



Yorkley Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115555
Local Authority Gloucestershire
Inspection number 290256
Inspection dates 20–21 November 2006
Reporting inspector Susan Walsh

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Lydney Road
School category	Community		Yorkley
Age range of pupils	4–11		Lydney GL15 4RR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01594 562201
Number on roll (school)	169	Fax number	01594 563305
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Deborah Gibbons
		Headteacher	Elizabeth Harris
Date of previous school inspection	21 January 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Yorkley Primary School is smaller than average. It mainly serves the local village but some pupils come from farther afield. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is just below the national average. Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above the national average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Yorkley Primary School is a satisfactory but rapidly improving school with important strengths in pupils' personal development. The future's bright! The new extension has provided a spacious classroom and renovations have established a very attractive learning environment and better facilities. Pupils really enjoy school. As one pupil said: 'I don't like school – I love it!' The curriculum has improved and is now good and pupils recognise that learning has become more exciting. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good but their social development is outstanding, as pupils fully understand their responsibilities and are very committed to their school community. This is reflected in their outstanding behaviour. Parents are positive about the school. One parent remarked about the 'family atmosphere' and another said that 'this is a lovely village school.'

Leadership and management are good and have been instrumental in bringing about significant improvements. Very rigorous self-evaluation, underpinned by good monitoring and evaluation, has resulted in the school facing its difficulties and doing something about them. After disappointing Year 6 test results in 2005, which reflected inadequate progress and weaknesses in teaching, the school very sensibly sought external support. Advice has been taken on board and has contributed to very important improvements, especially regarding standards in mathematics. Improvements to teaching of writing have come later and have had less time to impact. Staff are embracing new ideas and are very keen to develop their practice. They are behind the headteacher's huge commitment and exciting vision. Achievement is now satisfactory. Children enter the Foundation Stage with standards that are below average but make good progress because of good teaching and an interesting, good quality curriculum. Pupils enter the Year 1 with standards that are only slightly below average and make satisfactory progress through Key Stage 1. They reach broadly average standards, although standards in writing are below average. Pupils' achievement in Key Stage 2 is now also satisfactory overall, although progress in writing is slow. Standards, overall, are broadly average. Care, support and guidance are good. Pupils' achievement is now carefully tracked and support for underachieving pupils is more carefully focused. The use of targets has improved but the lack of individual targets restricts the achievement of the highest attaining pupils.

Teaching and learning have improved and are now satisfactory. However, the quality of teaching is not consistent and this is reflected in the pupils' uneven achievement. Expectations are not always high enough and work set does not always meet the needs of all pupils, particularly the higher attaining pupils. Marking does not always tell pupils how to improve their work.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and improve achievement in writing.
- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that teachers' expectations are consistently high, that work set matches the needs of all pupils and that marking tells pupils how to improve their work.

- Improve the achievement of higher attaining pupils by providing them with challenging targets.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Although some children arrive in the Reception class confident and articulate, a significant proportion have limited skills in speaking and listening and social development. They make good progress and enter Year 1 with standards which are just below national expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 and achieve standards which are broadly average. The results in national assessments in 2006 show significant improvement from previous years particularly in reading at the end of Year 2 and in mathematics by the end of year 6. Standards in writing remain below average throughout the school and too few pupils achieve at the higher levels in Science.

Standards in writing continued to be below the national average. Pupils' progress was satisfactory overall but inadequate in writing. Pupils' progress in writing, although slow, is improving. They have more opportunities to talk about their work and a very structured approach to writing is helping improve standards. However, there are still weaknesses in presentation, spelling and punctuation. Pupils' progress is uneven. Progress dips in lower Key Stage 2 but pupils catch up because achievement is much better in Years 5 and 6.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Their cultural development is satisfactory; although pupils have an adequate understanding of other cultures, this is limited by the lack of opportunity to meet representatives from other cultures. Outstanding social development results in happy, confident pupils who really enjoy their education. Relationships are very good, and pupils work very well together. Bullying is rare and pupils report that staff quickly resolve any 'falling out'. Pupils make a very good contribution to the school community. The school council is very active and their decisions have had a direct positive effect on the quality of provision. Pupils recognise that lessons are now more exciting, and they want to work hard and achieve. Older pupils especially enjoy their mathematics lessons; as one said, 'Our teacher makes it fun.' Good attendance reflects pupils' enjoyment of school. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe in school and in the community. They value a good diet, and participate enthusiastically in physical activities, including 'Huff and Puff' at lunchtimes. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of education as they are developing a sense of responsibility and very positive attitudes to school. Their key skills in numeracy and ICT are secure and their skills in writing are improving.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, but it has improved significantly recently and there is an increasing amount of good teaching. This is reflected in pupils' improving achievement. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good. Behaviour management is unobtrusive and very effective; this ensures that pupils are ready to learn. Teachers are very good at encouraging pupils' personal development and increasing pupils' confidence. Teaching assistants often provide useful support for pupils who are finding the work difficult but sometimes they do not have enough impact on learning. Many teachers are developing good questioning techniques that draw out pupils' knowledge and understanding and challenge pupils to think hard. Most teachers have high expectations but this is inconsistent. Use of assessment is improving and work is set at a level that meets most pupils' needs but higher attainers are not always consistently challenged. Some marking is highly evaluative but not all marking tells pupils clearly how to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has developed a good curriculum that meets most pupils' needs and interests very well. Advice from external consultants has been built upon and there is now good provision for numeracy. Provision for literacy has recently improved but there has not been time for the changes to fully impact on standards, and the needs of the highest attainers are not always fully met. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved significantly. Pupils now have good access to computers and ICT is used well to support learning in other subjects. The school is very sensitive to the needs of pupils in mixed-age classes and is making sure that pupils do not have to study a topic more than once. A good curriculum for personal, social and health education underpins the pupils' good personal development. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good and enables children to learn through discovery and investigation; however, outdoor activities continue to be restricted by the lack of a specific area for the Reception class. A very good range of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities such as music and sport successfully enriches the curriculum. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about their recent visit where they had dressed up as Vikings.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The level of care and support is good and contributes significantly to pupils' enjoyment of school and good personal development. Staff are very committed to ensuring the pupils' well-being. Procedures to guarantee the pupils' welfare are thorough and well implemented. Vulnerable pupils, including those with learning difficulties, are quickly identified and effectively supported. The Chat club provides good support for those

children who need that extra bit of nurturing. Warm relationships underpin the school's work; pupils know that their views are listened to and respected and this helps them to develop confidence. The tracking of pupils' academic progress is much improved and is allowing the school to focus academic support more effectively. These improvements are reflected in rising standards at the end of Key Stage 2. The setting of targets for groups of pupils has resulted in improved achievement for average pupils but the lack of individual targets for higher attaining pupils restricts their progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management have ensured that the school has significantly improved standards while retaining a caring family atmosphere and pupils' good personal development. Extensive use of experts in their field has resulted in significant improvements to the quality of teaching and learning and the curriculum, and this has led to rising standards in Key Stage 2. This is especially evident in mathematics and improvements are just starting in writing. There is a genuine desire to improve at all levels. The practice of subject coordinators has much improved and they are now having a positive impact on standards in their subjects. The governing body has been firmly behind the school during this tricky time, providing both support and challenge. Good improvements since the last inspection as a result of effective self-evaluation demonstrate the school's good capacity to improve.

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

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	1
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	2
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?	3
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	3
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

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We were very impressed by your outstanding behaviour and very good manners. You work very well together and your school council has been doing a really good job in helping to improve the school. It's good to know that you feel that your teachers listen to you and that your teachers take good care of you.

Your school is satisfactory, but it is clearly getting better and better. We were pleased to hear that you are finding your lessons enjoyable; Year 5 told us that their mathematics lessons are so much fun! It was also good to hear about all the interesting visits and visitors; we enjoyed learning about your recent trip where you learn so much about Vikings.

You are all learning much more in your lessons because teachers are making lessons more interesting and exciting. You are getting much better at reading, mathematics and science. We have asked your teachers to help you to improve your writing. Some of you could help by trying to write neatly, remembering to use the correct punctuation and by learning your spellings. We have also asked your teachers to make sure that all your lessons are good ones and that the work is hard enough for all of you, but especially those of you who are capable of much higher standards. We have asked teachers to set demanding targets for these pupils to make sure they do as well as they can.

We know that you are very proud of your school and are working hard with your teachers to make the school better.

Best wishes for the future.