



Nun Monkton Primary Foundation School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121721
LEA North Yorkshire
Inspection number 281092
Inspection dates 17 October 2005 to 17 October 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs Lesley Clark CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	The Green
School category	Foundation		Nun Monkton
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		York, North Yorkshire YO26 8ER
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01423 330313
Number on roll	29	Fax number	01423 330313
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr G Armitage
Date of previous inspection	17 January 2001	Headteacher	Mrs L Ashby

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 17 October 2005 - 17 October 2005	Inspection number 281092
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

Description of the school

This is a very small village school between York and Harrogate, serving several villages and including farms. The area is advantaged socio-economically and more prosperous than it was at the time of the last inspection though pupils come from a very wide range of backgrounds. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average and the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very small. All the pupils are of white British heritage. When children start school their attainment is broadly average, though it can vary considerably each year. There were no children of Reception age in school on the day of this inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school that despite its high costs gives excellent value for money. Pupils make exceptionally good progress because of extremely good teaching and systems sensitively tailored to meet their individual needs, both academically and personally. Attendance and behaviour are outstanding and pupils clearly relish coming to this school. Standards are high at the end of Year 6, as a result. Provision for pupils' personal development is outstanding and pupils flourish in the school's caring, family atmosphere. All pupils are highly valued and their individual talents are nurtured extremely well. Pupils are very well looked after and lead healthy lives. Children in the Foundation Stage are provided with many good opportunities to choose interesting activities both indoors and outdoors. The curriculum is good and enables pupils, including those in the Foundation Stage, to work with high levels of enjoyment and success. Leadership and management are outstanding and the governing body plays a full, supportive role in all aspects of school life. Parents value the school highly, but would like more regular newsletters. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and good use is made of it to ensure continued improvement. The school recognises there is a need to simplify and unify the way it records information about pupils' progress as they move through the school. Improvement since the last inspection is good and the school is well placed to improve at a similarly good rate.

What the school should do to improve further

- Simplify and unify the way the school tracks pupils' progress so as to reduce the administrative workload on teachers.
- Find ways to give parents more regular, written information about what goes on in school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

The school's evaluation is accurate: achievement and standards are outstanding. The school's assessments show that children make good progress in the Foundation Stage. Standards are generally average at the end of the year, indicating good achievement, for few have a full three terms in Reception and none has had pre-schooling experience. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2: some begin to forge ahead at this stage in reading and mathematics, in particular. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' achievement really takes off and their enjoyment is palpable. This is partly because of inspirational teaching, but also because of the very good groundwork in Years 1 and 2. Throughout the school, pupils benefit from very small teaching groups. Targets are ambitious and pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities usually meet nationally expected levels while higher attainers comfortably exceed them. The trend in the school's results in national tests remains steadily well above average in English, mathematics and science, despite an unprecedented dip in English in the 2004 national tests. This was not borne out by the pupils' work which was technically accurate and accomplished

as in this humorous dialogue based on a scientific experiment: 'Look at the roots! They burst out of the plant pot! Maybe we planted a tree, not a flower; or an alien plant!'

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding aspect. Provision for pupils' personal and spiritual development permeates the work of the school. Pupils say the best thing about their school is that they 'think about thinking. From a single word we were suddenly involved in a discussion about God and Jesus and whether they are real and the Big Bang theory and evolution.' Attendance is excellent because pupils love coming to school. Pupils thrive in the school's inclusive atmosphere. They work and play hard, becoming confident and self-reliant individuals. Older pupils enjoy the added responsibilities of looking after younger ones and using 'excellent technology' in free time. Provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is equally strong. Bullying is not a problem and pupils declare, 'We all get along together like a family'.

Outstanding involvement in local and international projects gives pupils a mature sense of responsibility for their age as well as economic awareness. They are very aware of the need to help others and talked of doing their bit to help in national crises including raising money to help those with leprosy. Pupils feel in control of their own progress and know what to do to improve their work. The school energises them both mentally and physically and they learn well because they feel happy, healthy and safe.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The inspection agrees with the school's self-evaluation that teaching and learning are outstanding overall. No teaching could be seen in the Foundation Stage as the children attend part time to begin with. Lesson plans clearly show a wide range of interesting and stimulating activities for this age group. Generous staffing keeps teaching groups very small so much of pupils' learning is individualised and meets the full range of their needs. Competent use of technology injects pace into teaching and ensures pupils' active learning. Teachers' excellent subject knowledge gives quiet authority to their teaching and so pupils work hard with high levels of concentration. Drama is used very well as when role-play inspired Year 2 pupils' lively vocabulary for writing stories. Inspirational teaching in Years 5 and 6 provides high levels of challenge without eroding pupils' confidence. Regular group assessments, plus individual marking, focus pupils on what they have learnt and how to improve. For example, older pupils decided that to solve mathematical problems it would help to be 'systematic, make an organised list and use elimination.' To which their teacher added: 'You should never underestimate your powers to reason - they should be greater than your knowledge'.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and has improved considerably since the last inspection. Pupils, including those in the Foundation Stage, are well served by what the school offers, benefiting from the concentration on basic literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. This is tempered by imaginative links between subjects and world events; for example, pupils' artwork based on digital images of Hurricane Katrina. The school does much to compensate for the limitations inevitably imposed by its rural isolation. E-mail links with an Australian school, visits to different religious centres and links with a school with pupils with severe learning difficulties and/or disabilities widen pupils' educational experience. Additional sporting activities such as swimming, training with a para-Olympic medallist and hurdling tutored by a national athlete go some way to make up for limited gymnastic provision because of restricted accommodation. Education for health and safety is good and pupils' awareness of health is fostered well and enjoyably as when designing new types of bread, for example.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

High quality care for all is the hallmark of this school. The inspection agrees with the school's evaluation of outstanding. Staff are fully committed to promoting the health, safety and welfare of their pupils and child protection arrangements are firmly in place. There is excellent provision for pupils to learn enjoyably in a healthy, balanced way. In this supportive, caring environment, pupils reach challenging targets and most make exceptionally good academic progress. The assessment systems reflect the individual attention paid to each child and work extremely effectively, but they make strenuous demands on staff time and this leaves less time for curriculum development. Information could be collated more simply to equally good effect. The school works very well with outside agencies to ensure those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. Links with parents are strong, but not unreasonably parents would like more regular information about what goes on in school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. With minimal time in which to lead and manage the school, the headteacher has successfully created a staff team which works extremely well to provide a first class education for its pupils. The best use is made of resources to give a personalised education to the benefit of all, regardless of ability. The school's management systems work effectively. Governors are fully involved, regularly reviewing the work of the school as part of their commitment to continually challenge. Autonomous sub-committees are used successfully to delegate responsibilities and financial management is carried out very efficiently by a bursar, additional to the equally efficient administrative support. Staff have a reasonable

amount of time in which to prepare, plan and assess in working hours and the result is excellent teaching, very effective learning and a public profile of excellence seen, for example, in local poetry competitions. However, the very individual nature of this small school depends very largely on the current personnel. There is a need to unify and simplify some of the current systems of assessment, for example, to give clear information about overall pupils' progress for the incoming headteacher. Similarly, while parents know this school is doing extremely well by its children, and that the restricted accommodation means it is impractical for them to come more than a couple of times each term to attend assemblies and the like, more regular information would help to keep them closely involved.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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
--	-----------------------	--------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	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	1	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?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	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	1	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?	1	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?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	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 me to your school and for being so friendly and polite. I enjoyed my visit and want to share with you what I thought about your school.

What I liked most about your school

- I think that you are taught extremely well and that your teachers help you to think and work things out for yourselves
- I am pleased that you all get on so well together and liked seeing you play on the village green using lots of different games equipment and using the computers at lunchtime
- I like the way you talk about your work with your teachers and have such a clear idea of what you need to do to improve your standards
- Your parents and carers are very pleased that you come to this school.

What I have asked your school to do now

- I want your teachers to sort out how they record your progress so the information can be easily understood and will take them less time to collate
- I think that your parents should receive more regular information, perhaps in newsletters, about what goes on in school.

I liked talking to you and watching you learn and wish you well for the future.