

South Otterington Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121603
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	359046
Inspection dates	6–7 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Georgiana Sale

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	108
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Helen Fielding
Headteacher	Mrs Kate Williamson
Date of previous school inspection	6 December 2007
School address	South Otterington Northallerton North Yorkshire DL7 9HD
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons involving five staff. They held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, parents and carers, staff and a group of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation, including records of pupils' progress, the school improvement plan, assessment information, policies and samples of pupils' work. Information about safeguarding was evaluated. Inspectors also took into account the views of staff and pupils expressed in questionnaires. They received and analysed 40 questionnaires from parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- What pupils' attainment and the rate of progress are currently, throughout the school, especially in science and mathematics.
- How the school monitors the performance of all pupils and how data are used to plan lessons so that they make good progress, especially in the mixed-age classes.
- How staff with responsibility for subject areas are contributing to school Improvement.

Information about the school

South Otterington is smaller than most primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much lower than average. There is a much lower proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities than in most schools. Nearly all the pupils come from White British backgrounds. The school was awarded enhanced Healthy School status in 2010. The headteacher was appointed just over a year ago.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

South Otterington is a good school. It is a strong, cohesive and safe community where the warmth and excellent care given by the staff provide a strong sense of family and belonging. Pupils show great care and support for each other and their excellent attendance and good behaviour contribute to them making good progress in class. The school has the overwhelming support of the parents and carers who make approving comments, such as, 'Our children are happy and nurtured in all ways.' Some aspects of its work are outstanding, for example, the Early Years Foundation Stage provision, the extent to which pupils feel safe, and the care, guidance and support the school provides. These contribute significantly to pupils receiving a good education.

Children join the Reception class with skills and knowledge broadly similar to children of a similar age and are given an excellent start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils continue to make good progress to attain above average standards overall by the end of Year 6. However, relative weakness in the teaching of mathematics has meant that pupils' progress is not as rapid as that in English. Pupils get on well with their friends and adults, and are very confident that they are safe. They understand well what they need to do to stay healthy and how to keep themselves safe, and they use information and communication technology (ICT) safely. Good teaching overall and a creative curriculum ensure that pupils achieve well from their starting points and that lessons are fun. Teachers plan lessons imaginatively, for example, using a Native American Pow Wow Dance to help pupils understand Tudor exploration, and lots of songs to help pupils remember important mathematical rules. Information communication technology is also used well to engage pupils.

The headteacher and the robust and well-informed governing body, have a shared vision for school improvement and a determination to ensure that all pupils develop as individuals. They have built a team which works well together and share this determination. The school has an accurate knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses. It recognises where more needs to be done, for example, that aspects of the teaching of mathematics need to improve. Improvements have been made in pupils' performance, for example, in writing in both key stages, and in science in Key Stage 1. Staff are dedicated and want to improve their practice. These strengths give the school a good capacity to improve further. However, senior staff recognise that subject leaders are currently under used in monitoring and improving key areas of teaching and learning, and that they have a lack of detailed knowledge of how well pupils are progressing in the subjects for which they are responsible.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase accountability and share leadership more widely across the whole staff, by involving subject leaders more in monitoring and improving performance.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics to be consistently at least good by:
 - ensuring that all teachers use pupils' assessment data to plan and provide suitably challenging and different learning opportunities for all pupils
 - increasing the quality and frequency of written and verbal feedback so that pupils know exactly what to do to improve
 - sharing examples of good mathematics teaching across the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils say they enjoy school, and this is reflected in their excellent attendance and good progress. They work together well in teams, enjoy being challenged and relish the opportunity to use ICT, for example, when they made a short film about the life of Rama and Sita. All pupils say they feel very safe and secure. This, together with the excellent classroom habits they have developed in the Early Years Foundation Stage, contributes to their positive attitudes to work, maturity and enthusiasm to learn when they enter Year 1.

The work observed in lessons and in pupils' books confirms that by the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment is above average. Pupils make good progress overall, particularly rapid in English. However, although still good, progress is not as strong in mathematics. Pupils' good social, moral and spiritual development shows in the way they are thoughtful and tolerant, and treat each other with respect in and out of the classroom. These personal qualities, together with their well-developed basic skills, excellent attendance, good ICT skills and self-confidence, provide a good platform for the next stage of their education. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive highly individualised and robust support, which enables them to make good progress. Differences between the progress made by different groups of pupils are minimal.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe and all are aware of risks associated with using the internet and other modern technologies. Pupils put into practice their good understanding of how to keep healthy, with nearly all pupils eating a healthy lunch and joining in an out-of-school physical activity club. Pupils take strong ownership of the school community and contribute well to the school, as servers at lunchtime, house captains, contributors to assemblies and as recycling monitors. The school council has helped in raising funds for the school and in organising house teams and events. Pupils have strong links with the wider community through village events and the church.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. A key strength in the effective teaching and learning is the warm relationships between staff and pupils. Teachers have good subject knowledge and set out clear lesson objectives, so that pupils know what is expected of them. Classrooms are productive and purposeful places where pupils work together sensibly. Teachers mostly make good use of accurate data about pupils' prior knowledge to set work which is enjoyable and challenging for pupils. However, sometimes they are not effective in providing work that stretches pupils in mathematics, who consequently do not always make the progress of which they are capable. Marking and verbal feedback are used very effectively to guide pupils on how they can improve their performance in English. However, this is not as consistent in mathematics and verbal feedback in class is not always detailed enough to ensure pupils know what to do to move to the next level.

The curriculum is good and is enhanced by many visits and visitors in order to make learning come alive, for example, visits to the local newspaper and the local 'forest school', and visitors, such as a local cheese maker. The majority of pupils take part in after-school clubs, choosing from a wide range that includes cooking, dance and gardening.

Pupils appreciate the benefits of a small school where everyone knows one another and realise they are very well cared for. The school has strong, effective partnerships with other professionals to give timely, targeted support when necessary. The school works

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well with parents, carers and other schools to provide good support to ensure a smooth transition into the Reception class and later, to the High school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The new headteacher's strong ambition for pupils to achieve well and to develop into well-rounded individuals is supported by the staff and the governing body, all of whom work well together as a team. The clear sense of direction through a time of staff turnover has ensured that above average attainment has been maintained. Accurate school self-evaluation means that development priorities are correctly identified. The regular and adept use of data, to evaluate and analyse the school's performance, enables the headteacher to take focused actions to bring about effective change. The headteacher, for example, has taken successful action to improve the overall quality of teaching and learning. This has resulted in pupils' improved performance, particularly in writing at the end of Key Stage 1, where attainment is now above average. New subject coordinators are supported to develop a greater understanding of their roles and responsibilities and their leadership capacity is improving. However, the impact of the subject coordinators on raising performance further has not yet been fully realised.

The school promotes community cohesion well. Interaction with the local community is strong and the Church plays a fundamental role in the life of the school. Pupils have a developing awareness of global issues but pupils have a more limited understanding of cultural and ethnic diversity in the United Kingdom. The budget is managed efficiently and, taking account of the outcomes for pupils, the school provides good value for money. The school has effective procedures for tackling any form of discrimination. The success of its promotion of equality is seen in the high quality of its care and the successful actions it is taking to make sure that those pupils at greatest risk of underachieving do not do so.

At the time of the inspection, safeguarding procedures were good. They are regularly updated and integrated into the curriculum so that pupils have a strong understanding of how to keep themselves safe. The governing body is well informed, knowledgeable and plays an active role in school life.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children get off to a flying start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make excellent progress in all areas of learning. At all times, children are safe and secure; all procedures regarding safeguarding are securely in place.

A rich, lively and stimulating environment has been created for children. Both indoors and outdoors, play and learning go hand-in-hand with a host of activities that give children every opportunity to explore and learn. Smiles are the norm and children buzz with the excitement of trying new things, for example, a stage had been made where children dressed up and performed their own play. 'Tidy up' music and other embedded routines, ensure that the children develop good learning habits and become confident to make their own choices. Teaching is good and activities are well planned and purposeful. Children were fascinated as their teacher dressed up as a shepherd and used a sheep puppet to make sure the children could count up to 15. Staff strike a good balance between enabling children to learn through their own interests and extending learning through adult-led tasks, for example, in reading, writing and mathematical development. Staff know each child very well and sensitively intervene where necessary to support, cajole or encourage. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified as soon as possible so that their needs can be met.

Excellent leadership and management make sure there is a clear focus on improving the quality of learning and well-being of the children. Effective teamwork is brought about by daily meetings to evaluate what has gone well and how to make the provision better for all. Teachers, parents and carers work extremely well together to make sure that information about progress and children's welfare is shared.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire, thought the school provided a safe, happy and stimulating place for their children to be. They said the school worked in a positive partnership with them and that communication with the school was open and easy. Parents and carers were also pleased with the progress their children made. They were especially happy with the Early Years Foundation Stage provision, which they thought was excellent. The inspector endorsed all these positive views. A very-small minority were concerned about some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching; however, the inspector found the quality of teaching to be good overall. A similar proportion had concerns that unruly behaviour was not dealt with effectively. The inspector found no evidence of this during the inspection.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at South Otterington Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 40 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 108 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	26	65	13	33	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	27	68	13	33	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	16	40	22	55	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	45	17	43	3	8	1	3
The teaching is good at this school	21	53	15	38	4	10	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	45	20	50	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	55	18	45	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	16	40	20	50	2	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	48	18	45	3	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	38	19	48	4	10	2	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	40	19	48	3	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	20	50	14	35	3	8	1	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	23	58	13	33	3	8	1	3

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



7 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of South Otterington Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Northallerton DL7 9HD

On behalf of the inspection team I would like to express how we really enjoyed inspecting your school and I am writing to thank you for two very interesting days. Your thoughts and views helped us to make our judgments during the inspection. You go to a good school that is giving you a good start to your life.

This is what I found.

- You are taught well and I agree with you that your lessons are fun and interesting.
- You feel very safe and know that the adults look after you very well.
- Children in Reception thoroughly enjoy school and learn quickly.
- Your attendance is excellent.

I have asked your headteacher and the governing body to do the following things to make the school even better.

- Your teachers need to make sure that they plan mathematics lessons that really challenge you and that they tell you exactly how to improve your work. You need to make sure that you listen to them and then put their advice into practice.
- The teachers in charge of a subject should make sure that they know how well all pupils in the school are progressing and make sure that all lessons in that subject are at least good.

I wish you every success in your time at school.

Yours sincerely

Georgiana Sale

Lead inspector

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