



Arkengarthdale Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121476
LEA North Yorkshire
Inspection number 281025
Inspection dates 8 February 2006 to 8 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Rosemary Rodger CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Arkengarthdale
School category	Voluntary controlled		Richmond
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		North Yorkshire DL11 6EN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01748 884335
Number on roll	31	Fax number	01748 884335
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr David Williams
Date of previous inspection	3 April 2000	Headteacher	Mrs M Hutchinson

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 8 February 2006 - 8 February 2006	Inspection number 281025
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an additional inspector.

Description of the school

The school is situated in the North Yorkshire Dales and serves a very small rural area. The area is advantaged socially and economically, which is reflected in the very small number of pupils eligible for a free school meal. A small number of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school was awarded a Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2004, a Healthy School Award in 2006 and has twice received a Highly Effective Schools Award from the local authority.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school judges itself to be satisfactory: the inspection disagrees with this very modest self-evaluation, which does not sufficiently reflect the school's strengths and good improvements since the last inspection. Standards are above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Pupils generally achieve well and they make good progress as they go through school, especially in information and communication technology (ICT). Personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils feel very safe and secure in school and enjoy the work they do in the strong family environment created by the staff. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils value the 'time teachers have for us'. Good attention is given to the wide range of abilities in each class so that most pupils make good progress. Occasionally, more able pupils could be challenged further in their day to day work. The curriculum is good. There are many opportunities for enrichment through links with other schools and the creative ways in which subjects are linked related to work in the environment. Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Trusting and friendly relationships are positive features identified by pupils. Pupils know how to improve their work and are able to evaluate how this needs to be done. Provision and standards in the Foundation Stage are good. Leadership and management are good. The headteacher leads the school well, especially by the example of her good teaching. Improvements since the last inspection have been good. The school provides good value for money and has a good capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to ensure that the older and higher attaining pupils are provided with more challenging work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is above average. By the time they start Year 1, they have reached the early learning goals in all areas of learning and have achieved well. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage because they are well supported in small groups and work well with their older peers.

The proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels in the national tests in Years 2 and 6 fluctuate year by year because the number of pupils in each year group is very small, so results need to be treated with some caution. Pupils in Year 2 achieved above average results in reading, writing and mathematics in the 2005 national assessments. These results are reflected in the good progress made in lessons. Pupils in Year 6 achieved above average results in English, mathematics and science. Progress made in lessons is generally good, although more able pupils and older pupils in each class did not consistently make such good progress. The above average standards achieved in the national tests are well reflected in all the other subjects throughout the school. Pupils talk with confidence and explain their ideas clearly. The school met its

challenging targets in English and mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress and achieve well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being is well reflected in the above average attendance figure. Pupils enjoy school enormously - as Year 6 pupils said - 'we pretend not to be ill so we can stay at school'. Pupils behave maturely and take their responsibilities seriously. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The whole school assemblies are used very well to create a caring climate in which everyone can flourish and respect each other. There are good opportunities to develop pupils' awareness of cultural diversity; for example, by linking with the community to celebrate Chinese New Year. A commitment to racial equality is firmly fostered. Pupils develop good levels of confidence that is well demonstrated as they describe their money making initiatives and understanding of how to get value for money from the sales of their weekly newsletter. 'Tootie Fruitie Friday' gives further economic responsibility to the school committee who collect a small donation to buy fruit at the local market, then 'garnish and prepare this for everyone', as well as keeping their accounts on a spreadsheet. Pupils feel safe in school because their teachers know them well as individuals. The personal, social and emotional development of children in the Foundation Stage is well fostered on an individual and group basis.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Bold, vibrant displays are an excellent reflection of the innovative learning that takes place. Pupils learn effectively because they are keen to please, behave very well and build well on prior learning. Lessons are consistently well planned to take account of the mixed ages in each class. Occasionally, there is too little challenge for the older, more able pupils in each class. The school is aware of this and is involving these pupils in special projects with pupils from other schools. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have their progress regularly checked and they are well supported by both teachers and teaching assistants. Parents value the good support their children receive. Improvements to ICT, through the addition of interactive whiteboards and more computers in each class, enrich learning effectively. For example, Key Stage 2 pupils learned to understand inflation as a result of a short video clip. Assessment procedures are comprehensive and accurate. Pupils have literacy and numeracy targets that they are encouraged to review themselves. Pupils' class and homework is thoroughly marked. The school tracking system highlights pupils needing additional support and is used effectively to target small groups.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and complies with all statutory requirements. There are good opportunities to develop literacy skills; for example, through writing about the Chinese New Year celebrations. Numeracy and ICT are given a high priority. Curriculum planning is detailed and provides good guidance for teachers of mixed age classes. All pupils are fully included and benefit well from the small classes. However, the needs of more able, older pupils in each class are not always met well on a day to day basis because the work they do is too easy and lacks challenge. The involvement of community talents to enrich the curriculum is very well developed; for example, music tuition, skills of a local artist and footballers from a nearby club. The innovative work of the school is publicly acknowledged through awards such as Basic Skills, Inclusion and Healthy Schools. The lack of facilities for physical education has been addressed through the gift to the school of a nearby field for outdoor games. Pupils enjoy their trips to the swimming pool and the sporting opportunities they are provided with. A range of out of school clubs are held and well attended. Links with the community are very good. Pupils are well prepared for their future economic well-being. They know they are fortunate to live in such a beautiful part of the country; as one pupil said, 'we love the springtime because we learn the names of the flowers'.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The arrangements to care for, support and guide pupils are good. Pupils praise the 'time teachers have for us', value that they listen to both sides and have more fun in school because they are so well known to their teachers. They trust their teachers implicitly and greatly appreciate the lack of crowds, friendliness and inclusion of everyone. Health and safety procedures are well attended to. Pupils say they feel very safe in school. There are established procedures for child protection and risk assessments are carried out rigorously. Governors and the local authority carry out regular health and safety checks. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported through regular visits from the local authority to guide and advise the school. Parents expressed great satisfaction with the progress their children make. Links with the nursery school are effective and contribute well to the smooth transition to school. Older pupils are knowledgeable about the feeder secondary schools and value meeting staff and getting involved in several joint projects with other schools. They know how to improve their work because they are encouraged to review their progress regularly.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good rather than the school's own more modest view that they are satisfactory. The headteacher leads the school well, especially by the example of her good teaching. She balances a high teaching commitment with her

leadership and management role effectively and efficiently. The school runs well on a day to day basis. The development plan provides a clear, three year strategic statement with a good priority given to enriching the curriculum and ensuring that all the outcomes of Every Child Matters are fully embedded into the school's work. The plan is well supported by yearly curriculum action plans with challenging targets to be met. School self-evaluation is good, but does not pay enough attention to learners' outcomes in order to focus further development. The arrangements to monitor the work of the school are thorough, well documented and have a good impact on improving teaching and learning. Teamwork is a very strong feature of the leadership. Governors are very conscientious and knowledgeable through their formal and informal visits. They support the school well. Improvements since the previous inspection - standards and provision for ICT, the accommodation and assessment procedures - are all now good. The budget is prudently managed and increased regularly through fundraising efforts of the friends of the school. The cost of educating each child is very high because of the small numbers on roll. However, because of the outcomes for learners, the value for money is good. The school has a good capacity to improve.

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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>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	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

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ 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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	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

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
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
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
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
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
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
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
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 making my visit to your school so enjoyable. You were very polite and friendly and I enjoyed talking to the School Committee. I enjoyed looking at all the interesting work you have done, especially the Chinese New Year and map of the village displays.

What I liked most about your school

- I was pleased that you enjoy school and feel so safe and secure.
- You work hard and get good results in the tests you take.
- Your behaviour is very good and you help each other.
- Older children have many jobs to do in school, you do these very well.
- The School Committee work hard and provide interesting fruits for you to eat on 'Tootie Fruitie Fridays'.
- Your teachers work hard, you said how much they help you and make learning fun.
- You are very lucky to have so many computers and teachers use the whiteboards to show examples of information to make your learning interesting.
- You have demonstrated your talents well when you perform plays to the local community.

What I would like to see improved

- Sometimes you have work that is too easy for you, especially when you have worksheets to complete.

I hope you continue to have a great time at school and have fun on the new playing field when the weather improves.