

Skirlaugh Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117993
Local Authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	358236
Inspection dates	10–11 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Linda Murphy

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	153
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Gary Taylor
Headteacher	Mrs Janet Forth
Date of previous school inspection	13 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Teaching and learning was observed in nine lessons taught by seven teachers; meetings were held with groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and staff. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents, including the school's data records, policies, the school development plan, minutes of governing body meetings, the notes of the School Improvement Partner's visits, and policies and practice in safeguarding. They analysed 66 questionnaires completed by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The quality of writing to determine whether teaching and the curriculum provide sufficient challenge
- How good achievement and attainment are in the Early Years Foundation Stage and what the contributory factors are.
- How well-established the curriculum is and whether there is a long-term overview to determine coverage, including opportunities for writing.
- How effectively the work of leaders and managers aids pupils' achievement.

Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average primary school. It serves the local and surrounding villages and some homes further afield. A very small minority travels by bus to school. Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for a free school meal is much lower than average. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average although the proportions vary year on year. Since the previous inspection there have been four changes of headship in three years. The present headteacher took up post in September 2010 alongside other new teaching staff. The school holds a wide range of external awards. Also since the previous inspection parts of the school building have been renovated.

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

This is a good school. Pupils' behaviour and their understanding of how to stay safe are outstanding features. Pupils enjoy school and are courteous and kind to others. Attainment on entry varies within the often small year groups in this school. Children enter the Nursery with skills mostly well below those typical for their age. Good progress enables them to narrow the gap but still join Year 1 at a level below that typical for their age. Good progress continues throughout school. As a result, by the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment is average in English and mathematics. Strengths are in reading and calculation. Writing, solving problems and reasoning mathematically are weaker elements.

Despite the changes in headship the school has done well to provide consistently good teaching and learning. It is based on an engaging curriculum and good quality care. As a result, all groups including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well.

The majority of parents are supportive of the school's work. A small minority expresses concern about some aspects at times due to changes in leadership. As a result of this, the school has yet to further strengthen its relationships with parents and carers and look together to the future. Pupils' attendance is average, in part because some pupils take holidays in school time and when this happens they miss out on their formal education.

The school has a good capacity for improvement because senior leaders and managers provide the school with clear direction and a strong sense of purpose. This is based on careful assessments of strengths and areas to develop and on the monitoring and evaluation of the school's priorities for improvement. This means that outcomes for pupils are good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in writing by:
 - improving pupils' understanding and correct use of grammar and sentence construction
 - modelling to pupils how to transfer their ideas developed through discussion into writing
 - providing structured frameworks to help pupils order their different types of writing
 - making good use of information and communication technology (ICT) to engage pupils in writing
 - providing greater opportunities for pupils to assess their own work.

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- Raise attainment in mathematics by improving pupils' skills at reasoning and solving mathematical problems.
- Look to the future and reinforce links and communication with parents and carers by:
 - ensuring that the expectations of the school are shared
 - ensuring parents contribute to ideas and change
 - working with pupils, parents and carers to raise rates of pupils' attendance
 - monitoring the impact of this partnership on pupils' learning and attendance.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and relate well to adults and other pupils. They enjoy learning and achieve well. Pupils' excellent behaviour ensures they quickly settle in lessons. A focus on developing pupils' speaking and listening is planned well in lessons. Pupils listen well to teachers' explanations. They willingly discuss their thinking with partners and are prepared to have a go at answering questions.

Given the widely-varying skills and needs of pupils on entry, together with the small numbers in some year groups, the performance of individual pupils has a big influence on the levels of attainment from year to year. In lessons and through scrutiny of work and data related to progress, it is clear that attainment is broadly average. Within this span, attainment in reading is higher than in writing. Pupils enjoy discussion and develop good ideas. They are not so adept at ordering their thoughts into a logical piece of writing. Grammatical inaccuracies and lack of clear sentence construction further clouds the clarity of writing. In mathematics, pupils do not always know which of their strengths in calculation to draw upon to reason and solve mathematical problems.

Pupils' good understanding about healthy lifestyles includes very effective knowledge of the importance of emotional well-being. Pupils' first-rate understanding of staying safe includes helping their classmates and friends to also stay safe. Plentiful opportunities help pupils reflect on right and wrong. They use their fast-growing maturity to good effect in contributing towards building their growing school community and contributing to the local and global communities. Pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy together with average attendance help prepare them soundly for the workplace.

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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	3
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	1
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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
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?

Strong relationships and a wealth of opportunities to encourage pupils to speak and listen aid teaching well. Clear questioning links to good quality assessment. Firm, fair and consistent management of behaviour ensures that no time is lost. These are crucial factors in the good quality of teaching across the school. The marking of pupils' work helpfully informs them of the next step although there are too few opportunities for pupils to reflect on how well they are doing and to think for themselves how they might improve. The school is trialling a new way of working to incorporate this but it is too early to see the impact on attainment. Teaching assistants are well-informed and well-deployed to aid the teaching so that individual pupils and small groups benefit well from extra teaching. Teachers do not always provide sufficient guidance, including structured frameworks, to help pupils order their writing well.

The curriculum underpins teachers' plans well for the varying ages and abilities of pupils in their classes. A move to encapsulate a thematic approach has a positive impact on pupils' enjoyment. Pupils enjoy a wide range of cultural experiences, for example, through studying celebrations. Opportunities are lost to incorporate the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in different types of writing.

The small size of the school is capitalised on in the extent to which all pupils are well-known by staff, and the good level of care provided. Concern for others is central to the school's work. The school works well with others, for example, local schools, to agree joint

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actions regarding families taking holidays in school time. Even so, attendance levels are only broadly average, despite the school's efforts.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The professional relationship that has quickly developed between the leaders and managers is notable and a strong factor in the school's continuing success. Leaders and managers have tenacity and a clear vision. They ensure that the school's mission statement guides developments; a statement that expresses the importance of achievement, values, nurturing and motivation. The governing body fulfils its statutory requirements well and is experienced in not only supporting but providing challenge to the school throughout the changes of headship. Good quality systems and practice ensure pupils are safeguarded from harm. These include very careful checks on people who work with the pupils and close working relationships with outside agencies. Faith, ethnicity and culture are promoted successfully across the curriculum and as a result pupils have a good understanding of what is happening worldwide and how they can contribute. Consequently, the school's promotion of community cohesion is good. Simple but effective systems for tracking pupils' progress are used well to identify if any child requires any extra help so that any gaps between groups of pupils continually narrows. Due to the many changes of headship and slight changes in basic management not all parents are fully aware of what is required or how they can best support the school. Even so, the school has made a good start by surveying the views of parents, carers and pupils on homework and is acting on their views.

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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	3
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

Throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage children get off to a good start and develop good learning habits. Within the well-planned learning environment children learn to take turns, listen and cooperate. For example, through role play in the 'Chinese restaurant'. They concentrate well on self-chosen activities or those led by adults, and become used to well-established routines. Children form good relationships. There is a good range of resources which are easily accessible to develop pupils' confidence, skills, knowledge and understanding. Leaders and managers bring increasing consistency to the approaches in the Nursery and Reception classes. There remains more to be done to bring the unit up to an outstanding level and to further aid transfer between the separate areas of accommodation. Differences remain in registration, children's freedom of choice of activity, the quality of assessment linked to observations of what pupils can do independently and the use of the outdoors. The school's self-evaluation has highlighted these areas and staff are introducing an increasingly consistent approach in a timely way. Adults are particularly adept at modelling language which, together with the effective teaching of letters and sounds, lays the foundation for the confidence with which Reception Year children talk about their work and make good progress in reading and writing. Welfare requirements are met well and children know how to be healthy and to stay safe. Records of children's well-rounded achievements and enjoyment in learning are recorded well through 'Learning Journey's' shared with parents and carers.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

An above-average response to the questionnaire from parents and carers showed strengths in particular in: children's enjoyment in school, the way in which the school keeps children safe, information about pupils' progress, that parents and carers believe the children are making enough progress at school, that the school helps pupils live a healthy lifestyle, meets their needs and that overall parents and carers are happy with the experiences the school provides for their children.

A very small minority had concerns over their child's progress and how the school helps carers and parents with their children's learning. Concerns were also expressed about the way that the school deals with behaviour and takes account of suggestions and ideas. In addition there were concerns about the effectiveness of the school's leadership and management and also regarding the happiness of parents and carers with their children's experiences at school. Inspectors investigated these concerns. They looked at behavioural records, held discussions with staff and pupils and observed behaviour in classrooms and around the school.

The school is reviewing how it can better respond to adults' views including how parents can help their children at home. Given the many changes in headship recently the school says it wants to look to the future alongside parents and carers in the interest of the children. For example, to overcome any difficulties such as for those parents whose children travel to school by bus and do not always meet staff daily. The school provides regular newsletters for parents and carers and uses a 'reflective journal' for messages between home and school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Skirlaugh 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 66 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 153 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	30	45	31	47	2	3	2	3
The school keeps my child safe	28	42	36	55	0	0	2	3
My school informs me about my child's progress	22	33	32	48	7	11	4	6
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	32	34	52	7	11	3	5
The teaching is good at this school	27	41	24	36	8	12	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	35	29	44	12	18	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	42	33	50	4	6	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)	17	26	33	50	6	9	2	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	30	37	56	7	11	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	26	31	47	10	15	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	26	28	42	11	17	3	5
The school is led and managed effectively	23	35	22	33	8	12	6	9
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	31	47	22	33	9	14	2	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



14 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Skirlaugh Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Hull, HU11 5EB

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave to the inspection team when your school was inspected. You attend a good school. Your behaviour and understanding of how to stay safe are outstanding features.

Strengths in your school include:

- the good start that children make in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- your good understanding of the importance in leading a healthy life
- the good contribution you make to your school and other communities
- that you make good progress
- leaders and managers who know what to do to help you do your best
- the good teaching and exciting and interesting themes you study
- the way in which adults in school care for you well.

The inspection team has asked your school to do three things to make it even better by:

- helping you to improve your writing even more
- helping you to use your skills at calculation to work out mathematical problems
- working even more closely with your parents and carers to help you make even faster progress and to raise the level of your average attendance.

I trust you will enjoy the changes which will be made. You can help by continuing to work hard at writing and solving problems and your families can help by ensuring you attend school every day.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Linda Murphy

Lead inspector

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