



# Scarcroft Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 121282  
**LEA** York  
**Inspection number** 280972  
**Inspection dates** 30 November 2005 to 1 December 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Roger Gill CfBT Lead Inspector

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Moss Street
<b>School category</b>	Community		York
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		North Yorkshire YO23 1BS
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01904 653569
<b>Number on roll</b>	313	<b>Fax number</b>	01904 610199
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Dr MacPherson
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 December 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Anna Cornhill

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 30 November 2005 - 1 December 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 280972
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a large primary school in York situated in an area with average characteristics. Most children are White British: about a fifth is of a minority ethnic heritage, which is above average, but few are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. A below average proportion of children is eligible for free school meals or has learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Most children start school with skills and knowledge typical for their age.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding features; it provides good value for money. It has a history of high performance and a deservedly strong reputation locally. The school judges its strengths and weaknesses accurately; inspectors agree with the school in every respect. Children progress well in the Foundation Stage and are above the nationally expected levels by the end of the Reception class. Achievement elsewhere is good overall but with some dips in writing, linked partly to a small amount of satisfactory teaching. The school is cherished by parents, staff, children and governors. Its ethos is superb. The children are currently learning a song with the lyric, 'to give is to live.' This embodies the generosity of care and respect for others which runs throughout the school. Improvements have been marked and the school is well placed to improve even further.

This is a well led and managed school in which individuals are nurtured. The headteacher, with the help of a very capable senior staff, motivates everyone in the pursuit of very good academic achievement. The school's first-rate methods of care produce outstanding personal development among children. The headteacher is, in partnership with many others, the chief architect of this well-being. As one parent wrote, 'she is a rock..always available for every child and parent.' The way that the children's progress is tracked, test results are analysed and teaching is evaluated is good. However, its use is not yet fully effective in terms of guiding children's progress evenly throughout the school or influencing the school's improvement plan.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the use of information about children's progress to set even more ambitious targets in writing.
- Ensure that the school's improvement plan is timed to contain all of the issues related to standards and achievement, which have emerged from the evaluation of results in national tests and other investigations during the academic year.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Achievement is good. Children exceed the expectations for their age in Reception; this represents good achievement. They continue to make good progress and by the end of Year 2 reach standards that are well above average. By the end of Year 6, standards were well above average in 2005, after a slight dip in 2004 caused by the high proportion of children who had learning difficulties. It is in writing that there is an element of uneven progress across the school causing the need for rapid acceleration in Year 6 for children to fulfil their potential; high attaining children do not always perform well in writing in all classes. Progress in mathematics and science is more consistently good and this is reflected in the significant achievements made by the end of Year 6. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are good and pupils make good progress in other subjects. The school's high reputation in the

visual and performing arts is well deserved: progress in art and design and music is outstanding. Some portrait sketching and clay work is breathtaking and children's singing lifts the spirits. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress towards their targets. The few who are learning English as an additional language also make quick progress.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

The excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children encapsulates the outstanding nature of this aspect. Spiritual growth is fostered very well through religious education, but it also draws heavily on the arts and the pride children derive from helping others. In this way social, moral and cultural influences are carefully intertwined with the spiritual. The school's allotment project is superb and typical of how the school's provision is woven together. Children learn about health, safety, sustainability, finances and the world of work all in one go. Behaviour and attitudes are exemplary; there are very few incidents of bullying or racism, but children handle these with confidence when they occur. Children feel safe and included well because the system of befriending by older pupils really works. School councillors discharge their responsibilities eagerly and speak about their role in a mature way. Pupils enjoy school greatly partly because as one child said, 'the environment is so friendly and colourful.' This keenness is reflected in the good attendance of most children. Below average attendance in 2004/5 has been tackled, but it is prevented in being better than average, currently, by families who persist in taking holidays during term time.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Children learn well as a result of good teaching. Parents, rightly, praise the stimulating lessons that take place. Skilful questioning is used to deduce what pupils know, and their involvement in how well they have done and what to do next is first rate. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities learn well and their confidence is boosted. Relationships are excellent and children's gifts and talents are nurtured very well. Learning is particularly effective, for example, when drama and digital cameras are used, and when lessons benefit from high quality resources. In music, for instance, every child in the class has a proper drum to play, which allows teaching to be very effective.

Some teaching is outstanding. Demanding lessons evoke the best in children: a Year 5 class created a wonderful poetic parody of The Charge of the Light Brigade, and younger pupils made rapid progress in their spelling and handwriting because teaching was so rigorous and buoyant. A small amount of satisfactory teaching exists, which lacks challenge or underestimates what children can do for themselves. Good teaching is not always reflected in the Year 6 test results because the system of setting ambitious

goals for all children, particularly higher attainers in writing, lacks consistency across the school.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum facilitates good progress in literacy, numeracy and ICT, but also in other subjects and the rich array of additional activities. For example, children participate in music festivals, work with the local theatre and enjoy science weeks. History comes alive because the school uses its locality so well: Yorvik is on its doorstep. An excellent arts curriculum produces dance, music, visual art and computer images of a very high order. Physical education is represented well despite parental worries about the lack of a school field. Children solve problems very well in ways that encourage teamwork: a very useful preparation for the world of work. The Investors in Pupils Award demonstrates, among other things, the strength of the school's provision for personal development: education for health, safety, drugs awareness, sex education and citizenship works very well. Community links are forged successfully, for example, when the choir performs for senior citizens or children liaise with local businesses.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

This is an outstanding aspect. One child summed up what many think, 'the school is a great place to work and a great place to be.' Children feel valued, safe and confident. Procedures for child protection are in place and working, so children are sure of a sensitive listening ear. Regular risk assessments ensure that health and safety matters are given top priority. The care for children who need extra help is scrupulous, for example those with medical conditions or disabilities. Parents are always consulted well and receive very useful advice about helping at home: this communication enhances their children's progress. Guidance about learning given in lessons and through teachers' marking is exceedingly good. Children wax eloquent about their next steps in learning and personal development. Moreover, they often play the part of assessing how well others have done. The relative weakness in setting annual targets for higher attainers is a managerial issue and does not lessen the outstanding daily guidance that children receive.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good and help children achieve well. The headteacher's leadership works very well on many levels: for example, coaching, leading from the front, demonstrating expertise and communicating widely. As one new member of staff put it, 'I feel proud to work here because the school is so well led and managed.' Moreover, parents and children admire what the school has to offer. The school is outstanding at making children feel at the heart of the process: they talk fluently

about their learning and demonstrate maturity beyond their years, when reflecting on their feelings and ideas.

Subject leaders guide their colleagues skilfully, offering useful advice and training. Governors fulfil their responsibilities and know the school well. They oversee performance management well and allocate resources, including teaching assistants, to support children's learning.

The school has a good understanding of its own strengths and weaknesses. Strong teamwork means that everyone is involved in the extensive programme of monitoring teaching and learning. As a result, children's performance in tests is analysed frequently. This is very useful in Year 2 and Year 6, but the complete evaluation of children's progress across the years is not yet fully effective, notwithstanding a very comprehensive system introduced recently. Moreover, the school's annual plans for development do not contain enough detail about how standards need to improve because they are aligned with the financial year, not the academic one. This makes it hard for governors and staff to check on children's achievements against previously agreed criteria.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for your help when we inspected your school. We thoroughly enjoyed our visit because everyone was so helpful and friendly. We would like to share with you what we thought.

These are some of the things that we enjoyed:

- yours is a good school with some first-rate features
- your 'mud pie' allotment group is a wonderful idea
- WILF lives! - in the way you all talk about how to improve your work
- yours is an active and healthy school, even without the grassed area
- your art work and singing gave extra zest to our visit.

We know everyone wants to do even better and we have suggested a couple of things that we think will help:

- we would like all teachers to set even more challenging targets in writing so that Year 6 results rise even further in English
- each year, we want your school to place the ideas it gains from studying your test results into the school improvement plan so that it can check how well standards are rising.

Best wishes to you all. We hope you continue to have a wonderful time in school and enjoy the grassed area when you get it.