

INSPECTION REPORT

EASINGWOLD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Easingwold

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121331

Headteacher: Mrs Vanessa Huws Jones

Lead inspector: Dr Brian Male

Dates of inspection: 22 - 24 March 2004

Inspection number: 260704

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	311
School address:	Thirsk Road Easingwold North Yorkshire
Postcode:	YO61 3HJ
Telephone number:	01347 821282
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Peter Nottage
Date of previous inspection:	October 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This large community primary school takes pupils from four to 11 years old, and is maintained by North Yorkshire Local Education Authority. At the time of the inspection there were 313 full time pupils in 11 classes. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is very low. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is well below the national average. There are very few pupils from ethnic minorities and none requiring extra support for learning English. A fairly high percentage of pupils joins and leaves the school during Years 3 to 6.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
14906	Dr Brian Male	Lead inspector	English Foundation stage Special educational needs
19419	Mrs Sue Boyle	Lay inspector	
3942	Mr Keith Sanderson	Team Inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education
18652	Mr Bob Bissell	Team Inspector	Science Information and communication technology History Geography

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Under the excellent leadership of the headteacher, the school has made outstanding progress since the previous inspection. The school is now working very effectively and improving still further. All the necessary steps have been taken for continuing improvement, and what is now needed is time for all the improvements to take full effect and raise the quality of provision and standards of attainment still further. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils' achievement is good and continues to rise
- The school's very positive ethos ensures that pupils' attitudes to work are excellent
- Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school
- Teaching is good overall and often very good
- There is very good provision for pupils' support, guidance and personal development
- The school's very good partnership with parents enhances learning and contributes to pupils' very positive attitudes
- Senior staff and governors make a very good contribution to leadership and management
- Standards in information and communications technology (ICT) are rising but are still below average
- All of the improvements are underpinned by the excellent leadership of the headteacher

The school has made excellent progress since the previous inspection. Standards of attainment have risen significantly, as have pupils' attitudes and behaviour. The quality of teaching is much better and assessment is now good. The curriculum has been improved significantly. Support and guidance are much more effective, and the partnership with parents has been improved. The quality of leadership and management has been improved very significantly indeed. All of the key issues have been successfully addressed.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	A	C	D
Mathematics	A	A	C	D
Science	A	A	A	B

*Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those where a similar proportion of pupils is entitled to free school meals.*

Pupils' achievement is good overall. Standards are higher in Year 6 this year than in 2003, in English and mathematics, and are now well above average. Standards have been maintained at well above average in science. Standards were unusually low in 2003 because there was a higher than usual proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Present standards in Year 2 are well above the national average in reading and science, and above average in writing and mathematics. In both Years 2 and 6, standards are below average in ICT because equipment is fairly new and pupils have not yet had enough time with it. Pupils make very good progress through reception classes, and almost all exceed the nationally expected goals by the time they move into Year 1. There is some very good support for pupils with special educational needs, and they make very good progress.

At present, these standards represent good overall achievement for the pupils. The improvements in the quality of provision already put in place are now raising this achievement still further.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. Pupils have excellent attitudes to school and are very confident learners. Their behaviour is very good in class and around the school. Their personal qualities, such as relationships and concern for others, are very good. They are open, friendly, confident and thoughtful of others. The rate of attendance is high, and most pupils arrive promptly for school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is very good overall. The quality of teaching is good and often very good. Some teaching is excellent. Teaching is very good overall in the reception classes. Lessons are very well planned and use an effective range of methods to enhance learning. In the best lessons across the school, there are very high expectations of achievement, and pupils are enthused by the challenge of the activities. Teaching assistants make a very valuable contribution to learning.

There is a broad and balanced curriculum enhanced by a very good programme of extra-curricular activities. There are very good arrangements for pupils' support and guidance. The school's partnership with parents is very good and enhances learning. The school is well staffed, and resources and accommodation are good, although computer resources and the library need improving.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good overall. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and a very clear vision for the school. She has moved the school on significantly in a relatively short time. She is very well supported by the assistant headteacher and by senior staff, who lead their areas very effectively. The governors are very active in shaping the direction of the school and provide very good governance. The school is managed very effectively and resources used very well to support learning.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very supportive of the school, and there is no area where a significant number would like to see improvement. Pupils are also very positive about the school, and the school takes very effective steps to ensure that pupils' views are sought.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

Significant improvements have already been made and now need time to become embedded in the school's practice and to impact on pupils fully as they move through the school. The immediate focus is to raise standards in ICT where they are much lower than in other subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is good and improving. The school has made many changes which have improved the quality of educational provision and are raising standards through the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above the national average by Year 6
- Standards in ICT are below average because equipment is fairly new and has not been in use long enough
- Pupils' achievement is very good in the reception classes

Commentary

1. Many pupils enter the reception classes with standards of attainment already above those usually found. By the time pupils leave the school in Year 6, standards of attainment are well above the national average in English, mathematics and science, below average in ICT and generally above average in other subjects. These standards represent good overall achievement for the pupils. A fairly high proportion of pupils, sometimes over half, start school during Years 3 to 6. Many of these start from a lower base than those who have come right through the school and this impacts on overall standards. Achievement is best for those pupils who have come right through the school.
2. Most pupils leave the reception classes having exceeded the nationally expected 'Early Learning Goals' for children of this age, and their achievement is very good. This is promoted by the very good quality of the teaching they receive, and the rich range of learning experiences in which they are involved. This is a significant recent improvement over previous years.
3. By the end of Year 2, standards are well above the national average in reading and science, and above average in writing and mathematics. These standards continue a trend of well above average standards in reading and writing but are slightly lower in mathematics than in 2003 when scores were unusually high. The changes are within the expected fluctuations from year to year. Standards are below average in ICT. Overall standards are generally higher than those in similar schools, and represent good achievement for the pupils.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.3 (17.1)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.2 (16.1)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.7 (16.0)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 35 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. By the end of Year 6, standards are well above the national average in English, mathematics and science. These are higher in English and mathematics than in 2003 when scores were unusually low in these subjects. A higher than usual proportion of that year group had special educational needs. Very good teaching in Year 6 raised their standards in science, but skills in English and mathematics take longer to develop. Standards in ICT are below average. The present standards represent good achievement and continue a long trend of mostly well above average standards. Standards are good in terms of pupils' prior attainment and in relation to similar schools.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.5 (28.8)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.5 (29.3)	26.8 (26.7)
science	30.3 (30.3)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 35 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

5. As other subjects (history, geography, art, music, physical education and design and technology) were only sampled, there is no formal judgement about attainment in these, but standards overall are generally above average across the school. There is some very good work in music and art. There is a particularly high number of pupils involved in playing instruments, and standards of orchestral music are high.
6. The below average standards in ICT stem from insufficient time given in the past to this subject and too little equipment. New equipment has now been purchased and a staff training programme has given teachers the required expertise. Teaching was good in the few lessons seen during the inspection, so what is now needed is sufficient time for pupils to use the new equipment and develop the usual level of skills.
7. Provision for pupils with special educational needs has been recently improved significantly and is raising achievement. These pupils now receive some very good support and make good progress. There are very few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, and none at an early stage of learning English. Their attainment is in line with other pupils. A relatively high number of pupils joins the school in Years 3 to 6 each year, and a number of these start with lower attainment than other pupils. The school's assessment procedures are beginning to make an early identification of these pupils to ensure that they make the expected progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes are outstanding. Their behaviour and personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. Attendance is very good, and punctuality is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils show an outstanding commitment to learning
- Relationships between pupils are excellent, and pupils work very well with each other
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good
- Attendance is very good

Commentary

8. Pupils are very eager and very willing to learn. They very much enjoy their lessons and try their hardest. These very good work habits are quickly established in the reception year, and maintained very well as pupils progress through the school. Their commitment to learning comes from their enjoyment of all that school has to offer. They feel well supported by their teachers and their parents, and know that they achieve well. As a result, they are very confident learners.
9. Pupils get on well with their teachers and find the work interesting. This means that pupils rarely have to be told about their behaviour. They move around the school very well, and show they can be sensible and responsible, without the need for overt supervision. Very occasionally, some pupils do misbehave, but although this tends to slow the pace of lessons, it very rarely disrupts learning significantly. Exclusion is used only extremely rarely, and only as a last resort. There have been no exclusions in the last year. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour have improved

since the previous inspection and contribute significantly to the ethos of the school, and to the learning.

10. Pupils get on very well with each other, and the way in which they work together in lessons, is a strength of the school. These very good relationships mean that incidents of bullying are very rare. However, the school is not complacent and has plans in place for a bullying focus. Pupils and parents say that they are confident that issues are dealt with quickly and well when they arise. Pupils play very well together, although the outdoor play sometimes tends to be quite physical. This in itself is not a major problem, but it does sometimes result in minor accidents and occasionally in misunderstanding. The school is in the process of developing playground provision, and this should help, although it will not solve the problem of the size of the playgrounds, which are too small. Children in the infant playground have equipment such as skipping ropes, but they are not always supervised sufficiently well to ensure that they use them for the intended purpose.
11. The school's ethos very effectively supports pupils' personal development. It works because it is so very valuing, and gives pupils a model of relating to others that is positive and supportive, and takes account of other people's views and beliefs. It is evident in the very good relationships seen in the school. Spiritual development is enhanced through assemblies, music and art where pupils reflect on their own feelings and on how others might feel. Pupils have very good social awareness, showing respect and concern for others. They are given good independence to demonstrate how sensible and thoughtful they can be by carrying out duties and responsibilities. This is very effectively established in the reception classes and continued through the school. Pupils want to do what is right, and are fully included in the development of the school rules. This has given them a good sense of ownership of the rules, and so they rarely transgress them. A range of visitors bring with them the richness and diversity of other cultures. Pupils enjoy learning about their own culture through visits, and extra-curricular activities, as well as very many valuable opportunities to perform for others.
12. Attendance is well above the national average, and most pupils arrive at school on time. The school has developed appropriate initiatives to encourage pupils to attend, and monitors attendance and punctuality well.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.8	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is very good, and has improved in almost all aspects since the previous inspection.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall, and often very good. They are very good overall in the reception classes and for the oldest pupils. The school has good procedures for assessment. The quality of teaching is much higher than at the time of the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good in the reception classes and for the oldest pupils
- Lessons are well planned and focus well on the learning needs of different groups
- There is a good range of teaching and learning methods being used

- There is very good support for pupils with special educational needs
- Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to learning

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 44 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (4%)	16 (36%)	17 (38%)	9 (21%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

13. Teachers have a strong commitment to the school and have worked very hard over the last few years to adapt to new practices and to improve the quality of provision. They have been very successful in doing so. Assessment information is being used effectively to identify the learning needs of different groups of pupils, and lessons are well planned to take account of this.
14. Teaching is very good in the reception classes in all of the six expected areas of learning. This enables children to make very good progress so that almost all exceed the nationally expected 'Early Learning Goals' by the time they move to Year 1. Relationships are very good, and a very positive climate is created where children settle quickly and grow in confidence. Expectations are high and the quality of support enables children to meet these expectations. Children are provided with a very good range of interesting activities with clear learning goals through which they can extend their knowledge and develop their understanding.
15. Teaching is good overall in Years 1 to 6, and often very good. Teaching is particularly strong for the oldest pupils. Teaching is good overall in English, mathematics, science and ICT. The teaching of science is very good in Years 3 to 6 because practical activities are used very effectively to extend understanding and develop investigative approaches. No overall judgement was made about other subjects. Although teaching was good in the few ICT lessons seen, pupils have not always had sufficient opportunities to use computer equipment to develop the expected level of skills.
16. Where teaching is best, expectations are high and there are very clear learning objectives and methods that involve the pupils in activities that extend understanding. For example, there were very high expectations in an excellent Year 6 religious education lesson where pupils were exploring Christian texts and discussing the significance of the resurrection. In an excellent Year 4 English lesson, described below, it was the quality of the methods that promoted such good learning.

Example of outstanding practice

A Year 4 English writing lesson had a particularly effective method of teaching the use of speech marks whilst encouraging the use of descriptive verbs other than 'said'.

Pupils had worked in pairs to prepare to act two lines of speech from their reading books to the class. The class then had to write down the lines with appropriate verbs and punctuation. The key was the selection of short extracts that the class could write down verbatim. The fact that the pupils saw the actions in front of them helped them select the most apt verbs. For example, using 'sobbed' and 'comforted' when writing:

The boy sobbed "I can't do it. It's too hard."

"Never mind, I'll help you," comforted his friend.

This made what might have been a very ordinary lesson into a very special one.

17. There is a good range of teaching methods in use across the school. For example, there was very good use of role-play in Year 1-2 history lessons where pupils used Victorian implements to wash clothes. Individual whiteboards are often used very effectively for pupils to prepare their work and show individual answers to teachers. Paired discussion is often used effectively to extend pupils' understanding and to shape their thoughts and ideas. The most effective lessons

seen involved pupils in practical activities and generated interest and excitement. For example, a Year 1-2 science lesson where pupils were given the independence to try out different methods of testing whether materials were waterproof proved particularly exciting, if rather damp, and a great deal was learned.

18. The approach to teaching pupils with special educational needs has recently been improved and is now very good. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) has ensured that targets are sharp on individual education plans (IEPs), and that there is a good focus on specific needs. There is some very good support from teaching assistants.

The curriculum

The range of the curriculum is good, and very good in the reception classes. There is very good provision for enrichment. The quality of accommodation and resources is good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has developed a consistent and effective planning framework
- There is a very good range of enrichment opportunities
- The curriculum is very good for pupils in the reception classes

Commentary

19. The quality and range of curriculum opportunities are good overall, and all statutory requirements are met. The curriculum for children in the reception classes is very good and provides a very wide range of stimulating experiences. Significant improvements have been made in curriculum planning and provision since the previous inspection, and this is helping to raise standards. There is consistency in planning and effective provision for pupils of different abilities and needs. The national literacy and numeracy strategies have been well implemented and this is one reason why standards in these subjects are high. National guidelines are used well to support long term planning.
20. The school has responded very well to issues raised by the last inspection, and has in place a secure framework of curriculum policies and plans, which are well monitored. Consequently the school is well placed to achieve its intention of creating an overall curriculum direction that meets the school's aims of

- fostering effective cross-curricular links (as seen with the recent Chinese Week project)
- responding in an innovative way to such initiatives as 'excellence and enjoyment'
- creating a 'personalised' curriculum specifically for the needs of pupils of Easingwold.

It is also helping to raise standards, which is an underlying if not explicit aim.

21. There is a very good range of additional curriculum opportunities, in both sports and arts, that enriches pupils' learning outside of class, and the school is making increasing use of visitors, visits out and the external environment to extend pupils' learning.
22. Accommodation is good. There have been significant recent improvements including two new reception classrooms, the refurbishment of toilets and the school being completely re-decorated. The school recognises that the hall is too small, and there are plans for its extension. The hard-surface playground areas are also too small, although there is plenty of play space when the weather is dry and pupils can use the field. Resources to support learning are generally good, with those for art particularly good. A better range of ICT equipment is now in place although its use is not fully developed, and for the size of the school, the library could be improved.

Care, guidance and support

The care, welfare, health and safety for pupils are good. Support and guidance for pupils based on monitoring are very good. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are listened to very well and their views taken into account
- Pupils feel very well supported
- The induction procedures for pupils entering the reception class are very good

Commentary

23. There are appropriate systems in place for the health and safety of pupils, and a good number of staff have had first aid training. The child protection policy has been well thought out, and concerns are monitored carefully. Midday supervisory staff have a very sensible and responsible approach to child protection, but their role in this needs to be developed, to ensure that all staff are clear about the school's policy. The climate in the school is very open, and pupils are listened to well. Pupils themselves say that there is always an adult they can go to with a concern.
24. Pupils discuss their learning needs with their teachers, and, with support, devise their personal targets for learning. Pupils are confident that teachers help them to achieve their targets, and they feel well supported in this. This involvement in the target setting effectively encourages pupils to take responsibility for their learning.
25. The school has worked hard to develop lunchtime provision. There are still improvements to be made of which the school is only too aware. There are now many effective systems in place, and pupils increasingly feel that lunchtime staff are much more supportive, although this is still not always the case.
26. The school has very effective systems for listening to pupils and taking their views into account. Questionnaires are used regularly to canvass pupils' opinions, and the school council is developing well and is proving a very effective forum to enable pupils to shape provision. For example, pupils had raised many concerns about lunchtime arrangements: the school invited a number of people to discuss the issues with the council and as a result, several changes were made. There is scope to ensure that the various systems for electing councillors are all more democratic, and to give the councillors increased responsibilities for the running of the meetings. Some of the school's institutions, such as the school council and participation in concerts, need to be monitored more rigorously to ensure that as many different pupils as possible take part.
27. Parents are very pleased that children starting in the reception classes settle in quickly, and soon feel secure and happy at school. The induction policy has recently been fairly radically revised, and then subsequently adapted in the light of parents' comments. It now works very well. The pairing of children in the reception class with a buddy in Year 5 is of particular note for the benefits to all the children involved. The school is very keen to develop its links with the nurseries, and liaison is improving.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has very good links with parents and other schools and colleges. Links with the community are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very supportive of the life and work of the school

- The school listens to parents and involves them well in its work
- Links with other schools have been developed very well

Commentary

28. Parents are very positive about the school, and are very supportive of its work. Very many help in classrooms and with visits, and make a valuable contribution to learning. The parent teacher association, run by a very committed group of parents, is thriving. Parents are keen to help their children with homework, and there are very regular curriculum letters and annual updates, to help them with this, and to keep them well informed. The school has recognised that there is scope to develop this further to give more information in the form of curriculum sessions, and workshops, and provide opportunities for parents to learn alongside their children.
29. The school consults parents very regularly about what they would like, and deals with the issues that arise. Most parents are very satisfied that the school is approachable and deals with their concerns well. The arrangements for this are good, with time allocated before the start of the school day, to enable parents to speak to a class teacher, should they wish to. However, despite this there is a very small minority of parents who say they do not always feel comfortable to approach the school.
30. The local partnership of schools is very effective and has helped the school to make numerous links with other schools, which have resulted in curriculum developments, and enabled all the schools involved to maximise their resources. The school has established an extremely effective relationship with the local secondary school, and works very closely with it, sharing curriculum expertise, and supporting pupils' personal development. This very close relationship has also resulted in very supportive arrangements for pupils transferring at the end of Year 6.
31. The school is very popular and, very rightly, is highly regarded by the local community. It has established effective links with the local churches, worked hard to raise money for local charities, and performs for the elderly. Local businesses give their support willingly. Pupils take part in various national competitions, and have been successful in this. These links contribute effectively to pupils' sense of belonging to a community and to the curriculum.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good overall. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and a particularly clear vision for the school. Senior staff lead their areas very effectively. The school is very well managed. The governors are fully involved in shaping the strategic direction of the school and provide very effective governance.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership, and sets a particularly clear educational direction
- The school has improved significantly under her leadership
- She is very well supported by the assistant headteacher and senior staff
- Governors are very active in shaping the school's strategic direction

Commentary

32. Under the headteacher's excellent leadership, the school has improved significantly since the previous inspection and made great strides in a relatively short time. She has provided a particularly clear vision and has been very successful in articulating that vision and turning it into reality. She is very well prepared and determined in her approach, and her work supporting other schools has widened her vision and made her even more effective in her role. She is very well supported by the assistant headteacher and senior staff who share the vision and commitment.

33. The headteacher has created a very effective management structure that enables senior staff to play a significant part in the running of the school. The curriculum leaders lead their subjects and areas very well. Support for pupils with special educational needs is being led particularly well by the new SENCO, and provision has improved significantly. There has been a very strong commitment to staff development, and this has underpinned the significant improvements made in recent years. New staff have been supported very well and enabled to make a very effective contribution to the development of the school.
34. There is very effective analysis of the school's performance through a wide range of evaluative measures. These are used to shape approaches and ensure the school's effectiveness. The school's development plan is well linked to the budget and is derived securely from the analysis of performance. It is a very comprehensive document, and a shorter strategic overview might be helpful in clarifying its focus. A large number of policies have been developed, and a great deal has been accomplished in a fairly short time. The school recognises that it is now ready for a period of consolidation during which the significant improvements have time to bear fruit.
35. The school's finances are managed very effectively and the school has been very successful in obtaining extra grants from a range of sources. This has enabled a range of improvements to be made to the building, the grounds and to resources. Resources are deployed very effectively to meet the school's goals. Taking account of its fairly low basic income but good and improving provision, the school provides very good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	688,706	Balance from previous year	10,515
Total expenditure	685,124	Balance carried forward to the next	14,097
Expenditure per pupil	2,276		

36. The governing body provides very good governance, and is very active in shaping the direction of the school. Governors are actively involved in the life and work of the school and make a significant contribution to its many activities.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

37. Provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is very good and provides a very good start to their education. Both teachers were new to this age group at the time of the inspection and had made a very good start indeed. Expectations are high, but because relationships are very strong, children are confident learners and so are able to rise to the challenge. There is a very good range of practical activities that promote good understanding. Teaching is very good across the six expected areas of learning of the national Foundation Stage Curriculum. A particular feature is the way in which lessons are made exciting, and as a result, children develop a love of learning. Most children start with standards of attainment already above those usually found, and almost all exceed the nationally expected Early Learning Goals by the time they move into Year 1. The progress now being made represents very good overall achievement.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PSE)

Provision in PSE is **very good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good relationships encourage confidence
- A wide range of practical activities encourages independence and co-operation
- Teachers provide very good role-models

Commentary

38. Teachers are very clear about the goals of this aspect of development and build them very effectively into the wide range of activities in which the children engage. Adults are very good at making use of these activities to promote learning. For example, children in a physical education lesson were encouraged to talk about their own and other children's performance in a sensitive and supportive way. There are very good opportunities for children to develop independence, selecting their own equipment and trying their own methods. As a result of very good teaching and the very good role-models provided by adults, children develop very well in terms of their attitudes, self-esteem, relationships, behaviour, independence and a sense of community. Children responded particularly well to their teacher's request to work quietly whilst she was hearing a group read; when an inspector asked them what they were doing they told him to lower his voice as it was 'a quiet time'. The progress they make represents very good achievement.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very high expectations
- Learning is promoted through a wide range of practical and formal activities

Commentary

39. Most children enter the reception classes with above average standards of attainment, and lessons build very well on these. Teachers provide very good role-models for speaking and listening, and involve the children in a wide range of activities that promote early literacy skills. They seldom miss an opportunity to extend children's vocabulary or language skills or to provide

opportunities for early reading and writing. For example, the 'opticians' role-play areas have been set up to provide wonderful opportunities for letter recognition with the eye-charts, and also involve children recording appointments and talking to each other in the roles of optician and patient. There are high expectations in the more formal reading sessions where children are taught about letter sounds and ways of understanding new words from context. Children respond very well to these and most have already exceeded the Early Learning Goals part way through the reception year. This is very good achievement.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Mathematical development is based very securely on first-hand practical activities
- Very good use is made of a range of games, songs and computer programs to extend learning

Commentary

40. Early mathematical development is based very securely on a wide range of first-hand experiences. Teachers and teaching assistants make very good use of these to develop knowledge and understanding. For example, when children were using construction equipment, adults ask questions such as, "How many more do you need?", "Will this shape fit?", and "Will this be long enough?" Very good use is made of games and songs to extend knowledge and understanding, and there are some very valuable computer programs that hold children's attention and give very good practice in number and shape. Children are quickly moved on to more formal recording of mathematics and most have a very good understanding of number bonds such as $3+2=5$. By the time they move into Year 1, almost all exceed the Early Learning Goals. This is very good achievement.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are involved in a wide range of stimulating activities
- There is very good planning to ensure coverage of the required areas

Commentary

41. Teachers plan very effectively to cover the various areas. There are very good opportunities for children to explore and investigate a wide range of materials, living things and events. They are encouraged to be curious and ask questions, and this is stimulated by the very good range of experiences arranged for them. There are very good opportunities for children to use construction kits and a variety of materials to design and make things, and children develop their skills very well in this area. There is some very good use of ICT, and children develop very good confidence and competence with the mouse and keyboard. They investigate the world around them and develop a good sense of time and place. The very good variety of formal and informal experiences, together with high expectations and very good teaching, ensures that children make very good progress. Most exceed the Early Learning Goals by the time they move into Year 1. This is very good achievement.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very good variety of experiences indoors and out
- There is some disparity between the outdoor provision for the two classes

Commentary

42. The new classrooms and outdoor areas provide plenty of space and a variety of settings in which children can develop their physical skills. The outdoor areas are used well and provide very good scope for creative play and a range of physical activities. The two outside areas vary in terms of facilities, with one having a house, which is greatly loved by the children, but the other class has more space. Outside provision is good overall. There is very good attention to the finer aspects of physical development such as the use of small tools and construction kits and children make very good progress. The more formal physical education lessons in the hall are well pitched for the age group and there are high expectations with children required to reflect on their movements and consider ways of improving them. Children are able to co-operate particularly well with others to create joint movement in these lessons. Almost all children attain the Early Learning Goals by the time they move into Year 1, and achievement is very good.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very good range of activities to promote learning
- Role-play is used very effectively in this aspect of learning

Commentary

43. The school provides a very good range of activities that stimulates children's imagination and creativity. Role-play is used very effectively to promote imagination and the expression of ideas, and the opticians' shops give good scope for imagination as well as social interaction. The range of outside play also encourages children to engage in imaginative play, and to take different roles whilst using the house and the wheeled vehicles. There are very good opportunities for children to explore a range of media and ideas through painting, drawing and three-dimensional modelling. The children respond to these very well, taking pride in their work, and giving thought to their shapes and colours. There are good opportunities for music, especially through singing and the use of percussion instruments. Through this rich variety of experiences, children make very good progress and most exceed the Early Learning Goals by the time they move into Year 1. This is very good achievement.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of reading, speaking and listening are well above average across the school
- Standards of writing are improving and are above average
- The subject is very well led and significant improvements have been made to provision
- There is some excellent teaching of the subject

Commentary

44. By the end of Year 6, standards are well above the national average in all aspects of the subject, and have risen significantly since the previous inspection. This is the result of significant improvements to the quality of provision. The subject leader has set a very clear agenda for change and focused very well on ways of improving the quality of pupils' writing in particular. Her own teaching is an excellent model for others. Teaching is now good overall with some very good and excellent teaching. Assessment data are used well to focus teaching, and individual targets are set to guide pupils' learning. There is a wide curriculum that involves the pupils in a good range of literature and writing. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work and enjoy reading and writing. All of this is an improvement since the previous inspection.

Speaking and listening

45. Pupils enter Year 1 with standards of speaking and listening already above those usually found. These skills are developed well through Years 1 and 2, especially through role-play and the discussion of the many practical activities in which they engage in a range of subjects. Good progress continues through Years 3 to 6 where good use continues to be made of paired and group discussion. For example, there was a very high level of discussion of the significance of resurrection in the Christian faith in the Year 6 religious education lesson already described. Standards of attainment are well above average by Year 6 and this is good achievement. The final plenary sessions are often used well for pupils to explain what they have done and learned, but this could be extended in some classes to give pupils more opportunities to raise questions about others' work and findings, and for discussion to ensue.

Reading

46. Standards of reading are high across the school. The school devotes a significant amount of time to this through the Literacy Hour, extra guided reading sessions and pupils taking books home to read to their parents. All of this contributes to the high standards. The quality of teaching within the reading sessions is often very good. Teachers have a good focus on the requirements of the higher levels of the National Curriculum and use questions effectively to draw pupils' attention to the literary features of the books they are reading. For example, in a very good Year 6 session, pupils were asked to look for meanings beyond the literal and to quote from the text to substantiate their views.

Writing

47. Standards of writing are above average in Year 2 and well above average by Year 6. Although a good number of pupils attain the higher expected level in each year (Level 3 in Year 2, and Level 5 in Year 6) there is a higher number of pupils that would be expected who do not reach the expected level (Level 2 and 4 respectively). This is because the special education needs provision in the past did not always pick these pupils up and provide the needed support. This has now been addressed and very good support is now in place. There is some particularly good writing in Years 3 and 4. The excellent Year 4 lesson on direct speech has already been mentioned in paragraph 16 above and is a good illustration of the most successful elements of the school's approach to teaching writing. There is good use of paired discussion and pupils evaluating each other's work in some classes. However, there are relatively few occasions on which pupils redraft their work in terms of its clarity and quality. Individual targets are used effectively to focus on specific aspects of development. One Year 3 pupil whose target was to use humour in his writing responded particularly well by writing, "They searched high and low, but whilst one was looking up at the trees and the other down into the grass, they bumped into each other and fell in the pond."

Language and literacy across the curriculum

48. There is some very good use of other subjects to extend language and literacy skills. The use of discussion in other subjects has already been mentioned, and there are some very good

opportunities for extended writing in subjects such as history, geography and religious education. The use of ICT is only just being developed but younger pupils are already benefiting from programs that extend early reading, spelling and writing skills. When skills improve, more use will be able to be made of ICT to assist older pupils to redraft and improve their work without having to write it all out again, a task which few pupils are ever keen to do.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are high and pupils achieve well
- Teaching is good
- As pupils get older they show consistently high levels of concentration and application
- The subject is very well led

Commentary

49. Standards of attainment are above average in Year 2, and are well above average by Year 6. This is good progress through the school. Overall, the school does well for its pupils, with all groups achieving well.
50. The quality of teaching, which is good across the school, is a significant factor in helping pupils achieve well. Teachers display good subject knowledge, and they interact with pupils in a confident, enthusiastic manner. There is a strong focus on developing basic numeracy skills, especially during the oral and mental sessions at the beginning of lessons. These quick-fire, sharp question and answer sessions invariably set a purposeful, positive tone that is carried on through the lesson, and both adults and pupils enjoy them. Pupils are given good opportunities to learn different ways of calculating and, crucially, they are given opportunities to describe, compare and utilise them. When tackling everyday, practical problem-solving, pupils are challenged to read the problem, decide questions such as, "What maths do I have to do here?", employ the appropriate methods of calculating, and set out their calculations. This is testing work and pupils relish these challenges. Their attitudes to work are excellent, and they work with enthusiasm and purpose. Older pupils display levels of concentration and application that are striking, and this helps them achieve very well.
51. The subject is very well led. The co-ordinator is a very good practitioner, has good subject knowledge and awareness and is well able to support and enthuse colleagues. In her monitoring of teaching, standards and planning she has gained a very good overview, and has identified the considerable strengths of the subject. She is also aware that more needs to be done to involve pupils in their own learning through such areas as marking and individual target setting. This is in order to give the pupils the clearest indication as to what they have to do to improve. ICT is used to support learning in mathematics, but this could be extended in some classes.
52. Pupils' achievements are good, teaching is good overall and the subject is very well led. Consequently the school is now well placed to develop an innovative curriculum in mathematics, and further extend opportunities for pupils to apply the knowledge they have gained.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average throughout the school

- Pupils achieve well because of the very good teaching and opportunities to experiment and investigate
- Pupils' attitudes towards their learning are very good
- There is a very good emphasis on the use of specific technical language in all classes
- The subject leader provides very good leadership

Commentary

53. Standards in science are well above average across the school. The school has continued to build upon the high levels reported at the last inspection and this represents very good achievement for most pupils. This is because of very good teaching, the pupils' very positive attitude to science and their enjoyment of the subject. Pupils of all ages demonstrate good knowledge across the curriculum and older pupils are very skilled at planning and undertaking investigations. There is a very good focus within lessons on specific skills and knowledge and this contributes to the very good achievement. Lessons are well planned to give pupils many opportunities to discuss their ideas and apply their expertise.
54. Teachers throughout the school capture pupils' interest in science by providing practical and enjoyable activities in lessons, so that pupils are very keen to learn, behave well and talk very enthusiastically about the science work they do. For example, a very good Year 1-2 lesson gave pupils wonderful opportunities to work out their own methods of deciding which material would be best for making an umbrella. Teaching is of a very high standard in Years 3 to 6, as teachers expect older pupils to plan and conduct their own tests and experiments, so that they develop very good investigative skills. Teachers are confident in their own knowledge of science, giving accurate information and using scientific terminology well, so that pupils expand their own knowledge, understanding and vocabulary. Teachers across the school encourage pupils to work collaboratively in groups, so that pupils learn good social skills, get on very well together and work responsibly in lessons. Both teaching and support staff work very hard to ensure that all children are well supported, take a full part in lessons, and achieve well.
55. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership. He has considerable scientific knowledge and expertise, which he uses well in his own teaching and to guide other staff. He has developed good systems for checking how pupils are progressing in science and the standards they reach. He is well supported by the advanced teaching assistant and other teachers in developing science clubs. These are very popular with pupils and the investigative work and experiments that both younger and older pupils explore, contributes much to their confidence in and enthusiasm for science in the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in ICT is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in ICT are rising but are still below average across the school
- Opportunities for pupils to develop their ICT skills have been extended through the acquisition of lap-top computers and a range of software to meet all curriculum requirements
- Co-ordination of the subject is now good and an effective programme to develop ICT and teachers' expertise is in progress
- The use of ICT to support pupils' learning in all subject areas needs to be embedded into curriculum planning and teachers' practice

Commentary

56. The recent acquisition of lap-top computers and a range of software has considerably improved the opportunities for pupils to develop their ICT skills and understanding. However, most pupils are still in the process of developing their confidence in the new resources and as a result, do

not achieve as they should in the subject. Standards are below average across the school, because the school had not kept pace with developments in the ICT curriculum, and in identifying teachers' own development needs.

57. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are developing the skills that they need to work with text and images on the screen. In Years 3 to 6, pupils use ICT to help them record, amend and present their work and are beginning to use spreadsheets from which information they have collected can be presented in a variety of ways. Older pupils are growing in confidence in interrogating and changing information. Pupils use the Internet to find information to support their work; for example in geography and history. They are not, however, working at a high enough level and do not yet have all the skills needed to use ICT to combine different forms of presentations, make predictions or explore patterns from information.
58. Teaching of ICT was good overall in the two lessons seen. In Year 5 and the joint Year 5 and 6 class teachers demonstrated a good knowledge of the subject and gave clear demonstrations, which pupils were able to follow on their own computer screens. Teachers also gave good ongoing support to individual pupils when they needed it. Pupils display very positive attitudes towards computers throughout the school. They work hard and concentrate well, sharing ideas and equipment in a sensible way. The number of lessons seen during the inspection where computers were being used was relatively small. If this were the normal pattern, it would not give pupils sufficient opportunities to use the new equipment and develop the necessary skills.
59. Leadership and management of the subject are now good, with a clear vision of how ICT will develop. Resources have been improved considerably, all classes networked and ICT opportunities timetabled for all pupils. A programme of staff training to raise teacher confidence in the range of software identified for each year group has been planned, and will further improve the opportunities for using ICT across all subject areas.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

60. There are examples of ICT within other areas of the curriculum, such as word processing in literacy and using the Internet to find information. In mathematics and science, pupils use a variety of graphs to present information. However, the use of ICT needs to be further extended into all curriculum areas if pupils are to develop their skills to support learning in other subjects.

HUMANITIES

61. It was not possible to see sufficient lessons in history and geography for any overall judgements to be made. A brief comment is therefore made about each subject. Religious education is reported in full.
62. In **geography**, standards of attainment are typical for their age in Year 2 and above this by Year 6, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. Discussions with pupils in Years 5 and 6 show that they have a lively interest in the subject and are knowledgeable about all aspects of the National Curriculum requirements. Pupils develop an appreciation of their surroundings and an awareness of environmental issues, which are enhanced by visits they make within the Easingwold area. Pupils research information on the Internet to support their geographical work and are beginning to present information they have recorded using their developing ICT skills. Teaching was good in the lesson observed, with well planned opportunities for pupils to discuss issues of caring for their school area. Pupils were attentive and enthusiastic, listening carefully and clearly valuing each other's views. The newly appointed subject leader has a clear vision for developing the subject. Schemes of work are being adapted to meet the school's own needs, and a programme of pupil assessment and monitoring is in the process of being developed. The development of ICT within the subject is being addressed.
63. In **history**, standards of attainment are above those typical for their age, and pupils achieve well throughout the school. This shows a considerable improvement since the last inspection.

Pupils enjoy the topics they have studied and talk enthusiastically about their classwork and visits they have made. This stems from the very good practical approach to the subject that involves pupils in first-hand experiences. For example, very good lessons for pupils in Years 1 and 2 gave them extremely valuable, and enjoyable, first-hand experiences of a Victorian washday. Similar first-hand experiences had enabled older pupils to be able to describe lifestyles in Victorian times that they re-enacted at Benningbrough Hall. Pupils gained a good understanding of the characteristic features of the periods they have studied and the changes that have taken place to the present day. A wide range of artefacts, pictures and historical records supports the development of pupils' historical understanding. The subject is well led, with effective methods to monitor pupils' progress.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus
- The quality of teaching is good overall
- Leadership is good

Commentary

64. Standards at both Year 2 and Year 6 are above the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. A key factor in this is the quality of teaching, which is always at least satisfactory, and sometimes very good and excellent. A consistent feature of the teaching seen was how effectively teachers enabled pupils to link religious teaching with everyday life. Teachers effectively explored with pupils the meaning behind religions, as well as religious facts. They made very telling use of such devices as music and lighted candles to create appropriate mood and atmosphere, and to enable pupils to understand something of the feelings and atmosphere of different religions. For example, in the excellent Year 6 lessons already mentioned, pupils explored the importance of the resurrection to Christians today, and recorded their thoughts in very thoughtful verse that captured important aspects of Christian belief:

*Resurrection.
Bringing new faith,
Bringing much needed hope,
Bringing new happiness to all.
Risen!*

65. Subject leadership is good. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic, hard working and supports her colleagues well. She has done much to raise the profile of religious education in the school. She is very keen to improve the provision of artefacts to support the teaching about different faiths.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

66. It was not possible to see sufficient lessons in art, music, physical education (PE) or design and technology (DT) for any overall judgements to be made. A brief comment is therefore made about each subject.

67. In **DT**, the work seen is often above the standard expected. In the one lesson observed very good teaching helped pupils learn quickly about how different shaped cams cause different types of movement, and how they can be used as part of a mechanism within a toy model. The co-ordinator works hard to support colleagues and in monitoring the subject gives useful feedback and ideas.

68. In **music**, the co-ordinator provides a very good musical direction for staff and pupils. Supported well by peripatetic teachers and with every encouragement from the headteacher, the co-ordinator has significantly widened the opportunities for pupils to make music. A high number of pupils learn cello, brass, woodwind, violin, keyboard, recorder and take part in the choir, and since last September almost twenty pupils have come together to form the school orchestra. Their progress since then has been very good and the music they make is of a high standard. In the class lesson seen, the teacher and pupils thoroughly enjoyed their music making, and all joined in enthusiastically. This is typical of the school's approach to the subject.
69. In **art**, the work scrutinised covers an appropriate range and standards are generally above those expected. The collection of work done by the whole school on 'Developmental stages in Drawing' was particularly impressive, with evaluations by the co-ordinator valuable in highlighting the progression of skills for her colleagues. Work by the Art Club in creating masks and painting in the style of Jackson Pollock showed great individuality.
70. In **PE**, one lesson in dance was observed, where teaching was good. The school offers an appropriate programme of activities, with good involvement in a range of competitive and friendly competitions. After school clubs include football, dance and gymnastics. Pupils have the opportunity to go swimming in Year 4, and by the time pupils leave school, around 90 per cent are able to swim 25m or more.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION (PSHCE)

71. The school's effective programme for PSHCE promotes pupils' personal development well. The programme is being introduced over a two-year cycle and was in its second year at the time of the inspection. The school has a good commitment to its programme and the subject leader maintains a very good overview and already has plans for the evaluation of the completed cycle. It was not possible to see the 'Circle Time' elements of the programme during the inspection, but the health aspects seen were taught effectively. A very good citizenship lesson with Year 6 was very effective in enabling pupils to explore ideas of employment and people's role in society. In a less effective lesson, too much time had been allocated for the topic under discussion and so its quality suffered. Across the school, the high standard of pupils' speaking and listening skills enable a high quality of discussion and so make lessons particularly effective.
72. The school council has a valuable part to play in the PSHCE programme, especially where councillors discuss issues with the rest of the class. This is why it is important that the procedures for electing councillors, canvassing opinions and reporting back are open and consistent.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	1
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	1
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).