

Seamer and Irton Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121357
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	358997
Inspection dates	7–8 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Robert Jones

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	363
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Helen Mallory
Headteacher	Mr Jonathan Wanless
Date of previous school inspection	20 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 12 lessons, taught by 12 different teachers. They held meetings with a governor, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including policies, the school improvement plan, records of pupils' progress and child protection records. The inspection team received and analysed 75 questionnaires from parents and carers, as well as a number of questionnaires completed by pupils and from staff.

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

-Whether the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is securing good learning and progress.

- How well the curriculum helps pupils to develop skills of scientific enquiry.
- Whether pupils' targets are sufficiently challenging and the rigour with which their progress is tracked in Key Stage 2.
- The accuracy of teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment across the school, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- How well children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are helped to develop skills in communication, language and literacy.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and very few speak English as an additional language. Fewer pupils than average have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school holds various awards, including Healthy School status, Activemark Gold, the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark and the North Yorkshire Inclusion Quality Mark.

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 that has improved well since its previous inspection. Parents and carers are supportive of its work, making comments such as, 'I could not wish for more from a school'.

As a result of a concerted, successful effort to improve the quality of teaching and learning, pupils make good progress during their time at the school. Attainment is average. It is rising in all subjects but at a faster rate in reading and mathematics due to effective interventions in place for pupils who need additional support in those subjects. The quality of assessment to support learning is more variable across the school and is satisfactory. The good curriculum is effective in making learning relevant and interesting. The arts, particularly music, have a high profile in the school. The result is that pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their above-average attendance. Sports are promoted well in the school, with a high proportion of pupils being involved in extra-curricular activities. Furthermore, many choose healthy options at lunchtime. Care, guidance and support are good. Pupils' progress is monitored carefully and a range of specially tailored programmes ensures that no pupils fall behind.

Outcomes, provision and leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Children make satisfactory progress during their time in Reception. However, there is some lack of rigour in how children's learning is assessed, how provision is evaluated and monitored, and how the two Reception classes work together. Furthermore, there are insufficient opportunities for children to practise and develop their writing skills.

The school has addressed all the issues from the previous inspection well. Improvements in the quality of reading and mathematics have been the result of incisive self-evaluation and effective plans for development. Attainment is rising, with the current Year 6 on track to reach standards that are above average. Middle leaders are fully involved in this good self-evaluation process and are committed to improving the quality of assessment to support learning. This illustrates well the school's good capacity to sustain its improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve how assessment is used to support learning by:
 - – ensuring pupils have clear, individual targets to help them improve their writing
 - – devising a more accurate way of assessing, setting targets and measuring the progress of lower-ability pupils in Key Stage 1
 - – providing increased opportunities for teachers to meet and compare their assessments to ensure they are accurate.

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- Enhance provision, outcomes and leadership for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - – ensuring there are sufficient opportunities for children to develop their writing skills in a variety of styles
 - – increasing the rigour and accuracy with which children's skills are assessed and how their next steps in learning are identified
 - – identifying opportunities for the children and staff in the two Reception classes to work collaboratively
 - – frequently monitoring and evaluating provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

In lessons, there are many opportunities for pupils to work in groups and discuss ideas. This makes learning interesting and develops their speaking and listening skills well. Pupils are given work that matches their abilities and are questioned skilfully by teachers which challenge them well by requiring them to answer in full sentences. In lessons, they are able to make good links between subjects. In a geography lesson, for example, pupils were involved in analysing data and drawing graphs relating to different climates around the world. This developed their mathematical skills as well as their skills of scientific enquiry. While pupils say they enjoy lessons due to the interesting things they have to do, they are not generally clear about what they need to do to improve, particularly the quality of their writing.

Pupils enjoy their time in school and achieve well. Children enter the Reception class with skills that vary from year to year but which are generally below average. They make good progress to leave in Year 6 with attainment that is average. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. In reading, they make outstanding progress due to a highly effective programme for them.

There are ample opportunities for pupils to make valuable positive contributions and many grasp these with enthusiasm by becoming a member of the active student council or becoming a playground helper. Pupils say how they feel safe in school and how there is always a caring ear should the need arise.

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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	2
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	2
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 quality of teaching and learning is good overall. In the majority of lessons, pupils are fully involved in their own learning which leads to them making good progress. The pace of learning is lively in the majority of lessons. Only occasionally do teachers talk for too long which results in a slower pace of learning. Teachers plan well for the different abilities in the classroom and good use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) to support and enhance learning.

The quality of the use of assessment data lacks consistency across the school. Assessing pupils' understanding through teachers' questioning in lessons is of high quality. Additionally, there are ample opportunities for pupils to assess their own and each others' work in lessons. However, pupils' targets in writing are vague or not sufficiently personalised to each pupil's needs in some classes. This leads to pupils not always being sure of what they need to do to improve. Targets in all subjects for lower-ability pupils are imprecise in Key Stage 1. This means that target-setting is not driving improvement as well as it should. While assessments are generally accurate, there are pockets of inaccurate marking which is the result of insufficient opportunities for teachers to meet and compare their assessments. This has largely been the result of an over-complex system of marking literacy work which some teachers understood better than others. The school has good plans in place to overhaul and simplify assessment in literacy.

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The curriculum is constantly under review to check it reflects pupils' interests and abilities. For example, the science curriculum has been modified to provide more opportunities for scientific enquiry. Best use is made of the extensive grounds to enhance the curriculum, such as an excellent outdoor classroom where pupils learn about sustainable lifestyles and grow their own crops. Activities such as the 'business club' which sells stationery and provides opportunities to engage with a school bank, introduces pupils well to the world of work. ICT is used well in lessons, which particularly motivates boys and has been a contributory factor in closing the gap between boys' and girls' achievement in literacy. Music, particularly singing, has a high profile which adds to pupils' enjoyment and strongly builds up their speaking, listening and reading skills.

The good care, guidance and support systems are supplemented well by close working with outside agencies to ensure the needs of pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable are well met. Good support is available for those pupils who need help to manage their behaviour. In the inspection, the school was able to give examples of how pupils with additional social and emotional needs had been helped to overcome their challenges. This good provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities has led to them making good progress overall and outstanding progress in reading.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
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 headteacher and his senior team lead with energy and vision. They have successfully galvanised the enthusiasm of all staff, embedding ambition and driving improvement well. Leadership in English has recently changed but the new leader has quickly taken stock of what needs to be done to simplify the assessment processes which will enable teachers to assess accurately without being overburdened with paperwork. Currently, there are too few opportunities for teachers to meet and ensure that their assessments are accurate. Keen analysis of data has led to sharp plans for action to address remaining areas of weakness. The exception is in the Early Years Foundation Stage where some lack of monitoring has meant that areas of weakness have persisted. In Key Stage 2, attainment was falling in science but has been quickly rectified by introducing a 'big book' approach which enables pupils to build up and show their investigative skills.

Safeguarding meets statutory requirements, with risk assessments, effective site security and documentation relating to child protection being of a satisfactory quality. Members of the governing body receive good quality information from the headteacher and visit the school frequently. Some governors have a better understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses than others, so the effectiveness of the governing body is satisfactory

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overall in the support and challenge it gives to the school. The school promotes equal opportunities well. This is particularly evident in how well pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve. Any gaps in achievement between boys and girls are analysed and effective measures are put into place to close the gap. Incidents of discrimination are rare, but when they do take place, are tackled decisively by the school. This is reflected in how very safe pupils say they feel in the school. The school has undertaken a thorough audit of its promotion of community cohesion. There are good links in place with a local special school. Pupils have made good links with senior members of the local community, for example by involving them in music performances. Good opportunities exist in the curriculum for pupils to understand cultures other than their own and the school is building on this to establish links with schools overseas.

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	3
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	3
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 make satisfactory progress during their time in Reception. Good arrangements are in place to ensure their transition from Nursery settings is smooth and that they settle quickly into their new surroundings. Throughout the day, children are involved in stimulating activities both indoors and outdoors. In one lesson, pupils demonstrated good physical skills by taking part in country dancing. The two Reception classes are next to each other, but operate very independently. Opportunities are missed, therefore, to share resources and staffing to further enhance the learning experiences for children.

Children quickly learn to cooperate when playing and are given opportunities to develop their communication skills. The local authority has given good support to helping teachers to develop children's communication, language and literacy skills. This has led to them developing well their understanding of letters and their sounds. During the inspection, children were keen to show an inspector how they were able to read words from a

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computer by splitting syllables up. However, there are insufficient opportunities throughout the day for them to apply this knowledge in developing their writing in a variety of styles. During the inspection, children were able to talk to inspectors about foods that were 'good for you' and how exercise made them healthy. In the bathroom, they showed good hygiene practices.

All staff contribute to assessments of children's development across all areas of learning, but the assessments made, particularly of their writing, lacks accuracy. Consequently, the assessments are not precise enough to identify the next steps children need to make to improve. Inspectors saw examples of good teaching and good subject knowledge which are promoting good learning in some areas of learning. However, school leaders have not monitored or evaluated the Early Years Foundation Stage frequently enough to ensure this good practice is shared among all staff or that the quality of assessment improves beyond being satisfactory.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are supportive of the school's work. Many of their comments focused on the friendly and welcoming nature of the school, how they feel the teaching is good, how approachable the staff are in resolving problems quickly and efficiently and how school trips enhance pupils' enjoyment of school.

A small minority of parents raised concerns about the progress of their children and the challenge afforded to higher ability pupils. The inspection team investigated these issues thoroughly. In previous years, there has been more variability in the quality of teaching. Remaining weaknesses have been tackled decisively by school leaders and this has resulted in the quality of teaching and learning improving. This is reflected in the overall good progress being made by pupils currently in the school. However, the inspection team did find that the quality of feedback to pupils on pupils' writing is not clear in identifying the next steps they need to take to improve. This is leading to some pupils making faster progress in reading and mathematics than they do in writing.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Seamer and Irton Community 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 75 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 363 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	51	68	23	31	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	39	52	32	43	3	4	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	25	33	47	63	2	3	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	37	42	56	4	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	34	45	39	52	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	29	39	42	56	0	0	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	41	43	57	1	1	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)	24	32	42	56	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	30	40	41	55	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	26	35	46	61	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	33	45	60	3	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	43	57	32	43	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	45	60	28	37	1	1	0	0

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.



9 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Seamer and Irton Community Primary School, Scarborough, YO12 4QX

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we came to inspect your school. This letter is to tell you what we found out.

You go to a good school and you make good progress. Those of you who need extra help in reading make outstanding progress. That is another of those 'wow' words that means really, really good. You told us how you feel very safe and how the school helps you to keep fit and healthy. Your teachers make your lessons interesting and fun and you told us how school trips also help to keep things interesting. We thought your behaviour was good and we were impressed by how older pupils looked after the younger ones and by how many of you take part in sports.

These things do not just happen, of course. Your headteacher and staff have been working hard behind the scenes to make sure they improve teaching in all classes. There are always things to improve, so we have asked your school leaders to make sure that when your work is marked, you have targets to help you know exactly what you need to do to improve in writing. We have also asked your teachers to meet regularly to compare the assessments they make of your work to help them improve the way they mark your work. For children in the Reception, we have asked your school leaders to make sure children have lots of time to practise their writing, that the two classes think of ways of doing some activities together and to improve the way in which children's progress is recorded.

You can help by looking carefully at what your teacher tells you to do to improve your work and by asking if you are still not sure.

Yours sincerely

Robert Jones

Lead inspector

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