

Romanby Primary School

The Close, Romanby, North Yorkshire, DL7 8BL

Inspection dates

9–10 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher, governors and key leaders are aspirational for all pupils. They constantly communicate high expectations about the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements. As a consequence, teaching is improving and achievement is rising.
- Pupils generally start school with skills typical for their age. The vast majority now make good progress and achieve well.
- In 2014, pupils overall attained above average standards by the end of Year 6, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- The early years provision is good. Outdoors and indoors children enjoy motivating and well-planned learning experiences.
- Teaching is good because most lessons capture pupils' interests, encourage them to share ideas together and to think for themselves.
- Pupil premium funding is used successfully to promote the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well. Adults understand individual pupils' needs and provide appropriate support.
- Pupils behave well, enjoy their lessons and the many extra-curricular activities and visits. They are very welcoming to visitors and proud of their school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. All the planned experiences and activities promote their understanding of the importance of patience and tolerance and of respect for others.
- Arrangements to keep pupils safe and secure are good. Pupils are knowledgeable about how to keep themselves and others safe.
- Governors are well informed about the school's work. They are adept in holding school leaders to account.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough pupils make good progress in writing to reach consistently above average standards by the end of Year 6.
- A minority of the most able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently in all lessons. Not enough attain the highest standards in all subjects by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Occasionally, the progress that all pupils make in lessons is not checked by teachers. Consequently, activities are not adapted to meet some pupils' changing needs, especially the most able.
- On occasions, a very small minority of pupils are insufficiently motivated to give of their best. Not all respond readily to teachers' comments about how to improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in a range of lessons of which two were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Pupils' work was sampled informally in lessons in a wide range of subjects. In addition, pupils' work in English from Years 2 and 6 was sampled separately by inspectors.
- Inspectors also scrutinised a range of documents, including the school's own data relating to pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, minutes of meetings of the governing body, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents pertaining to safeguarding.
- Meetings were held with pupils in Years 3 to 6, with governors and school staff, including those with management responsibilities. A discussion also took place with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors evaluated the 86 responses of parents to the Ofsted on-line questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors also took account of the views of 16 members of the school's staff through the inspection questionnaires they returned.

Inspection team

Andrew Swallow, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Jan Lomas	Additional Inspector
Barbara Martin	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage, with a very small minority from other ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those who are supported through the pupil premium funding is well below the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support those known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well below the national average.
- The Reception class provides full-time early years education.
- In 2014, the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Since the last inspection, there have been many changes in staffing, including senior and middle leaders, and changes to the membership of the governing body.
- The school receives support from the local authority, a National Leader of Education from the North Star Teaching School Alliance, and the Northallerton cluster of schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching even further by:
 - ensuring that all lessons engage pupils fully in their learning, including the most able, so that they achieve consistently well
 - giving all pupils opportunities to respond to teachers' comments about how to improve their work further
 - ensuring that pupils' understanding in lessons is checked by teachers and activities are adapted accordingly to meet the needs of all pupils, including the most able.
- Accelerate pupils' progress in writing, to reach even higher standards, by:
 - encouraging the use of a wider range of language and punctuation for effect, especially when writing in a formal style, and about non-fictional events
 - building pupils' confidence to express their ideas in increasingly complex sentences and better thought out paragraphs
 - providing opportunities for all pupils to develop and apply their writing skills in all subjects.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The school is led by a committed headteacher. He has high expectations of all pupils and is highly regarded by all staff.
- Since the last inspection, the headteacher has improved the quality of the school's work and pupils' achievements. Under the headteacher's skilful management, new staff have settled quickly and have become members of a team who work increasingly well together.
- The headteacher is supported well by senior and middle leaders. They achieve a good balance between providing support for colleagues and checking the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning.
- A range of training opportunities are matched well to the needs of individual staff. Much of the training comes from the North Star Teaching Alliance of schools, and is also provided by the local education authority. This training has supported good improvements in the quality of teaching and governance and has resulted in increased gains in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Key leaders, including governors, communicate increasingly high expectations. Systems for the management of teachers' performance are rigorous. They ensure all teachers are held to account for their contributions to improve pupils' achievement. Governors are appropriately informed about, and included in, all of this work.
- The school has an accurate picture of its strengths and areas for development. There are appropriate plans in place to enhance the school's work further. For example, the headteacher has identified the work still to be done to improve some of the most able pupils' progress and attainment in writing. Detailed plans focus on improving teaching even further and honing the skills of new leaders.
- Teachers know pupils well. Teachers make good use of the school's arrangements to check the progress of all pupils, identifying early any underperformance and addressing shortfalls in achievement. As a result, the school makes sure that pupils have an equal opportunity to do well.
- The well-planned curriculum is enhanced by regular sporting, musical and drama opportunities and visits to museums and local places of interest. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the developing links with a school in Ghana. They also talk about activities that have inspired their learning, such as recent visits to the coast and a funfair and opportunities to research into local village and community life through work on allotments. However, opportunities to reinforce pupils' writing skills across other subjects of the curriculum are limited.
- The school's 'Secrets of Success' and 'Shining Stars' awards value pupils' all-round contributions to school life and their peers, underpinning pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Through the daily formal and informal learning experiences staff help all pupils to become confident citizens of the future.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity well and there is no evidence of discrimination in any form. Appropriate use of additional government funding has successfully helped to close gaps in the achievements of disadvantaged pupils and other learners.
- Good use is made of the primary school sport funding. Pupils enjoy good experiences in physical education and sport. They participate in a wide range of activities, competitive and recreational, funded from the primary school sports initiative.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective and meet requirements. School leaders are skilled in identifying any pupils at risk of harm and engaging with the local children's safeguarding board and other partners to respond appropriately, when necessary.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. Staff work successfully to encourage parents to support their children's learning at home. Most parents express confidence in the work of the school and the impact that it has on their children's lives.
- The fundamental British values of freedom, law, and equality of opportunity are promoted well. This can be seen through the work of the school council, team captains, visits from the police, ambulance and fire services, and from people in positions of authority within the local community. Well-planned assemblies also contribute to this effectively. Staff promote the concept of good relations at all times.
- The local authority knows the school well. It provides and commissions good support from other schools, including a National Leader in Education, to enhance the quality of teaching, the work of the governing body and to help to moderate the school's own judgments about its overall effectiveness.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The recently reconstituted governing body is effective in providing a good balance of support and challenge for the school's leaders. Governors have supported the headteacher well in tackling

successfully all underperformance since the previous inspection.

- Governors receive detailed information about the school's work. This is presented in a helpful and accessible way. Consequently, governors have the necessary understanding that helps them to hold the headteacher and senior leaders to account for the impact of actions to improve pupils' achievement.
- Steps to commission reviews by the local authority and external consultants, help governors to understand how well the school compares to local and national schools, on a range of performance indicators.
- Governors have detailed discussions about major spending decisions, in particular the allocation of the pupil premium and sport funding. For example, they have authorised additional staffing and resources to support teaching literacy and numeracy in small groups. They have appointed sports coaches to improve the teaching of physical education.
- Governors have been thorough in the arrangements that they have put into place to review the performance of the headteacher annually. They receive appropriate information about the performance targets set for teachers and check potential links with salary progression. They know that the headteacher will ensure that teachers only receive financial reward if pupils reach their challenging targets.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The vast majority enjoy positive relationships with one another and all the adults who work with them.
- Pupils are welcoming to visitors and proud to talk about their school and its values. They enjoy learning about people from different cultures and backgrounds, and emphasise how important it is to treat everyone fairly and courteously.
- Pupils are committed to the school's 'Secrets of Success,' and emphasise the importance of individual's rights to learn, to feel safe, and to be treated with respect.
- Pupils are eager to talk about each other's achievements. They are keen to acknowledge their friends' successes on the 'Shining Stars' notice board, on the 'What a Star' certificates displayed around the school, and to celebrate awards in the special assemblies.
- Pupils take seriously their responsibilities as class representatives on the school council, as playground supervisors, team captains and librarians. They are proud of the work they do to learn about the importance of garden allotments in the local village and to raise money for local and national charities. These examples demonstrate a strong school community.
- Pupils know of the different types of bullying, particularly racist, homophobic and cyber-bullying. Records show that the rare incidents of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with effectively and quickly by staff.
- In lessons, most pupils enjoy working together and support each other well. On occasions, a small minority of pupils lose concentration and do not persevere with planned activities. This is particularly the case where their needs and interests are not always met.
- Staff work hard to make parents aware of the importance of regular attendance and as a result most pupils attend school regularly.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Almost all parents who responded on Parent View and to the school's questionnaires during the current academic year say that their children are happy and kept safe.
- Outdoors and indoors, pupils work and play sensibly and are well supervised. On rare occasions pupils can be unkind and fall out. These disagreements are swiftly dealt with by staff and soon forgotten.
- Training keeps staff up-to-date with child protection and safeguarding procedures. The climate of the school encourages pupils to share openly their thoughts and to value each other's viewpoints.
- Pupils say they feel safe at school. They are confident that there is always someone with whom they can share a problem. They know about organisations such as Childline and who to contact should they have worries away from school.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves and others safe when learning outdoors and during visits, for example. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and mobile phones.

- Governors regularly visit the school. They carry out safety checks and ensure that pupils are looked after well.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is improving rapidly. Staff readily share ideas about their teaching with other staff in school and in local primary schools that form part of the North Star Teaching Alliance and the Northallerton cluster of schools. As a result, pupils learn and achieve increasingly well.
- Most teachers plan relevant experiences to stimulate pupils and ignite their curiosity. For example, in a Year 5/6 mathematics lesson, pupils were immersed in solving problems relating to time, including making comparisons between different time zones across the world and displaying information in analogue and digital formats. Similarly, pupils in a Year 1/2 class were thoroughly engrossed in producing tourist information leaflets following a recent visit to Runswick Bay.
- The teaching of reading, in particular of phonics (the connections between letters and the sounds they make) is now good. A high proportion of pupils indicate how much they enjoy reading. They read regularly at home and in school and show good understanding of fiction and non-fiction texts.
- The teaching of mathematics is also effective. Pupils practise conscientiously their times tables and persevere well daily to improve mental arithmetic skills. In books, work over time shows a good balance between calculations and 'real-life' problem-solving opportunities.
- The teaching of writing is increasingly effective. The handwriting of most pupils is legible, written work is presented with care and good attention is paid to the spelling of common words and phrases.
- However, there are inconsistencies in the ways that some teachers model a range of punctuation and grammar for effect and encourage pupils to build increasingly complex sentences, especially when writing for formal purposes and about non-fiction issues.
- Some teachers miss opportunities for pupils to reinforce these key writing skills in all subjects.
- Relationships with pupils are good in all lessons. The atmosphere created is one in which most pupils readily help and encourage each other.
- The skills of teaching assistants are particularly well developed. They make a real difference in supporting individual pupils to succeed.
- Most teachers know their pupils well. In general, teachers plan to meet particular pupils' needs.
- In a small minority of lessons, teaching does not motivate all learners nor do teachers check carefully whether all pupils understand sufficiently what they are learning before moving on to new activities. At times, some teachers are not flexible enough to adapt activities to meet some pupils' changing needs, particularly those of the most able pupils.
- Opportunities are provided by all teachers for pupils to respond to marking that invites them to improve their initial written work. However, not all teachers insist that pupils take full advantage of these opportunities to stretch themselves fully and improve their work.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- The majority of children join the school with skills and understanding typical for their age. In the Reception Year they make increasingly good progress. In 2014, three out of four children reached a good level of development by the time they joined Year 1.
- Pupils' rates of progress are increasing throughout Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics and are now good in all three subjects. This is due to the improved teaching. Changes in staffing since the last inspection have resulted in higher expectations of what pupils can achieve by adults and by the pupils themselves. These improvements have not had time to impact on standards attained by the end of Year 2, which are still average.
- Across Years 3 to 6, pupils' rates of progress are also rising and are good overall in reading, mathematics and writing. In 2014, attainment in all three subjects improved and overall standards were above national averages, especially in reading and mathematics.
- Progress in lessons and in pupils' books is good. The vast majority of pupils take pride in completing their work in all subjects and show high levels of concentration.
- Progress across the school is particularly strong in reading. Pupils are taught to read effectively in their earlier years, they read often in school and at home and with growing confidence and understanding. In the phonics screening check carried out at the end of Year 1, increasing numbers of pupils reach national

expectations for six-year-olds.

- Progress is also good in mathematics. Pupils benefit from the daily practice in manipulating times tables and in calculating mentally. They persevere well to apply their well-honed calculation skills to a variety of everyday problems in different contexts.
- Most pupils are increasingly competent writers. As early as Year 2, pupils try out new vocabulary when they write about different types of seaweed they have collected from a recent trip to the seaside. As they move through school, many pupils experiment confidently with a range of language to write in the style of different authors and poets and some enter national competitions.
- Not enough pupils reach consistently high enough standards in writing by the time they leave Year 6. This is largely because their use of more formal language and punctuation for effect when writing about non-fiction events and issues is not sufficiently well developed. Opportunities are missed to enable some pupils to reinforce their confidence in using complex sentences and well-planned paragraphs to sequence their ideas, in other subjects.
- The attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils are rapidly improving. In 2014, disadvantaged pupils at the end of Year 6 were typically 12 months behind in their attainment in writing and mathematics compared to other pupils nationally and their classmates. They were 16 months behind in reading.
- Senior leaders have taken effective action through daily, targeted one-to-one activities and small group work to reduce these gaps in attainment. The school's information and inspection evidence shows that in Year 6, disadvantaged pupils' attainment gaps in reading, writing and mathematics are now within 12 months of other pupils nationally.
- Rates of progress made by disadvantaged pupils have similarly improved and are increasingly approaching those of other pupils nationally in all three subjects. In school, they are often higher than their classmates in most years and at least in line.
- Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers. This is because all these pupils benefit from targeted support from adults who are well trained to meet their needs. This shows the school's good and effective commitment to equality of opportunity.
- The most able pupils generally achieve well, but not all are challenged sufficiently in all lessons. As a result, the proportion attaining the highest levels in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 2 and 6 are not as high as they should be and are below the national averages.
- Pupils enjoy good experiences in physical education and sport. They participate in a wide range of activities, competitive and informal, funded by the primary school sports initiative.

The early years provision

is good

- Almost all children join the early years provision with skills and understanding typical for their age. They make increasingly good progress so that a large number achieve a good level of development, particularly in their communication, physical and imaginative skills, by the time they enter Year 1.
- Teaching is consistently good. Adults plan interesting activities, indoors and outdoors, that draw carefully on all children's interests and that invite them to play co-operatively together. As a consequence, children develop self-confidence and self-awareness and learn how to make positive relationships. They thoroughly enjoy the daily activities, such as building a pirate ship from blocks, working out the value of coins in the 'corner shop' and writing postcards on computers.
- Children have good opportunities to develop their early mark making, they enjoy listening to stories and finding out about numbers and geometric shapes.
- Children behave very well and become readily absorbed in these activities. They develop trusting relationships with the staff and get on well with one another.
- Classrooms and outdoor spaces all have a good range of toys and learning materials, although some equipment is not sufficiently stimulating.
- Adults constantly ask searching questions, regularly make informal and formal observations and record frequently in each child's 'learning journey' how well they are doing, and their next steps.
- Well-organised induction procedures ensure that children settle quickly. These include parental visits to school which help to provide detailed pictures of each child's needs.
- There are good opportunities for parents to contribute to their children's development and staff keep them well informed about how they can support learning at home.
- The early years provision is well led and managed by a knowledgeable member of staff. Teamwork is good and ensures that all children are well cared for and safe at all times.

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	121312
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	462228

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	257
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr R Flint
Headteacher	Mr J Foxwell
Date of previous school inspection	13 June 2013
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