

# Middleham Church of England Aided School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121614
<b>Local Authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	359048
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 June 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Katharine Halifax

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	75
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Amanda Adamson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs S Bell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 June 2008
<b>School address</b>	Park Lane Middleham North Yorkshire DL8 4QX
<b>Telephone number</b>	01969 623592
<b>Fax number</b>	
<b>Email address</b>	admin@middleham.n-yorks.sch.uk

---

**Inspection number** 359048

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2011

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited six lessons or parts of lessons taught by three different teachers. Further time was spent looking at pupils' records, work books, and information about pupils' progress. Inspectors held meetings with leaders, governors, staff, pupils, parents and carers, and other professionals. They looked at the school's review of its work, the current development plan, minutes of governors' meetings, and documentation to ensure pupils are safe. The responses to 35 parental questionnaires were analysed.

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

- The effectiveness of actions that are taken to raise attainment in writing.
- The accuracy with which teachers assess pupils' achievements and their use of the information when planning further work.
- The effectiveness with which teachers plan the curriculum to provide activities that challenge pupils of different ages and differing abilities in the same class.
- The effectiveness of actions that identify and provide for pupils who have a gift or talent.
- The depth of pupils' understanding of diversity and community cohesion.

## Information about the school

This smaller-than-average school serves a rural community where almost one half of pupils are bussed in from outlying villages and farms. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and all speak English as their principal language at home. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Though the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, the numbers vary significantly from year group to year group. The school has achieved the Inclusion Quality Mark, Activemark and Healthy School status.

Considerable changes have been made to the accommodation since the last inspection. Two of the three teachers have been appointed during the past four terms. The headteacher is leaving at the end of the school year. The governing body has appointed the headteacher of a neighbouring village school as a collaborative headteacher until a suitable appointment can be made.

**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 is at the heart of the village community. Despite being a small school, leaders have worked hard to ensure pupils have a rounded education. Through numerous links with other schools and community groups, pupils have access to a wealth of sporting and creative activities which contribute to their skills, achievements and enjoyment.

Achievement is good. While attainment in national tests has varied from year to year because of the very small year groups and differing proportions of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, pupils make good progress from their individual starting points. Children enter the Reception class with attainment typical of their age and make good progress in all areas of learning. The good progress continues through Key Stages 1 and 2. In the 2010 Year 6 national tests, every pupil achieved at least two National Curriculum levels progress in both English and mathematics. Teacher assessments for 2011 show a similar picture. The proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 5 is rising, so by the end of Year 6 attainment is well above average in reading and mathematics. Attainment in writing is broadly average. Leaders have introduced a number of initiatives to raise attainment in writing, but there is still a gap between pupils' performance in writing and in reading in all age groups. As a result of the focus on mathematics, attainment in this subject has risen considerably. Through the village link with Agincourt, and first-rate teaching, pupils' performance is well above that expected in French.

As a consequence of daily routines and an effective programme for their personal and social education, pupils make good gains in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This, coupled with above-average attendance, enables them to acquire a range of skills which prepare them well for the next stage of their lives.

Leadership is good and has been enhanced by a recent appointment. Leaders know the school well. Self-evaluation is generally accurate and staff are clear about what is needed to raise attainment further. A useful system has been devised to check pupils' progress. This identifies gaps in learning and tracks individual pupils' annual rate of progress. However, the process does not provide adequate detail to keep a check on pupils' progress over time, nor does it track the progress made by different groups of pupils such as those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, or those who have a gift or talent. Although the headteacher is leaving, the school is safe in the hands of an energetic, enthusiastic staff whose knowledge and skills give the school good capacity to continue to improve.

**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

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in writing by:
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to express and extend their ideas orally before they start to write and as they are writing
  - improving pupils' spelling, use of grammar and sentence structure
  - ensuring pupils make better use of similes, metaphors and alliteration
  - taking full advantage of opportunities to extend pupils' vocabulary.
- Improving the whole school recording and tracking system to:
  - track pupils' progress and achievements over time
  - track the progress of different groups of pupils
  - formalise pupil-progress meetings with class teachers.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy their time in school, acquiring new knowledge and skills at a good rate. They show good levels of concentration and are keen to do well. Classrooms are buzzing with pupils bursting to take their learning further. Pupils especially enjoy being able to influence the way topics develop. Pupils make good progress in most subjects. Those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the targeted support they receive and through their 'inclusion passport'. The focus on practical and mental mathematics for all pupils has resulted in significant improvement in attainment and progress in the subject. Pupils love reading and achieve highly, but they do not write to the same standard. While pupils write in different genres, and for a variety of purposes in different subjects, their sentences sometimes lack structure and spelling is not always accurate. Pupils are beginning to use similes and metaphors, but on occasions these do not always make sense. At times, pupils' vocabulary lacks imagination and opportunities to use alliteration, for example in poetry, are missed. As a result of inspired teaching and meeting with French children, pupils are determined to master the language and make excellent progress in acquiring new vocabulary.

Pupils behave well and say they feel safe; they are confident that staff would sort out any problems that might arise. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves fit and healthy. Pupils are proud of their achievements and undertake their numerous responsibilities conscientiously. Aware that the school grounds are not used to full advantage, pupils have visited a number of schools to gather ideas to improve this with, for example, rural art, willow tunnels and allotments. The creation of a school blog has been extremely successful in connecting pupils with local and international schools. In addition to showcasing the exciting events that happen within school, links have been established with schools in Canada, India and New Zealand. Pupils are currently following the progress of two round-the-world cyclists. This is improving their geographical understanding considerably. For example, pupils explain the gruelling conditions the cyclists are experiencing in the Gobi Desert. The links give pupils a good understanding of diversity and community cohesion. Though this is an almost all-white Christian school, pupils have a good awareness of the major world faiths commenting 'though we have different religions we all believe in a special god'. Furthermore, they are knowledgeable

**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

about the lives and customs of the children in their link school in India. Pupils comment on the differences in lifestyles, for example when going to market to buy vegetables, 'we go on a bus, they travel by cow and cart'.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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?

Teachers and support staff work effectively as a team and have an in-depth knowledge of the abilities and needs of all pupils. They plan meticulously to provide and challenge the differing abilities and age groups in each class, and use the information well to plan the next steps in each pupil's learning. Teachers are imaginative in the activities they offer, particularly when inspiring boys to write. For example, boys were enthusiastic as they crawled through a 'tunnel' using similes such as 'as slippery as black ice' to describe their experience and create a setting for a story. Teachers are skilled in questioning pupils to make them think and reason. Some very good examples were observed of adults extending pupils' vocabulary by asking for alternative words, but opportunities to use imaginative language were sometimes missed. Similarly, pupils are usually encouraged to express their ideas orally prior to commencing writing, but they are not always encouraged to 'think aloud' and expand upon their thoughts as appropriate when writing. Inter-active white boards are used effectively to introduce new learning and reinforce teaching points. Day-to-day assessment is good and accurate. Teachers use a range of

**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

assessment methods. They mark pupils' books conscientiously, providing targets to help pupils improve their work.

The imaginative curriculum is tailored to individual needs, and carefully checked to ensure pupils in each age group in mixed-age classes receive their full entitlement. It motivates pupils and engages them very well with learning. Suitable time is allocated to literacy and numeracy, and themes such as 'Water Worlds' are developed especially well through English lessons. Leaders have been innovative in developing the curriculum and have introduced topics that inspire pupils as well as giving them a greater understanding of the wealth of resources on the doorstep. For example, following a visit to a nearby castle, pupils gained considerable insight into Richard III, commenting 'he wasn't all bad you know' and used their knowledge in their entertaining production of 'What a Knight'. Pupils appreciate being consulted as to the way topics will develop to match their interests. Numerous visits and visitors make learning meaningful. The provision for pupils who have musical and sporting talents is good. Leaders identify and provide well for gifted mathematicians and now are developing this for other subjects.

Pupils benefit from very good relationships with adults. They receive sensitive support from caring, approachable grown-ups whom they trust. This enhances the quality of their learning. Staff ensure pupils' understanding of keeping safe and healthy is relevant to their circumstances. For example, pupils are articulate when listing the hazards that occur on farms and when discussing farm safety. Considerable work has been undertaken on anti-bullying. When cyber-bullying occurred, leaders tackled this head-on with the result that the school is a safe community. Links with agencies and health professionals are good. Staff work hard to involve parents and carers in their children's education. A recent 'pyjama party' with families playing table games and reading bedtime stories together was a hit. Transition to secondary education is well-planned, giving pupils confidence and enabling a smooth transfer.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

Although teaching for half a week, the headteacher has successfully moved the school forward since the last inspection and increased pupils' rate of progress. In addition, she has overseen extensive building work, and good induction has been provided for new staff as well as professional training for existing staff. Class groups have been restructured. An effective team has been assembled and morale is high. Teachers regularly discuss the progress of individual pupils informally, but do not have rigorous pupil-progress meetings to analyse the advancement of every pupil in reading, writing and mathematics.



**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

Governance is good. Members of the governing body work closely with the diocese to ensure pupils' spiritual and moral needs are met. Members are articulate and knowledgeable. They ask searching questions about pupils' attainment, but they have not been party to information about pupils' progress. At the time of the inspection, good arrangements were in place to safeguard pupils. Adults have a good understanding of protecting their pupils. Procedures are reviewed and updated regularly. Equality of opportunity is good, leaders are determined 'no child will ever miss out'. Community cohesion is good. The school is a harmonious, outward-looking community, not just to the village but to the wider and global community. The electronic link and exchange of teachers and letters with a school in India has been a revelation to pupils. Plans are in place for more local links with a school that has pupils of Asian heritage.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children relish their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The move to a new classroom and outdoor provision has opened up a wealth of opportunities. Regardless of the weather, children delight in learning outdoors. Although Reception children are taught in the same class as pupils in Key Stage 1, exemplary planning ensures both age groups receive their full entitlement. Children's progress is good overall. It is outstanding in their personal and social development and in communication. Teaching is never less than good. A suitable balance between adult-led and child-centred activities both indoors and out cater well for children's learning. Activities are imaginative. They enable children to make choices, work independently and to think and reason. For example, a discarded cardboard box became, amongst other things, a home for a hamster, the hull of a ship, or the door of a train going on a long, exciting journey. A wealth of displays, such as well-preserved fossils, encourages children to be curious and led to in-depth discussions about dinosaurs. Leadership and management are good. The new outdoor area is developing well, though

**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

at present it lacks storage facilities, and there is no sheltered area for children in wet weather or strong sun. Parents and carers are becoming more involved in their child's education. 'Learning Journeys' are of a high quality, providing memorable records of magical moments.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

Almost one half of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire, which is a higher proportion than typical in primary schools. Many parents and carers chose to make comments, most were positive. Parents and carers particularly appreciate the warm atmosphere of the school, and adults who genuinely care. Others reported areas of concern. The inspection team endorses the strengths identified by parents and carers. In response to their concerns:

Behaviour and bullying:

Inspectors investigated the parental concerns and judge that the school has good procedures for dealing with any form of misbehaviour and with bullying. Behaviour during the inspection was good, with that of most pupils being impeccable. No disruptive or inappropriate behaviour was observed.

Progress:

Progress is good overall, though pupils do not make as much progress in writing as in other subjects.

Keeping parents and carers up to date:

While some parents and carers had concerns, others are pleased, for example, commenting 'the school blog is a great way to see what is going on and the fantastic work the children do'.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Middleham Church of England Aided 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 35 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 75 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	18	51	14	40	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	22	63	12	34	1	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	15	43	15	43	2	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	13	37	16	46	1	3	2	6
The teaching is good at this school	17	49	13	37	2	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	37	17	49	2	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	57	14	40	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)	14	40	14	40	1	3	1	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	13	37	15	43	2	6	1	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	11	31	14	40	9	26	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	29	18	51	3	9	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	13	37	10	29	6	17	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	20	57	10	29	2	6	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



22 June 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Middleham Church of England Aided School, Middleham, DL8 4QX**

Firstly may I say what an enjoyable time my colleague and I had when we visited your school recently. Thank you for talking to us and for showing us your work. We especially enjoyed hearing about all your sporting achievements and how much you enjoy your clubs, particularly Tuesday Trekkers. Your production 'What a Knight' was really entertaining, and I spent ages reading your Blog! It was very clear from our chats and the questionnaire replies that we received from you, and from your parents and carers that you enjoy school, and think that you are safe and very well cared for.

Your school is providing you with a good education. Your teachers have high expectations of your behaviour and the work you produce. They teach interesting lessons and provide good care, support and guidance. As a result, standards are rising and you are achieving especially well in reading and mathematics. You are well-behaved and your attendance is above average. You have a good understanding of keeping safe and healthy, and you make a valuable contribution to the school and wider community.

Your leaders are working successfully to make the school better for you. There are two things we have asked them to do to make it even more successful.

- We would like you to make better progress in writing.
- We would like your leaders to have better systems to keep a track of your progress.

We know you will do all you can to help your teachers and we wish you every success in your future.

Yours sincerely,

Katharine Halifax  
Lead Inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**