

Sicklinghall Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121415
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	359009
Inspection dates	27–28 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Carmen Markham

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	50
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Paul Robbins
Headteacher	Mrs Claire Pascoe
Date of previous school inspection	14 November 2007
School address	Main Street Sicklinghall, Wetherby West Yorkshire LS22 4BD
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector visited five lessons and observed three teachers. She spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at learning in lessons and in pupils' books. The inspector held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. She observed the school's work, and looked at the school improvement plan, school policies, safeguarding documents and details of the progress made by pupils. The responses to 26 questionnaires from parents and carers, and those from pupils and staff were scrutinised.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. She looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether teachers' planning takes sufficient account of pupil assessment information and the tracking of their progress.
- Whether children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have their needs fully met in a mixed-aged class.
- The effectiveness of leadership, management and governance in distributing leadership and management responsibilities and holding class teachers to account for the performance of their pupils.
- The quality of the school's planning for, and delivery of, national and global elements of community cohesion.

Information about the school

The school is very small compared to other primary schools. It draws a few of its pupils from the village it serves but most arrive by car from the surrounding rural villages and the nearby town. Very few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. Almost all are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is a little below the national average. All pupils are organised into mixed-age classes. The headteacher teaches for approximately half the week. The school has been awarded the Activemark, the North Yorkshire Inclusion Quality Mark Level 3 and the Financial Management Standard in Schools.

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?**1****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****1**

Main findings

This is an outstanding school. It has made rapid improvement in all aspects of its work since the previous inspection. The very strong emphasis on improving pupils' learning has strengthened the teaching of basic skills, produced an outstanding curriculum and ensured that the needs of all pupils are known, understood and met by staff. This ensures that attainment in English and mathematics is at least above average at the end of Year 6. All groups of pupils make at least good progress and many make outstanding progress. Pupils have benefitted from an excellent learning environment that is very welcoming and well resourced. Learning is strengthened by the regular and creative use of the outdoor environment.

The headteacher has an excellent understanding of how children learn and how learning is promoted. This has been expertly communicated to staff who share her outstanding drive and ambition for the school and its pupils. Morale is high and strong team work facilitates rapid improvement. The improved delegation of management responsibilities has ensured that all staff have some responsibility for school management and teachers are held to account for the performance of their class through regular reviews of pupils' progress. Therefore, all staff are involved in very effective school self-evaluation and identifying and agreeing priorities for improvement. They all influence school improvement and fully recognise their responsibility in delivering the excellent school development plan. The school's capacity for sustained improvement is outstanding.

A high proportion of teaching seen during the inspection was outstanding. This reflects high quality professional development and support from excellent local partnerships. The use of assessment to support learning is good and effective but pupils' skills in peer- and self-assessment are still developing. Outstanding care, guidance and support ensure that teachers have detailed knowledge about the progress of every pupil and their needs. Teachers use a range of strategies very flexibly to support individual pupil's personal learning needs. Activities are inclusive of all pupils. The school is highly effective in promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination and ensures all pupils have equal chances to succeed.

Pupils' attendance is high and their punctuality is excellent. They behave well and have very positive attitudes to learning. Their development of work place skills is outstanding and so is their knowledge and understanding of safety and healthy lifestyles. They are members of a very cohesive school community but they have limited opportunities to experience other traditions and cultures.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Give pupils more responsibility for their own learning by developing peer- and self-assessment.
- Raising pupils' awareness of cultures and traditions in communities that are different to their own by:
 - re-establishing previously strong links with an inner city primary school
 - extending current links with a school in Peru.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Achievement is outstanding and all pupils are enthusiastic and very well-motivated learners. They are always fully engaged in their learning and work well collaboratively and independently. In lessons, team work is strong and pupils regularly support each other effectively in problem solving. They are mature and confident in their approach to learning and all have the confidence to ask questions and take risks, as they appreciate that this is part of learning. Pupils are very clear about the levels at which they are working, what their targets are and how they can improve their work to reach them. They are beginning to assess their own work and that of others, but this is at an early stage of development. Pupils enjoy the fast pace and challenge of lessons. In a mathematics lesson, a pupil was heard to say, 'that was great; it really made my brain sweat'.

Most children start school in the Reception class with skills and knowledge in line with those expected for their age. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is above average overall and sometimes high. Very small cohorts with variable numbers of pupils and sometimes a wide range of abilities cause annual fluctuation in overall figures for attainment. School data and inspection evidence confirm that all pupils currently make at least good, and often outstanding progress throughout the school. The skilful teaching of mixed-age groups enables all pupils to work at their own level and achieve highly. There is little difference in the performance of boys and girls and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities perform better than their peers nationally. There is little variation in performance between subjects. Progress in writing is good, but it tends to be not quite as strong as in reading, which is very strong. Previous weaknesses in mathematics have been addressed and current progress is similar to progress in English.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and contributes well to their personal development. The behaviour of all pupils is good overall. It is exemplary in lessons, but a very small minority are not always considerate to others around school. Pupils serve their school and the local community extremely well. School councillors give pupils a genuine voice and school ambassadors represent the school at a forum of local schools. All pupils in Key Stage 2 have jobs in school; some of these require pupils to apply for them and to be interviewed. Pupil-led charity fund raising provide good opportunities for enterprise and the regular application of basic skills in topic work ensures that pupils are very well prepared for their future economic well-being. This is further supported by their high attendance and excellent punctuality.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	1
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?

Teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection. There is a very strong focus on enabling pupils to be effective learners and on the development and application of basic skills. Teachers' accurate assessments are used well to track pupils' progress and to plan lessons that ensure the needs of all pupils are catered for. Teachers ensure that pupils are always active learners. They make lessons challenging and relevant to the interest of their pupils. Lesson pace is fast and excellent resources and very effective support from teaching assistants enable pupils to rise to the challenges presented. Teachers use questions very skilfully to help pupils to recall previous learning before they move on to the next stage. High quality marking supports learning well and contributes to good and better progress.

The outstanding quality of the curriculum is enabling teachers to engage and motivate learners. Topics are put into a real-life context and are very relevant to pupils. While subject specific skills are at the heart of the curriculum, as seen in two excellent science lessons, the curriculum is a means for pupils to use, consolidate and extend their key skills in a range of contexts. The curriculum plan enables pupils to learn about team work and personal organisation. It also makes excellent provision for the pupils' personal development, including their health and safety, which are both outstanding. 'Special weeks' specialising in a range of topics, including, the Second World War and the Italian week, provide enrichment, as do residential visits and the use of a local farm for a range

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of memorable outdoor learning experiences. Almost all pupils attend at least one after-school club, including 'Let's Get Cooking' and football.

Pastoral care is outstanding. Transition arrangements into and out of school are very effective and the excellent strategies to ensure attendance and punctuality are highly successful. The school provides a family atmosphere in which pupils thrive. All pupils and their families are well known to staff and this helps to identify pupils who need additional help in their learning. This is supported by half-termly reviews that identify pupils who may be falling behind. Pupils are well supported by personalised provision and one-to-one support. The school meets the needs of those pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable through using trained specialist staff in school and also using external agencies. The school uses a variety of media to communicate effectively with parents and carers and ensures that they are kept fully informed about their children's progress.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The governing body and the leadership team are very successful in sharing their ambitious vision for the school with all members of the school community. Very effective self-evaluation identifies good priorities for improvement and development planning is rigorous and linked to challenging targets. There is a very strong focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning and the headteacher is relentless in driving this forward. Excellent use is made of in the school's monitoring and evaluation, and excellent partnerships with the local school cluster have enabled best practice to be shared very effectively. Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection, with teachers usually delivering outstanding lessons and pupils achieving outstandingly well.

Financial management by the governing body is exemplary and value for money is outstanding. The governing body has a good understanding of the context of the school and is actively involved in aspects of self-evaluation and development planning. It ensures that policies are regularly reviewed and that all safeguarding requirements are met. Pupils are very safe in school; the building and the school grounds are secure and high priority is given to regular safeguarding training for staff. High quality risk assessments, policies and procedures help to secure the safety of pupils.

The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination in an exemplary manner. All groups of pupils progress at similar rates. The school has evaluated its impact on community cohesion and there are effective plans that promote links with a variety of communities beyond the school and its locality. However, these have been slow to develop

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as cultural exchanges have been restricted by the only recently completed building work in the school. The school is keen to re-establish its links with an inner city primary school and extend its links further with a school in Peru. Community cohesion makes a strong contribution to work within the school and in the local community.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
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	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Reception-age children are taught effectively alongside Year 1 pupils in the same classroom. Excellent arrangements for children joining the school ensure that they settle very quickly into their new routines and make good progress. Their learning profiles show the good progress they have made during the year, with many pupils writing simple words clearly and sometimes creating meaningful sentences by the end of the summer term. Teaching is good and the curriculum develops children's basic skills well including speaking, listening, writing and number.

Children are very confident learners who integrate well with Year 1 pupils; often preferring their more structured activities at times when they have opportunities for more free choice. They respond well to challenging activities such as making a fantasy model and collecting and investigating insects. Leadership and management are good with staff working effectively as a team to provide good quality provision through good assessment, planning, a very welcoming learning environment and excellent resources. This includes a new outdoor area that is not yet fully developed, to meet requirements for physical development but the staff are already working to improve this. Children are cared for very well; their safety is a priority. Parents and carers are welcome in class at the start of the day and seen as partners in their children's learning. Good quality children's planners ensure that all parents and carers are kept informed daily of progress and concerns.

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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

The proportion of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire was above average when compared to other primary schools. Overall, responses were overwhelmingly positive. This was further reflected in the comments from parents and carers who expressed their thanks to the school for all the help and support they and their children receive. They also recognised the dedication and hard work of staff while the recent, extensive building work was being managed on the school site. Typically, parents and carers commented that, 'We have nothing but praise for this school and all the staff. Our children are happy and thriving. There is a caring, family atmosphere. Communication between home and school is excellent'.

Some parents and carers expressed concerns, and wrote at some length about the impact that staff absence can have on continuity of provision. The school appreciates the importance of continuity and the inspector found that the school had done everything possible to reduce disruption to pupils' learning and endorses the positive views of those parents and carers who recognised that, 'The school has covered these absences with excellent and consistent use of supply teachers and that children's education over those periods did not falter'.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sicklinghall 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 inspector received 26 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 50 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	18	69	8	31	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	17	65	9	35	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	12	46	12	46	1	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	13	50	11	42	1	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	17	65	9	35	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	15	58	9	35	1	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	65	9	35	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)	11	42	11	42	0	0	1	4
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	58	11	42	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	9	35	13	50	3	12	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	46	10	38	1	4	1	4
The school is led and managed effectively	12	46	12	46	1	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	17	65	9	35	0	0	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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).

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"> ■ 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.



29 June 2011

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Sicklinghall Community Primary School, Wetherby, LS22 4BD

I would like to thank you for making me so welcome when I came to inspect your school. A special 'thank you' goes to those pupils who gave up some of their time to talk with me about their work and activities. I was delighted to hear about the success of your mixed boys and girls cricket team in a recent tournament.

You attend an outstanding school where the headteacher and all the staff ensure that you are exceptionally well cared for and very safe. They have also made a lot of improvements to help you to achieve exceptionally well. In particular, you understand how to improve your work and know what your targets are. Your targets are helping you to do better in English and mathematics. Most of you, including the children in the Reception class, are making at least good progress in lessons and many of you are making excellent progress. I was very impressed by your enthusiasm for learning, your ambition to succeed and willingness to learn from mistakes. Your attendance is high and behaviour is good. You enjoy school and all the activities you are offered. I agree with you when you say you know a lot about staying safe and healthy.

I have asked your headteacher to do the following two things to improve your school further:

- develop your skills in assessing your own work and that of your classmates.
- improve your knowledge and understanding of cultures and traditions in communities that are different to your own.

You can help to improve your school by learning to assess your own work.

Yours sincerely,

Carmen Markham

Lead Inspector

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