



Pool-in-Wharfedale Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 108000
Local Authority Leeds
Inspection number 287990
Inspection date 29 November 2006
Reporting inspector Christine Harrison

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Arthington Lane
School category	Voluntary controlled		Pool-in-Wharfedale, Otley
Age range of pupils	4–11		West Yorkshire LS21 1LG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0113 2843151
Number on roll (school)	175	Fax number	0113 2037852
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr R Claxton Ingham
		Headteacher	Mr R Bumby
Date of previous school inspection	10 February 2003		

Age group	Inspection date	Inspection number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This average sized primary school serves the village of Pool-in-Wharfedale, with a quarter of its pupils coming from nearby Arthington, Otley, Leeds and parts of North Yorkshire. Almost all pupils are White and most are British. The number of pupils who do not speak English as their first language is below average and all pupils speak English fluently. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is well below average. Pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds but, overall, their social circumstances are above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities varies but is currently below average and, at present, there are no pupils with statements of special educational need. The school holds the Gold Activemark and level 1 of the Stephen Lawrence Education Standard for promoting racial equality. The new headteacher has been in post only for a term and a half.

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 where pupils feel safe and happy. Both they and their parents value the quality of education and care that the school provides. As one parent says, reflecting the overwhelmingly positive responses to the parents' questionnaire, 'We are very pleased with all aspects of our daughter's education.'

Children arrive in Reception with standards that are broadly average. The Reception class provides good opportunities for them to develop and achieve, so that by the time they are in Year 1, they have gained ground and standards are starting to rise above those expected nationally. Throughout the school, teaching and learning are good, enabling pupils to build continuously on their progress in earlier years. Hence, by the end of Year 6, standards are above average, pupils' achievement is good and pupils are well prepared for the next stage of education and beyond. Higher-attaining pupils are provided with challenging tasks and many gain the higher Level 5 in tests. Nevertheless, the school is aware that pupils do not make as much progress in writing as they do in other aspects of their work. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are generally well supported and enabled to make good progress alongside others in their class.

The very good relationships between teachers and pupils underpin the good teaching that pupils experience. In particular, teachers are cheerful and encouraging so that pupils enjoy lessons and develop positive attitudes to learning. Teachers are particularly skilful in questioning to ensure that all pupils thoroughly understand the topic. The good curriculum includes all the required subjects, with suitable emphasis on literacy and numeracy, and teachers plan carefully to ensure that subjects are linked in order to get the most learning from them. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 learn Spanish and parents whose first languages are French and German run after-school clubs to introduce pupils to those languages as well as extending their understanding of European culture. Extra-curricular opportunities, including visits, music and drama activities and clubs, are a strength of the school. As a pupil says, 'There's tons of stuff to do.' Pupils are extremely well informed about the need for a healthy lifestyle and eat clementines and carrots enthusiastically at break. School lunches are both appetising and nutritious and receive widespread approval from pupils. The wide range of sports available to all pupils is a real bonus in encouraging regular exercise.

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils say how much they enjoy school, their attendance is good and many arrive enthusiastically to take part in activities from eight o'clock. Behaviour in class is good and pupils are polite and cooperative. However, behaviour in the playground is less impressive and there are a few incidents where pupils do not show enough regard for the needs and feelings of others. The school provides very good care for all pupils, including those who are vulnerable. The tracking of pupils' academic progress is satisfactory.

Leadership and management are good. The new headteacher is very experienced and already knows the strengths and weaknesses of the school and what is needed to make it even better. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection:

pupils' standards in mathematics have improved, along with the facilities for outdoor learning and play. Parents confirm the views of pupils that the school is moving forward quickly. Pupils speak of improved behaviour in lessons and a wider range of opportunities, including more residential experiences. The governing body provides good support and valuable expertise. The school is now well placed to make further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Build on and extend the current efforts to improve writing throughout the school.
- Ensure that all pupils treat each other with sufficient care and respect during break and lunchtime.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are above average and pupils achieve well. They arrive in Reception with standards that are broadly average. They make good progress as they move through the school, largely as a result of consistently good teaching but also because of their own good attitudes to learning. By the time they reach Year 6, they gain better test results than might be expected from their standards when they arrived. Test results dipped in 2005 and pupils' achievement was not as good as it had been in the previous two years, because more pupils than usual had joined the school relatively late in their school career and so did not benefit fully from the good teaching in this school. 2006 results indicate a return to the better achievement of 2003 and 2004. Pupils are currently making good progress, particularly in Years 5 and 6 where good experiences in earlier years are bearing fruit and teaching is particularly effective in motivating them and capturing their interest.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

When pupils arrive in Reception, their social skills are less well developed than their other skills so the school places much emphasis on helping pupils to develop socially. For example, there is extra support for behaviour in the early days and Year 6 pupils provide support and very good examples for the younger pupils. The result is that pupils are generally keen to come to school and want to learn. Even when, occasionally, concentration lapses, good behaviour in lessons is maintained. Pupils feel that their views are listened to and respected and value the work of the People in Partnership committee. They work hard for charities. Pupils are aware from an early age of the need to protect the environment, for example by composting all appropriate waste in the school grounds. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Assemblies are excellent: pupils enjoy them, contribute enthusiastically and, most importantly, remember the messages they convey.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers plan carefully to meet the needs of all groups of pupils, with plenty of challenge for higher attainers and tasks broken down into smaller steps for those who find the work more difficult. Occasionally, teaching is less effective when there is too much emphasis on what pupils do and not enough on how much they actually learn.

Learning support assistants provide skilled and effective support in the classroom and enhance pupils' concentration and learning. Many volunteer helpers also support pupils, notably in helping them to develop their particularly good reading skills. Teachers set good homework tasks, and marking is thorough and helpful to pupils, telling them what they need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum provides pupils with good opportunities to achieve. A few parents are concerned that the school does not always meet the particular needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school is improving the arrangements for these pupils, particularly in targeting and tailoring the support and involving parents more closely. However, it acknowledges that there is still a little way to go in ensuring that every individual pupil has a programme of support that precisely meets their needs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides a high quality of care and pupils are confident that there is always someone to turn to if there are problems. Arrangements for child protection, health and safety and checking staff all meet current requirements. The school works closely with parents, for example in keeping them very well informed about the progress of a recent residential visit. Such reassurance for parents is helpful in building up the partnership that supports pupils' learning. However, the arrangements for tracking pupils' progress, although satisfactory, are not as useful as they might be in gaining an overall picture of pupils' progress as they move through the school, and identifying where things need to be improved.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The new headteacher and the deputy headteacher have quickly formed a strong and effective team and are building on previous strengths. The headteacher has so far had

to teach more lessons than expected and has had little time for formal lesson observation. Nevertheless, the school's self-evaluation of its work is generally accurate and the leadership team has a good understanding of where things could be better. For example, the school is aware that in order to improve learning still further, teachers with responsibility for particular subjects need a more accurate view of the teaching and learning in their subjects. The school improvement plan indicates the training that is being undertaken in order to achieve this.

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

As you know, I visited your school to check how well it is getting on.

Thank you very much for making me feel so welcome and for making my day so enjoyable.

In particular, thank you to those of you who talked to me and told me what you thought about the school.

I agree with you that yours is a good school. Teachers work hard and plan carefully so that you can all learn quickly and make good progress. I very much enjoyed the assembly that I visited, particularly your singing of 'He gave me eyes so I could see'. You told me that you like assemblies and remember them. particularly the one with the caterpillars! I was impressed by how much there is for you to do and I know that you enjoy sports, visits, clubs and all the other extras. You know how to stay healthy, eat very good food at break and lunchtimes and take plenty of exercise, so you have made an excellent start in leading a healthy life.

However, even in a good school, there are some things that could be improved. The headteacher and I agreed that you are not quite as good at writing as you are at other things that you do. I have suggested that teachers do even more to encourage you to improve your writing. I hope that you will do your part and make an extra effort so that your writing is as interesting and accurate as it can be. You told me, and I saw for myself, that some pupils are not always as kind to each other in the playground as they should be. I hope you will try to make sure that nobody feels miserable at playtime.

I wish you all every success in the future.