adults. Pupils enjoy many aspects of art and music and study different world faiths. However, they have little experience of the cultural diversity of contemporary Britain. Pupils' attendance has improved well since the last inspection and most pupils are punctual.

The pupils appreciate the value of healthy living and take full advantage of chances to keep fit and healthy through physical education lessons and many after-school activities. This is recognised in the achievement of the Healthy Schools and Activemark. Through the school council, they have played a key role in improving outdoor facilities and raising funds for charity.

The pupils are well prepared for their future economic well-being. They develop good basic skills and learn to cooperate and develop enterprise and management skills through technology competitions and other activities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning range from satisfactory to outstanding, but are predominantly good. The vast majority of lessons are well planned to incorporate interesting and fun activities, with a strong practical element, and frequent opportunities for pupils to discuss ideas or solve problems with a partner. Relationships are positive and classrooms are stimulating places in which to learn. Pupils say they enjoy their lessons because they 'feel involved and see the purpose in what we do. In the best lessons, skilful questioning enables teachers to determine how well pupils are learning and whether they require further explanation, or additional resources, to enable them to make even better progress. Activities are often linked to a theme so that learning is meaningful. Effective use of new technologies arouses pupils' interest and engages them in persuasive discussion. However, in a few lessons activities are not always as engaging as they might be and, consequently, some pupils, particularly the most able, do not make quite as much progress as they could.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Teachers have begun to establish successful links between subjects to ensure that pupils steadily develop key understanding, whilst retaining an emphasis on literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT). These arrangements are impacting positively on pupils' calculation and problem-solving skills and on their confidence in using computers. Membership of a local oracy and writing network of schools is paying dividends. Teachers make increasingly good use of drama and speaking activities to develop pupils' confidence in writing for a range of purposes and audiences.

The regular technology challenges, and links with local businesses, promote effectively the importance of enterprise, providing pupils with a good insight into the world of work. The many visitors to the school and visits to local places of interest, as well as the learning of a foreign language, enhance pupils' personal and social development. A good range of enrichment activities, including sport, music and art clubs, and the impressive school choir, all help pupils to broaden their horizons and develop varied lifestyles. Pupils have developed a good understanding of the local traveller community through opportunities to explore the story-telling traditions.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents and pupils appreciate the very strong pastoral support provided. Parents comment that they 'Couldn't ask for anything better' and pupils feel that 'teachers really care about you'. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements. Every care is taken to ensure that the school is a safe and healthy environment and regular checks are made to minimise risks. Individual education plans for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are used effectively to check progress and set new targets. The involvement of the pupils themselves in this process

is a real strength. Child protection arrangements are in place and there is particularly effective support for vulnerable pupils and those from travelling families. Links with external agencies are strong. The school works successfully with local authority inclusion services to improve pupils' attendance and to make King Edward an increasingly calm environment in which to learn. Much has been done recently to provide pupils with guidance about how well they achieve. For example, many pupils talk knowledgeably about their reading, writing and mathematics targets. Overall, the marking of pupils' work is regular and celebratory, but it is not always helpful in enabling pupils to understand how well they are doing and what they need to do next to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher's friendly efficiency and clarity of purpose have created a strong culture where staff and pupils feel they have an essential role to play in raising achievement. Although some senior staff have been in post for less than two years, their influence for positive change has been marked. For example, the development of detailed systems to track pupils' progress and the introduction of a more relevant and exciting curriculum are driving up standards. Community cohesion is good and whilst the school broadens pupils' awareness of the multicultural society in which they live, it is taking steps to develop the curriculum to incorporate even more links with people from different heritages and countries. Self-evaluation is accurate and successfully draws on the views of parents, pupils, governors and the wider community. The good governing body is now well informed and makes a full contribution to school improvement planning. The school improvement plan is a very sharply focused working document that is ensuring the school's good capacity to improve. Rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluating provision make a good contribution to improving standards of teaching. Parents have very positive views of the school and feel more involved than they did at the last inspection; this has contributed to significantly improved attendance. 'My husband and I have found that we are encouraged to take an active role in our child's education,' reflects their views.

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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?	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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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/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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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?	2

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	2
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**

On behalf of the inspection team I would like to thank you for giving us such a warm welcome when we visited your school recently. The friendly way you greeted us when we came into your classrooms and your politeness and helpfulness made our stay at Thorne King Edward Primary a very pleasant one. We will especially remember your enthusiastic and tuneful singing in assembly and the school choir.

I would like to tell you about the things we found out about your school.

First, it is a good school and getting better all the time. You make good progress in your lessons and reach challenging targets. Your personal development is good because you are happy at school and eager to learn. You take many responsibilities and your school and class councils give you real opportunities to improve the school. You behave well and play and work together happily. You know how to keep fit and healthy. You enjoy school and are proud of it. Although, you know a lot about traveller families and their lifestyles, many of you do not know as much about other cultures in Britain today.

You are well taught and are given exciting things to do in your lessons. There are exciting clubs and sporting activities in which most of you take part. The staff take good care of you and involve you in your learning well. The teachers provide good support to help you improve your work and reach higher targets. The headteacher and all staff run the school very well so your learning is always improving.

We have asked the school to make all lessons more challenging for you, particularly those who find learning easy, and to give you even more experience of the many different cultures that live in Britain. You can help by trying hard in all your work and continuing to enjoy school.