

Plover Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131265
Local Authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	315766
Inspection dates	6–7 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Elizabeth Godman

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	364
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Keith Burbanks
Headteacher	Mr John Hill
Date of previous school inspection	4 May 2004
School address	Coniston Road Doncaster South Yorkshire DN2 6JL
Telephone number	01302 361450
Fax number	01302 738886

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Plover Primary School is a larger than average primary school. Most pupils live on the housing estate which surrounds the school. The school serves an area of social and economic disadvantage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. A greater than average number of pupils are identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities, as are the number with statements of special educational need. The school has resourced provision for hearing impaired pupils and some of these pupils travel some distance by taxi to attend school. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The headteacher has been in post since September 2006 and the current leadership team has worked together since September 2007. The school has an Inclusion Chartermark, a Healthy School Award and is an Eco-school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Plover Primary School is a satisfactory school. Most parents are pleased with the quality of education provided. Satisfactory leadership has ensured that staff and governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and a start has been made on using this information to improve teaching and pupils' progress. The use of this information, however, is not fully established and it is too soon for the effects of these recent initiatives to be seen.

Pupils enter Key Stage 1 with below average skills. Satisfactory teaching and learning mean they make steady progress. Their skills in reading, writing and mathematics remain below average by the end of Year 2. In Key Stage 2, pupils say they enjoy practical activities and this helps them to make up some ground in mathematics and science, but their difficulties with language and literacy persist. Due emphasis is given to the teaching of basic skills and the recently appointed subject manager has started to make improvements. However, approaches to improve achievement in English are not consistent and so standards overall remain below average by the end of Year 6, with English being the weaker subject.

Although all lessons are well organised and behaviour is good, teachers do not make sufficient use of assessment to provide work closely matched to pupils' needs. This inhibits the progress of the highest and lowest attaining pupils. Marking does not always give enough guidance to pupils on how to improve their work. Consequently, teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress overall. Sometimes, work is not closely matched to their individual needs and they do not always have adult support in lessons. Where the effective learning support assistants provide extra help for pupils, then they make good progress. This is particularly so for the hearing impaired pupils who make consistently good progress. Staff take good care of all pupils and this helps them to enjoy school and to feel safe.

Personal, social and health education lessons help pupils to share ideas and to learn about the dangers from drugs, strangers or traffic. They enjoy school but much prefer practical lessons such as those in design technology. Pupils are learning to live healthy lives. They enjoy the exercise provided in physical education and in after-school sports and they readily eat the fruit provided in school. Parents agree that their children are safe and happy in school. Pupils say there is very little bullying and they are confident to approach adults about this or any other problems. They behave well and listen politely to one another and to adults in lessons and around the school. The school council make well considered and thoughtful contributions, for example, in identifying the drainage problems with the recently resurfaced playground. Pupils are developing suitable skills for adult life. Although many have weaker literacy skills, they work well together, are confident in the use of computers and are learning about financial management.

Attendance is below average. Although work with parents has started to improve this, particularly in the Foundation Stage, there is more to do to improve attendance and to increase parents' involvement in their children's learning. Strong partnerships with other schools helps pupils to feel confident about the transfer to secondary school and good cooperation across different agencies and with special schools is especially effective in ensuring the inclusion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Satisfactory improvement since the last inspection,

accurate self-evaluation and the recently introduced steps taken to make improvements, give the school a satisfactory capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Good teaching in the Foundation Stage ensures children make good progress. Most enter the Nursery with skills well below those expected for their age. Staff rapidly identify difficulties with communication, language and social skills and provide activities which secure good progress in these areas. As a result, many children currently in the Reception year are working at levels closer to those expected for their age, particularly in writing. These children take great care of today's 'special person' and listen carefully to the teacher and to one another. Throughout the Foundation Stage children follow clearly established routines. Classrooms are set out to allow children good access to a wide variety of activities, both indoors and outside. This stimulates curiosity and encourages independence. A strong feature is the way in which adults talk to children when they are playing, encouraging sustained interest and extending their vocabulary. Systems to assess children's progress are good and provide a clear record of development in all areas of learning. Children's welfare is promoted well. Recently established links with parents are starting to improve attendance and to encourage parents to be involved in their child's learning. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed, ensuring that planning is consistent and effective in both Nursery and Reception years.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the rate of pupils' progress in English.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning and make better use of assessment to match work to the needs of all the pupils.
- Ensure that leaders make best use of all available information to support and monitor improvements in teaching to enable pupils to progress at a faster rate.
- Work with parents to improve attendance and to increase their involvement in children's learning.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils enter Key Stage 1 with skills below those expected for their age and make steady progress in all subjects. Standards are below average at the end of Year 2 and very few pupils reach the higher levels in reading, writing or mathematics. Satisfactory progress continues in Key Stage 2 so that by the end of the key stage overall standards remain below average. Standards in mathematics and science are closer to the national average because the pupils benefit from a more practical approach in lessons. English results are the weakest. In many lessons work is not always closely matched to the starting points of the higher and lower attaining pupils, this is particularly so in English lessons. Not all pupils are clear about what they need to do to reach a higher level and so their progress does not accelerate but remains steady. Overall pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress, although hearing impaired pupils make good progress. This good progress is the result of effective adult support which ensures the pupils are fully involved in lessons and are very clear about what is required.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Most pupils are happy at school because, 'There are lots of friendly people' and 'You get fun work'. Despite this, attendance is below average. Pupils' behaviour is good. They are polite and well mannered, attentive in class and get on well together. Pupils feel safe in school and know how to look after themselves when out and about. They have no concerns about bullying and have confidence in staff to deal quickly with any that does occur. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. While pupils' appreciation of their own culture is satisfactory, their understanding of other cultures and faith traditions is weaker. Pupils' self-esteem builds progressively and they become mature and personable young people. They have a well developed sense of responsibility and readily take on jobs around the school. Older pupils act as play leaders to increase the enjoyment younger ones get from playtime and pupils of all ages raise matters sensibly and astutely through the school council. Pupils recognise the need for a healthy lifestyle. Many take regular exercise and try to eat a sensible diet. Preparation for future learning and life is satisfactory. Pupils learn to work alongside others and become confident in the use of the computer.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Good quality relationships and effective management ensure that lessons are orderly, purposeful and progress smoothly. Pupils respond well. As they grow older, their capacity to concentrate hard increases and they become thoughtful learners. Teachers have good subject knowledge which they use effectively to extend pupils' skills and develop their understanding. Lesson planning is clear, but teachers do not use assessments well enough to match work to the different learning needs of pupils. As a result, some pupils may have work that is too hard and others work that is too easy, all of which slows progress. This is particularly the case in the teaching of English. Teachers make good use of technology, such as interactive whiteboards, to add interest and opportunity for pupils. Learning objectives are shared with pupils at the start of lessons but are not always revisited often enough to help pupils assess for themselves the progress they are making in their learning. The quality of marking is inconsistent and pupils are not always given the information they need to improve their work. Learning support assistants play a full and effective part in lessons and make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. The teaching for pupils with hearing impairment is good and they are included fully in lessons.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum adequately provides for pupils' needs and enables them to make satisfactory progress. Due emphasis is placed on basic skills, but the programme for literacy lacks cohesion and does not promote pupils' learning consistently. The recently appointed subject manager has started to make improvements but there is much still to do. Pupils enjoy the interesting practical activities they are provided with in subjects such as design technology and science but are far less enthusiastic about religious education, saying this is 'because it is all writing'. The programme for personal, social, health and citizenship education provides valuable opportunities for pupils to share their thoughts and feelings with others, which they much

appreciate. Pupils learn about the hazards surrounding drugs and other substances and of the importance of sensible financial management. The curriculum is enriched with a good range of additional features, such as the highly enjoyable 'Circus Skills' day Year 6 took part in very recently. Older pupils are included in a programme to improve their physical coordination and confidence, which enhances many aspects of their personal and physical development. There is a good range of well attended extra-curricular activities and pupils take pride in their success in local sports competitions.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Staff take good care of pupils. Most parents agree that their children are safe and well cared for in school and pupils know that there is someone they can approach about any problems. Procedures to safeguard children are in place. This helps pupils to feel secure and happy in school. All pupils are fully included in the life of the school, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This enables all pupils to show a positive attitude towards disability. Monitoring of attendance levels is sound. The partnership with the education welfare service and targeted intervention with families have secured some improvements but more remains to be done to improve it further. Links with parents are developing but opportunities are missed to work with all parents to improve attendance and to increase involvement in their children's learning. The academic guidance provided for pupils so that they know what they have done well and what they need to learn next is inconsistent and as a result, pupil progress is not accelerated and remains satisfactory.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leaders and managers have a very clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses based on accurate self-evaluation. This has secured a shared understanding amongst staff and governors of the school's priorities for improvement and the plans necessary to secure this. Although leaders have gathered a wide range of information about the school's performance and pupils' progress, the analysis and use of this by key stage leaders and subject leaders is at an early stage of development. As a result, this information is not used consistently to improve teaching to meet the needs of all the pupils and to increase their rate of progress. The school makes satisfactory use of financial resources and careful thought is given to how best to use staff to improve pupils' learning. Learning support assistants provide good focused support. There is a strong and shared commitment to ensuring the inclusion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the leadership of the provision for hearing impaired pupils is particularly effective. The school makes good partnerships with a wide range of agencies to improve pupils' well-being. Procedures for ensuring pupils' safety meet requirements and the positive and friendly approach of staff helps children to feel safe and confident in school. Governors have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are starting to provide the support and challenge needed to secure improvement.

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?	3
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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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 team, I should like to thank you all for being so friendly and welcoming when we inspected your school recently. We enjoyed visiting your lessons and talking to you about your school.

We found that your school is giving you a satisfactory education. Changes being made by your teachers and ideas from the school council are starting to improve it further. You told us you enjoy school. We were impressed by how polite and well behaved you are. We think your teachers and helpers take good care of you and help you to stay safe. You know about being healthy, enjoying the fruit and sports in school. Year 6 had great fun learning circus skills. School is helping you to grow up into responsible people who understand the importance of taking care of yourselves and of other people. Your lessons are helping you to make steady progress. However, you do learn more quickly in science, mathematics and practical subjects than in English. We think that those of you who are hearing impaired are learning well and you are also helping the other pupils to understand how to get along with everyone.

We think your headteacher has identified the right things to make the school a better place for you to learn and we have asked him to do four things to improve your learning:

- help you to improve your work in English in both reading and writing
- improve the quality of teaching and make sure that all the information teachers have about how well you are doing is used to plan work that is not too easy or too hard for you
- use all the information the school has about your learning to make sure the teachers help you to make even better progress
- work with your parents to make sure that you all attend regularly and help your parents know how to help you with your learning.

We feel sure that you will continue to do your best and that you will enjoy working hard to meet these challenges.