

Grassington Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Acre Lane, Grassington, Skipton, BD23 5LB

Inspection dates 17 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress throughout the school and achieve well especially in reading and writing.
- The quality of teaching is good. Some teaching is outstanding. Teachers usually expect the best from pupils. They have a good understanding of what pupils have learnt and use the information to plan interesting lessons.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils say that they feel safe and play an important role in keeping the school safe. Pupils are polite and courteous and together with the adults in the school have created a caring environment in which to learn.
- The determined leadership of the headteacher supported by an equally effective senior leader has secured impressive improvements in a relatively short space of time. For example, the quality of teaching has improved and systems to check how well pupils are learning are now more robust.
- The governors are supportive and are increasingly effective in holding the school to account; they are determined to help the school to continue to improve further. They are well informed and know their school well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The teaching of mathematics is not as strong as it is in other subjects because the most-able pupils are not always given work that is hard enough for them.
- Pupils are not always given time to make the improvements suggested by teachers when they mark pupils' work.
- The school's plans for improvement do not include precise measurable targets. As a result, leaders do not know how well new initiatives to improve the school further are working.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed four lessons, two of which were joint observations with the headteacher. Inspectors also listened to pupils read in Year 2.
- They took account of 20 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View) and 11 questionnaires completed by the staff.
- They held a meeting with members of the school council and talked informally with other pupils at lunchtime and break time. Inspectors talked to three members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. They also had discussions with senior leaders as well as leaders with other responsibilities including special educational needs and the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Inspectors observed the school at work and looked at a range of documentation including internal and external information relating to pupils' progress, pupils' workbooks, school improvement planning and the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its own performance. They also considered reports written by the local authority, documents relating to the management of teachers' performance, minutes of governing body meetings and safeguarding and child protection documents.

Inspection team

Peter Eeva, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Janet Keefe

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a much smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after) is lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The number of pupils in each year group is much lower than average and pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has been through a period of change including a change of leadership at senior level and other staffing changes.
- In recent years there have been a significant number of pupils in Years 5 and 6 who have joined or left the school other than at the usual time.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the school's improvement plans include precise measurable targets so that leaders, including the governing body, know if new initiatives are having a positive impact on improving outcomes for pupils.
- Further improve the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding, especially in mathematics, to raise achievement higher by:
 - always planning tasks which are hard enough for the most-able pupils
 - sharing the best practice that exists within the school and the local authority with all staff
 - making sure that pupils always have time to respond to teachers' suggestions on how they can improve their work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The very small number of pupils in each year group means that each pupil has a disproportionate effect on overall results in the national tests. This has been certainly true in recent years when progress and standards appear to have dipped. Pupils' absence due to serious illness and the movement of pupils into and out of the school mask the real picture of pupils' good achievement from their different starting points.
- Most children enter Reception with skills, knowledge and understanding that are broadly in line with those typical for their age although there are some who enter with skills that are lower than this. They make good progress because teachers have a thorough knowledge of what each child needs to learn. Children make a good start in linking letters to the sounds they make and are becoming good readers. By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage many write sentences using correct grammar and punctuation with growing confidence.
- Good progress continues in Key Stage 1 and 2 in reading and writing, but progress in mathematics is not quite as strong. The school's records, recent test results and inspection evidence show that a well-above average proportion exceeds national expectations in reading and writing. However, the proportion of pupils who exceed expectations in mathematics, while above average, does not match those in other subjects. This is because the most-able pupils are not always given work that is hard enough for them.
- There are now effective systems in place to check on pupils' progress throughout the school. As a result, the school can quickly identify any gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills. Action is taken promptly to provide extra support for pupils in class or out of class, individually or in small groups to boost pupils' learning.
- The progress of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding including those known to be eligible for free school meals is good and their attainment in English is similar to that of others in the school and nationally. This is because of the effective extra support provided for them such as individual one-to-one teaching. Progress in mathematics is similar to others in the school.
- The school provides effective additional support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs so they, too, make similar progress as others in the school. Staff have a thorough understanding of each individual pupil's particular needs and use this knowledge to provide specific help where it is needed.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good and sometimes outstanding in the impact it has on pupils' learning over time. The good relationships between pupils and staff ensure a productive atmosphere for learning.
- Teachers plan lessons which interest and make pupils want to learn. In a mixed-age Year 2 and 3 class, for example, pupils became detectives as they accurately measured hand and footprints to identify a burglar. Their attention was captured; they enjoyed learning and made good progress.
- Teachers use their knowledge of how well pupils have learned in reading and writing to help them plan activities that meet the needs of the wide range of pupils in their mixed-age classes. However, this is less effective in mathematics particularly for the most-able pupils who do not always have work that is hard enough for them.
- Teaching assistants are deployed effectively and carefully guide pupils' learning. They have a clear picture of the needs of different pupils, especially disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and want them to do their best. Pupils respond to these expectations and typically try hard to rise to the challenges set for them.

- Pupils are encouraged to cooperate and work together and learn from each other as well as with each other. The mixed ages in each class allow opportunities for pupils to learn in different groups to everyone's benefit.
- Teachers mark pupils' workbooks regularly and make suggestions on how pupils can improve. However, time is not always given in lessons for pupils to respond to their teachers suggestions; as a result, some pupils repeatedly make the same spelling mistakes. Where writing might benefit from the addition of adjectives or connectives, for example, pupils do not have a chance to do this straight away.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour is good and sometimes impeccable, for example when on school visits. Inspectors were impressed with pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons. The records kept by the school confirm that behaviour is typically good.
- In the playground pupils play with each other and look out for those who sometimes have nobody to play with. Older pupils typically make sure that younger pupils enjoy their break times.
- The school has an effective system to encourage pupils to behave well and for rewarding good work. All teachers follow this system consistently and pupils say that they know how to behave both in and out of classrooms.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. The school council plays an active role in assessing risks and making sure that the school site is safe. Parents agree that their children feel safe in school.
- Pupils recognise the dangers when using the internet and understand how to keep themselves safe. They say that bullying of any type is rare and would be dealt with promptly if it did happen. Parents and teachers agree.
- Pupils are very confident and are keen to take on responsibilities such as being a member of the school council or a buddy to younger pupils and they take their responsibilities seriously.
- The school's 'Seven Cs' form a cornerstone for pupils' good behaviour. They are understood by all pupils who seek to use these characteristics in all they do.
- Attendance, while below average, has improved as a result of the rigorous hard work done by the school. The improvement last year was slowed by the effect of severe weather and an outbreak of illness. The school's records show that improvement is now back on track.

The leadership and management are good

- The school is well led by a determined and effective headteacher who has seen the school through a period of change. She is ably supported by the senior teacher and an ambitious governing body.
- The school has an accurate picture of its strengths and areas for development and produces clear plans with actions to tackle these. However, the plans do not always have accurate measurable targets that would enable leaders to know how well new initiatives to improve the school further are working.
- The headteacher carries out regular checks on the standard of teaching and learning which provides an accurate view of its quality. Where improvements are needed teachers are able to improve their skills through effective professional development. Improvements in pupils' achievement in reading and writing have been the result of effective collaboration with local schools. However, the outstanding practice evident in the school is not always shared widely enough among all staff.
- Thorough systems are now in place to check on pupils' progress throughout the school. Where any gaps in knowledge, understanding or skills are identified the school quickly takes action to boost pupils' learning by providing extra support in small groups or individually, in class or out of class.

- The school knows and cares for its pupils as individuals and successfully removes any barriers to learning. As a result, all pupils have an equal opportunity to do well. There is no difference in the achievement of different groups.
- Arrangements for pay and promotion of staff are carefully linked to their performance and the progress pupils make.
- The curriculum is good and ensures that pupils experience a range of interesting topics. Pupils say that they thoroughly enjoy the visits and the after-school clubs and activities such as the gardening club. During the inspection, the Year 6 pupils very effectively organised and ran a fund-raising afternoon for pupils and parents much enjoyed by all, the funds going to a local hospice.
- The development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is very important to the school and as a result, pupils' personal development is of a good quality.
- Child protection and safeguarding procedures are effective and meet current requirements.
- The local authority provides support that is appreciated by the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is effective and determined in monitoring the performance of the school and is becoming increasingly effective in asking the questions which help to hold the school to account. It is ambitious for the school to improve further. Governors know the school well and are kept well-informed about all aspects of school life, in particular school data relating to the achievement of pupils and the quality of teaching. They are familiar with the Teachers' Standards and use them to help manage teachers' performance. They oversee the spending of any pupil premium funding and are aware of the positive impact it has on pupils' achievement.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	121563
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	413090

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	61
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Claire McGuinn
Headteacher	Lesley Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	14 January 2009
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