



Wheldrake with Thorganby Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121644
LEA York
Inspection number 281068
Inspection dates 28 September 2005 to 29 September 2005
Reporting inspector Mr Christopher Keeler HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	North Lane
School category	Voluntary aided		Wheldrake
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		York, North Yorkshire YO19 6BB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01904 448564
Number on roll	202	Fax number	01904 448564
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr P Botting
Date of previous inspection	15 November 1999	Headteacher	Ms Helen Rodbourn

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 28 September 2005 - 29 September 2005	Inspection number 281068
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

Wheldrake with Thorganby Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School is situated in a residential area to the south of the city of York. A high proportion of parents are employed in a professional capacity and almost all of the pupils are white British. The percentage of pupils who claim school meals is below average. The attainment of pupils on entry is above the level expected of 4 year olds. The percentage of pupils identified as having is well below the national average. At the time of the inspection, there were 207 pupils attending the school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This school provides a satisfactory level of education. This reflects the schools own evaluation of its performance. A particularly good feature of the school is the happy, secure environment. Pupils like coming to school. They are polite and their behaviour is good. In the Foundation Stage, pupils make a good start to their school life. The quality of teaching is good and pupils progress well. In Years 2 to 6 the teaching is more inconsistent with examples of satisfactory and good teaching. By the time pupils are 11 most of them have made steady progress and are achieving the national average in mathematics, science and English, with the exception of writing, which needs to be improved. Pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress. The care, guidance and support shown to pupils is good. Provision for pupil's personal development and well-being is satisfactory overall with some strengths. The leadership of the headteacher is satisfactory. Subject leaders are new to their role and are becoming increasingly aware of what it is that they have to do. Pupils are taught about healthy lifestyles and are encouraged to participate in activities both within school and the wider community. The school provides satisfactory value for money and has satisfactory capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Monitor the implementation of the school improvement plan so that it impacts on the quality of teaching and learning.
- Raise standards of writing throughout the school.
- Develop the role of subject leaders so that they are familiar with the curriculum beyond their own key stage.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The school's evaluation that the pupils make satisfactory progress is correct.

Pupils start school with higher than average levels of attainment in all areas of learning. They quickly settle into the school's routines and this combined with good teaching enables them to progress well during this first year.

In Years 1 to 6, progress is more variable for some pupils, especially the more able. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are just above national levels, although some pupils, including the more able, are insufficiently challenged and as a result do not progress as well as they might. Standards in reading are good throughout the school. Standards in writing are less so. Pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress.

In the past, pupils have achieved results well above national averages. In the last two years due to instability in staffing, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2, the gap between school results and national levels of attainment has narrowed in all subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

The provision for pupil's personal development is satisfactory with some strengths. Most pupils' attitudes to work are good. They pay attention in class and work sensibly on their own and when working co-operatively. However, some pupils at the end of each key stage do not apply themselves sufficiently to the work set during the lesson. With few exceptions pupils behave well in class and around the school. Their attendance is excellent. They play happily and safely together. Older pupils take responsibility for helping younger children at playtime. Pupils are confident and get on well with adults.

The provision for spiritual, social, moral, and cultural development is satisfactory. Their understanding of other cultures and what it means to live in a multiracial society requires further development. The school is aware of this and intends to address the matter. Pupils know how to keep safe and stay healthy. They understand the need to eat healthy food and to take regular exercise. They enjoy regular opportunities to show initiative, for example by organising charity events. Through the school council, pupils are given an opportunity to develop an awareness of democracy and learn about the responsibilities of living in a community. Opportunities for the council to meet have been limited recently and this needs to be addressed.

Good systems are in place to deal with bullying should it arise. Drama groups have led anti-bullying and drugs awareness raising activities for upper Key Stage 2 classes. A programme of sex education is delivered to Year 6 pupils by the school nurse following consultation with parents. Pupils also have opportunities in 'Circle Time' to discuss issues that concern them, such as their feelings on settling into a new class. The school has introduced a support group for specific children called "Circle of friends". This group is designed to assist pupils who find it difficult to relate well to others.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. The quality of the relationships between teachers and pupils is good in all classes.

There are examples of good teaching in all areas of the school, but this is not the case in every class. The majority of pupils attain standards that are slightly above the national average at the end of both key stages. However, the progress of some pupils could be better, especially the more able.

In the Foundation Stage, the quality of teaching is good and pupils make good progress. This is maintained as pupils enter Year 1 where they quickly acquire basic reading, writing and numeracy skills. However, in Year 2, the expectations of some pupils are too low. They are not sufficiently challenged and demonstrate poor working habits. As a result, the progress of these pupils is not as good as it should be. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils make steady but not rapid progress in all areas except writing.

Where teaching is good, the teachers have high expectations and pupils are set appropriately challenging work. They assess pupils' progress, set targets and adapt their planning to meet their needs. They also display good questioning skills that require pupils to think and articulate their ideas. In such situations, pupils respond positively and show an interest in their work. However, this is not the case in all classes. Occasionally insufficient account is taken of what pupils can or cannot do when planning future work. In these lessons planning is too reliant on published material and not always adapted to meet the needs of individuals. As a result, the focus of these lessons is not sufficiently clear. Homework is not set on a regular basis especially in Year 6. This does not help pupils reinforce newly acquired skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory overall. It covers the full range of subjects. The curriculum for the youngest children is good. It takes account of individual pupils' abilities and needs, and enables them to make good progress.

The school has recognised the need for pupils to acquire skills, knowledge and understanding that they can use across a range of subjects. Pupils in Year 1 are given opportunities to apply literacy and numeracy skills in their science, history and geography work. Pupils in Key Stage 2 take part in Topic afternoons each week, where they work collaboratively in mixed year groups. An example of such work includes the making of bird tables which involves the use of design technology and mathematical skills.

Lessons are enriched by regular visits to places of educational interest, and there is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities, including a variety of sports. Many pupils in Key Stage 2 are involved in an annual musical production. The oldest pupils take part in a residential visit to the Lake District, which helps to promote their confidence and social skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils feel well cared for. Arrangements for dealing with child protection issues are good. The school works closely with a range of external agencies, including, the health visitor, child paediatrician and social workers in order to safeguard the welfare of pupils. Pupils feel safe, secure and well looked after in school. They say the school is friendly and that newcomers are supported by other pupils in their class until they feel confident about school routines. There is no evidence of bullying and pupil behaviour is good. Older pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for looking after resources or younger ones and they carry out these tasks with great care.

Good links exist with the local secondary schools to which pupils transfer at the end of Year 6. Pupils undertake work in their final term that prepares them for the transition to Key Stage 3.

Relationships between pupils and staff are warm and supportive. The pupils feel that there are many people who would help them if they had a problem. The vast majority of parents are extremely supportive of the work of the school, although a small number would like the school to be more responsive to their suggestions.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. A particularly good feature of the school is the creation of a happy and caring environment. The headteacher runs the school effectively and uses resources well. She has an appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

The onus is now on the headteacher to proceed with initiatives that are designed to improve provision further. She should monitor their impact on pupils learning, so that as a result of consistently good teaching, all pupils attain the standards of which they are capable. This will require a shift from focusing on administrative matters to teaching and learning. The recently appointed deputy headteacher is adjusting to her role well and offers effective support to the headteacher. The school has the capacity to improve.

The headteacher has taken the opportunity of recent staff changes to review the arrangements for overseeing the curriculum. Subject leaders are aware of what their role entails and are keen to monitor teaching and pupils' progress as a mechanism to raise standards further. However, they need to be more familiar with the curriculum, other than in the key stage in which they are based.

The governing body and the headteacher have an effective working relationship. The headteacher keeps governors informed of school issues and subject leaders report directly to the governors about developments in their particular area. The governing body should take the opportunity to determine the progress of initiatives contained in the school improvement plan with particular attention to the impact they are having on pupils. There is a sub-committee structure in place that enables the governors to effectively manage school affairs. They have ensured that statutory requirements are met and that resources are used efficiently. 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?	3	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	3	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?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	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?	2	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	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	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 for welcoming us when we came to visit your school. We especially liked talking to you about your work and the things that you enjoy doing.

You told us that you enjoy coming to school and do not like to miss a single day. It was good to see how well you get on with each other and how you look after other children, especially if they are younger than yourself. You behave well, both in the playground and in the classroom.

Children in the reception class are doing well and think learning is exciting and fun. As you get older you learn to read very well and you speak clearly and confidently. Most importantly we want you to get better at writing.

Your teachers take very good care of you and want you to do well. They work hard and also provide lots of things for you to do after school.

We have asked your teachers to help you with your writing. They will expect you to try your best all the time and will make sure that the tasks that they give you to do will help each one of you improve. While you are working, your headteacher and teachers from other classes will come and see what you are doing.

We think that by doing these things, not only will your school be even better but you will become very good in all that you do.

We had a good time in your school. Thank you.