



# Dobcroft Junior School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 107035  
**Local Authority** Sheffield  
**Inspection number** 287684  
**Inspection dates** 13–14 December 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Rosemary Eaton

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 address</b>	Pingle Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Sheffield
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11		South Yorkshire S7 2LN
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0114 2368075
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	364	<b>Fax number</b>	0114 2621648
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Dr Jane Weir
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr N Kingdon
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 June 2002		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school. Many of its pupils come from socially advantaged areas. Few pupils are eligible for free school meals. An above average proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, but very few are in the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average but a more than average number have statements of special educational need. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools award, Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Activemark, and the Football Association Charter Mark. Dobcroft After School Hours provides before and after school care for pupils and is managed independently of the school.

## 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 an outstanding school, providing outstanding value for money. It strikes an excellent balance between striving for the highest academic standards and its commitment to every aspect of pupils' personal development. As a result, pupils become well-rounded individuals, exceptionally well prepared for their future lives. They play a full part in the life of the school and wider community. Pupils apply to be members of the Job Squad ('Seeks reliable and sensible people to contribute to school life') or 'Quarrelbusters' and develop a strong social conscience. They regularly consider issues relating to the school's core values, honesty and kindness, for example, during lessons in philosophy and in thought provoking assemblies. Pupils enjoy school enormously, because the huge variety of activities in and outside lessons are stimulating and fulfilling. Additionally, they understand how to stay safe and appreciate how extremely well they are cared for by all the adults in school. 'There's always someone to listen to you,' they say. Consequently, pupils are confident and very well equipped to take on challenges and voice their opinions. They are fully aware of how they can lead a healthy life, and the extensive array of sporting activities, such as cross country running, are hugely popular.

Pupils' remarkable personal development is mirrored in their outstanding academic achievement. When they join the school, the attainment of many pupils is above average. Teachers have very high expectations and they challenge pupils to work hard and aim high. As a result, pupils make rapid progress and standards at the end of Year 6 are consistently well above average. Standards in English are exceptionally high, especially in reading. However, in 2006, a small minority of pupils made less than expected progress in mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who are especially vulnerable, also achieve outstandingly well. The quality of academic and emotional support provided for them is exceptional and is very much appreciated by parents. The progress made by all pupils is tracked rigorously, with swift intervention at any sign of underachievement.

The arrangements for monitoring the school's performance are exceptionally good, providing its leaders with an accurate view of strengths and areas for development. The information collected is put to excellent use. For example, standards in writing improved following a concerted effort. Governors are actively involved in checking the quality of each aspect of school life and offer both support and challenge. Ultimately though, it is the headteacher's and deputy headteacher's first rate leadership that makes this such a successful school. All staff share their determination to provide the best possible quality of education for every pupil. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection, and the school has an outstanding capacity to become even more effective whilst remaining, as the Pupils' Parliament observed, 'a friendly school where everyone is welcome.'

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all pupils reach or exceed their target levels in mathematics.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils make outstanding progress across Key Stage 2 and standards at the end of Year 6 are consistently above average. In 2006, for example, when one fifth of pupils had learning difficulties, the school surpassed its challenging targets for English and most pupils reached Level 5. Similarly, the target for the percentage of pupils reaching the highest level in mathematics was reached. More pupils failed to reach their individual targets in mathematics than in English and science, but the school has undertaken an analysis of the areas of weakness. The excellent support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities helps them to overcome their barriers to learning so they, too, make exceptional progress as do pupils from minority ethnic groups. Comparative data does not always fully reflect the outstanding achievement of pupils who started Key Stage 2 working at Level 3. This is because the most movement they can make is to Level 5, in other words, the expected progress of two levels.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. For example, philosophy lessons make extremely effective contributions to moral development. Pupils suggest questions for discussion, such as 'Should parents ever disown their children?' and debate these in an extraordinarily mature manner. Behaviour is very good, often exemplary, and pupils are quite clear that bullying is not tolerated. They take great care of each other and help to ensure that everyone feels safe. The Pupils' Parliament provides a formal arena for pupils to express their views and have an impact on school developments. For example, playground facilities were improved to take account of information collected by the Parliament. Pupils relish opportunities to be independent and to take on responsibilities, such as running the Healthy Tuck Shop or taking part in peer mediation through 'Quarrelbusters'. They are well aware that there are many people less fortunate than themselves and regularly support a range of charities. Pupils' love of school is reflected in their above average attendance. Their very positive attitudes, outstanding achievement in English and mathematics, and excellent personal development mean that pupils are very well prepared to secure their future well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Lessons build successfully on what each pupil has already learned. Teachers have a great deal of expertise and subject knowledge and this, combined with their detailed assessments of pupils' learning, enable them to match tasks very accurately to what pupils of differing abilities need to learn next. Additional tasks to extend pupils'

learning further are always available for any who get on faster than anticipated. Teaching assistants support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities very effectively. Pupils are kept very busy with exciting activities and their relationships with adults are very positive, so they have little inclination to misbehave. Pupils work particularly hard when teachers set them time limits within which to complete tasks, enjoying this additional challenge.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The school offers a vibrant and exciting curriculum and all pupils have opportunities to learn French, Spanish and German. In Year 6, some lessons in a variety of curriculum areas are taught partly in French, enabling pupils to apply their vocabulary in new contexts and enhancing both their learning and personal development. 'Booster groups' provide intensive and highly effective support for pupils who need extra help in English or mathematics. The personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) curriculum is broad and successful, covering themes such as anti-bullying, the legal system and support for pupils' social and emotional development. Assemblies, daily routines and work in other subjects reinforce this area of their learning. Pupils' enjoyment, achievement and personal development are reinforced significantly by the vast array of activities outside the classroom. Visits and visitors to school are planned to support work in most topics. The range is exceptional, 'Superb', commented parents. Pupils look forward to their annual residential visits, which build up to a week in Paris for Year 6. The school's outstanding partnerships with the local secondary school and in the community are an important factor in its ability to offer such a wealth of learning opportunities.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school could not take better care of its pupils. Procedures for ensuring their safety are secure and very well known to all staff. For instance, midday supervisors have termly updates on child protection procedures and are charged with keeping an eye on particularly vulnerable pupils, to ensure that they are safe and happy. 'A Place to Chat' provides a haven for pupils to talk through their problems. Trusting relationships mean that pupils feel secure in the knowledge that all adults deal with them sensitively as individuals. The PSHCE programme equips pupils exceptionally well to make informed choices about their health, safety and relationships. Constructive links with the adjacent infant school and local secondary school smooth pupils' entry to the Junior School and to the next phase in their education. Pupils know their individual targets and what they need to do in order to move on to higher levels. They respond very well to their teachers' encouragement to take increasing responsibility for their own learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide extremely strong and reflective leadership, ensuring that the school is constantly moving forward. Planning to achieve priorities, including those for individual subjects, is very thorough and based on accurate audits of performance in all areas of school life. Some of the school's judgements about its performance are too cautious, because its leaders are content with nothing less than excellence. Governors bring a wealth of relevant expertise and share the headteacher's high expectations for pupils' achievement and personal development. Through careful management of the budget, governors have ensured that the accommodation has been modified to provide a pleasant environment for pupils. However, lack of space does present significant problems for teachers, for example, when storing pupils' work and learning resources. Partnerships with a host of agencies and other schools are extremely effective and the school readily shares its knowledge of teaching about global citizenship, for example, with others.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<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>	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
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>	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

### 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	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	1
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<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.

## 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	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

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when we visited your school. We very much enjoyed our short time with you, and this letter is to let you know what we found out about your school.

We were extremely impressed with your personal development. You are some of the most responsible and caring children that we have met. Quarrelbusters, the Job Squad, philosophy lessons, and the Pupils' Parliament are some aspects of the school that made a very strong impression on us. The school's values, which we know that you appreciate very much, help to make sure that you are very good citizens and will be valuable members of society in the future.

Because your teachers are so good at their job, you learn extremely well and get very good results in the Year 6 national tests. Last year, a few pupils did not reach their targets in mathematics, and we have asked the school to make sure that all of you make as much progress as you can. You can help, by continuing to work as hard as possible.

You told us how much you enjoy school and all the activities provided for you. We think you have an exceptional range of opportunities to learn and have fun. You also said that you feel safe in school and we agree that you are looked after extremely well. All in all, we think you are lucky to go to such an outstanding school, with a headteacher, deputy headteacher and the staff who are always finding new ways to provide you with a first class education.

We wish you all well for the future.