



Richmond Methodist Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121544
LEA North Yorkshire
Inspection number 281037
Inspection dates 18 January 2006 to 19 January 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Peter Howard CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Darlington Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Richmond
Age range of pupils	5 to 11		North Yorkshire DL10 7BH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01748 822794
Number on roll	312	Fax number	01748 821292
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs J Pinning
Date of previous inspection	13 November 2000	Headteacher	Mr J Huddleston

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average Methodist primary school. The area it serves is one of social advantage and the proportion of children eligible for free school meals, from minority ethnic groups, those speaking English as a second language and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is low. The numbers of children entering or leaving school during the year is low. Most children start school with skills and knowledge that are above average 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: 3

The school judges its overall effectiveness to be good; however, inspectors judge it to be satisfactory. It is most successful in creating a supportive environment in which the children's personal development and well-being progress well. A strong commitment to providing high quality care and support for all groups of children results in them feeling safe, secure and well looked after. Strong partnerships with other schools and outside agencies, including outstanding international links, enhance the school's provision well. Relationships are good; children respect the feelings and needs of others. They enjoy school and their behaviour is excellent. Children's academic achievement is satisfactory. They enter and leave school with above average standards, but progress throughout the school is uneven, being weaker in Years 3 to 6, particularly for those of higher ability. Teaching is satisfactory and some teaching is much better. The curriculum is also satisfactory, with considerable enrichment. However, there are some weaknesses in both teaching and the curriculum in respect to English and mathematics. Their effect is felt in the transition between Key Stages 1 and 2, which is not fully effective, and this contributes to the underlying weakness in progress in Key Stage 2. Recently implemented systems for improving the assessment of children and the tracking of their progress are not yet fully effective. Leadership and management are satisfactory. However, school development planning is not sufficiently focused on the changes that need to take place in classroom practice; neither does it set sufficiently clear success criteria to be fully effective. Progress since the last inspection, the capacity for improvement within the school and value for money are all satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

Increase progress in Key Stage 2 by:

- improving development planning to ensure that the strategy for school improvement is effective
- using the information from assessment more systematically to improve children's progress, particularly the progress of those who are more able
- improving teaching and learning and the curriculum so that transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 is more effective and enables children to achieve their full potential, particularly in English and mathematics.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children enter school with above average standards. Good provision in Reception and Years 1 and 2 helps them reach standards that are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2. At the end of Year 6, children reach above average standards overall. In 2005, results in national tests in English and science were above average and in mathematics they were average. Inspectors judge that staffing disruption caused by ill health contributed to the lower than expected results

of this group of children. Progress from entry in Reception to the end of Year 6 is satisfactory. However, progress is not consistent throughout the school. The good progress in Reception, Years 1 and 2 is not maintained in Years 3 to 6 as the school finds it difficult to sustain the exceptionally high standards reached in Year 2 in English, especially writing, and also mathematics. In particular, the school has found it difficult to ensure that a sufficiently high proportion of more able children achieve their full potential. The school has identified weaknesses in teaching and the curriculum that contribute to this uneven progress. A programme of school development is already underway to ensure that progress in Years 3 to 6 is improved. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well cared for and make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school that children's personal development is good and judge that there are also outstanding features. Children's spiritual and moral development, firmly rooted in the school's Methodist foundation, is good. Their social and cultural development is also strong. Children enjoy school, they are polite, their behaviour both in lessons and at play is excellent and they relate well to adults in a mature, sensible way. As a result of the rich opportunities available in school, children's ability to take responsibility and exercise independence is good and they make excellent contributions to the school and wider community. The school council is particularly effective and children get thoroughly involved in projects on healthy living, recycling, and multi-cultural links. The 'Doing it Right' programme helps children feel safe in school and promotes respect for others. Older children take pride in helping younger ones and talk maturely about good conduct. For example, a Year 6 child explained how good behaviour posters were in reminding children about school expectations. Children have sensible attitudes to their own health and safety. Healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle are encouraged and as a result, the school has gained the Healthy Schools Award. Children make a satisfactory preparation for the world of work. Attendance is high and punctuality is good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The school judges teaching and learning to be good but inspectors judge them to be satisfactory. Children are making at least satisfactory progress in lessons. Teaching is more consistently effective in leading to good learning and achievement in Reception and Years 1 and 2. In good or better lessons, work is well matched to the needs of children and offers them a high level of challenge. Teachers use a good range of activities to engage and sustain children's interest, including increasingly effective use of information and communication technology. Where teaching is satisfactory, work is not as well matched to the needs of individual children and pace is slower. In the transition between Key Stages 1 and 2, a lack of continuity of practice results in

teaching being less than fully effective in building on children's prior knowledge and skills. The result is that children, particularly the more able, make slower progress in English and mathematics in Key Stage 2. Assessment, and the tracking of progress, have been strengthened recently. Although an impact can already be seen, they are not yet fully effective in ensuring that all children achieve their full potential. The provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well organised and teaching assistants make an effective contribution to children's progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school has judged the curriculum to be good; inspectors judge it to be satisfactory. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good, offering children an exciting range of imaginative activities. In Key Stages 1 and 2, while the curriculum is satisfactory and meets all statutory requirements, there are aspects of the curriculum for English and mathematics that require improvement. The curriculum in Key Stage 1 does not give children enough opportunities to encounter open-ended tasks and problem solving activities. In Key Stage 2, the curriculum does not take sufficient account of children's earlier experiences. Taken together, these weaknesses contribute to less than effective transition, which lessens progress in Key Stage 2, particularly for more able children. However, a real strength of the curriculum is the outstanding range of enrichment activities. For example, there are very strong international links and the school council has been involved in the development of the wild life area, which included making a presentation to the local council in the town hall.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school thinks that the care, support and guidance it provides for children are good. Inspectors agree that staff are dedicated to providing children with a safe and healthy learning environment and do so with great success. However, inspectors judge this aspect satisfactory overall because, despite recently strengthened procedures, older children are not yet guided well enough to meet the challenging targets that have been set for them. Child protection arrangements and those regarding vulnerable children are thorough and regularly updated and risk assessments are conscientiously carried out. The school's strong ethos, supportive environment and appropriate use of praise, reward and sanctions promote self-confidence and excellent behaviour. The school has rightly earned the Quality Mark for its strong support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. External agencies contribute strongly to children's welfare. The school works well with parents and receives very strong support from them, reflected in the overwhelmingly positive responses from parents during the inspection.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school has judged leadership and management to be good; inspectors judge it to be satisfactory. The leadership team are most successful in the establishment of strong commitment among the staff, a caring ethos and good personal development of children. The strong commitment of the headteacher and staff results in the many positive outcomes for children. The issues raised in the last inspection have been dealt with satisfactorily. However, the uneven progress of children as they pass through the school, reflecting some underlying weaknesses in teaching, learning and the curriculum, is an issue that the school's leadership has not yet resolved. This is in part because the school's development planning is not clearly rooted in the changes needed in classroom practice. The use of data is insufficiently focused to set effective success criteria when deciding upon actions for improvement. However, the school has put in place effective strategies for the monitoring of teaching and its self-evaluation strategies are satisfactory. The period of disruption caused by several long-term absences of staff has come to an end. The leadership team is aware of the issues raised during the inspection and inspectors judge that it has the capacity to make the necessary improvements. Governors are very supportive of the school and have good general knowledge of it, but need a more informed and detailed understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses in order to promote maximum improvement. Financial management is satisfactory and the school gives satisfactory value for money.

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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?	3	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	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	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	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	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?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	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 very much for welcoming us to your school and being so polite and friendly. We enjoyed our visit.

What we liked most about your school:

- how hard all the staff in school work, how well they look after you and keep you safe and how much they want you to do well in school
- the conversations we had with you that showed us how grown up you are when you talk about school life
- that you behave so well and work so hard
- the way you get involved in school life and the good school council which helps the school to run well
- the outstanding range of activities the school offers to make the work you do exciting and interesting.

What we have asked your school to do now:

- think about how you can do even better in English and mathematics, particularly in Key Stage 2
- continue working to improve the way the school keeps track of how well you are doing and then sets work that is just right for each of you
- make more use of your test results so that the teachers can go on helping you to learn even more.

We enjoyed meeting you and seeing you in your lessons and we wish you all well for the future.