



Appleton Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 117713
Local Authority Kingston-upon-Hull
Inspection number 290905
Inspection dates 8–9 February 2007
Reporting inspector June Tracey

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Appleton Road
School category	Community		Hull
Age range of pupils	3–11		HU5 4PG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01482 343507
Number on roll (school)	338	Fax number	01482 494318
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr John Smith
		Headteacher	Mrs Mary Langton
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2002		

Age group 3–11	Inspection dates 8–9 February 2007	Inspection number 290905
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Most of the pupils come from two adjoining wards close to the school. The socio-economic situation is better than in some areas of the city but there is still a relatively high level of unemployment and social deprivation. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. None is at the early stage of learning English. When children join the school in the Nursery, their social, language and communication skills are less well developed than is usual for children of their age. The school holds the Basic Skills Quality Mark for the promotion of literacy and numeracy skills. This has been awarded to the school on three successive occasions.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Appleton is a good school. Some aspects of its work are outstanding, for example, the way it enriches pupils' personal development. Parents praised the school heartily in the questionnaires that were returned. One said, 'This is a wonderful school'. Pupils say that they enjoy school. Their response and enthusiasm support the impression of a happy and fair-minded community in which every pupil has a part to play. This is due in no small part to energetic leadership that is backed up by a dedicated team of teaching and non-teaching staff.

On entry to the school, children settle quickly into routines. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good but there is scope for more overlap in the planning when children move into Year 1. This is because the youngest children spend only one term in the Reception class so their approach to learning in a structured way is not as well developed as that of the older children in the year group. The school safeguards pupils well and promotes healthy habits by encouraging and rewarding examples of good practice. Pupils are nurtured to have confidence in their ability to achieve personal goals. Some pupils demonstrated tenacity when they explained that their achievements so far were only the first steps on the road to an ambition for the future. Teachers and other staff are good role models. Relationships are meaningful and respectful. Pupils know what is expected of them and from a young age they are encouraged to take on responsibility. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils play a very significant part in helping the school to run smoothly. They behave well, are very considerate and respond eagerly to the many opportunities provided for extra-curricular activities. Music and sport are popular. Both add to pupils' all-round spiritual and physical development. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on the past and look to the future, as exemplified by a walk down the main corridor. Here, black and white photographs of the local area in days past are accompanied by questions that test pupils' observational skills and encourage them to seek answers from sources outside the school. This, together with explicit evidence of pupils' involvement in the national Young Enterprise scheme, indicates that pupils are getting a good introduction to social and economic issues that have a direct bearing on their future.

Teaching is good. It leads to good progress and above average standards in Key Stages 1 and 2. The school's very good assessment system has identified some inconsistency in progress in Key Stage 2. Middle ability pupils have not always made as much progress as they could in Years 3 and 4. This is listed as a priority in the current action plan, along with further improvement in writing. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well because their exact needs are diagnosed early and met effectively.

Good leadership and management drive this school forward. It knows itself well and is enterprising in selecting initiatives that are likely to have a direct effect on pupils' standards and achievement. The school has the capacity to sustain and extend the good improvement since the previous inspection.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the consistency of progress of middle ability pupils in Key Stage 2, particularly in Years 3 and 4.
- Develop further the links between the Foundation Stage and Year 1 to promote smooth progression in children's learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and standards are above average. Pupils achieve well. Children make rapid progress in the Foundation Stage. The majority reach, and sometimes exceed, the early learning goals for their age by the end of the Reception year. Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1. Language and communication skills improve so pupils become more confident in their learning. Standards as measured by end of key stage assessments in Year 2 are consistently above average. In 2006, the proportion of pupils exceeding the levels expected for their age was above the national average, significantly so in mathematics. The school sustains this above average level of attainment throughout Key Stage 2 so that standards in Year 6 as measured by the national tests have also been consistently above average and sometimes well above average. In 2006, overall results were significantly above the national average. Higher ability pupils achieve very well. The school exceeded its target for pupils attaining Level 5 in 2006, but did not meet its targets for pupils attaining Level 4. This was partly because the targets were very ambitious. In addition, some pupils at the lower end of the middle ability range did not make as much progress as they should have done in Years 3 and 4. Although they made good progress in Years 5 and 6, this did not fully compensate for the ground lost in the earlier years. The school's current action plan focuses on ensuring that all pupils make consistent progress year-on-year. Writing is also a key point for action in the teachers' planning.

The school's vigorous approach to analysing pupils' progress and taking action where necessary underpins its success in helping pupils to achieve their potential. Boys and girls do equally well. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well because the school's systems are adapted to teaching them in ways that are flexible and responsive to their specific needs. Minority ethnic pupils make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. Central to this is the school's aim to build pupils' self-esteem, confidence and social skills. Pupils have trust in the school to help them achieve as well as they can. This starts in the Foundation Stage and is evident throughout the school. Pupils really enjoy school, as shown by their good attendance, punctuality and the absence of exclusions. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles, participate highly in extra-curricular activities and show good awareness of safety issues. They

accept responsibilities and display the tenacity to see them through over long periods of time. Older pupils demonstrate increasing maturity, such as when acting as coaches for younger pupils with their reading. Allegations of bullying are very few and dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils are proud of their good behaviour and the fact that it promotes high quality learning. They feel safe, know what to do if they have a problem and are confident in doing so. Their spiritual awareness is awakened by the school's conscious effort to focus on sensory issues. Typical of this is the excellent, spiritually moving display in the entrance hall of an African landscape at sunset.

Pupils' ability to transfer skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology to other subjects is good preparation for the future. They are developing a good sense of what it means to be a responsible citizen through the personal, social and health education programme. By representation on the school council, pupils consider what is best for the school as a whole, whether or not it is what they want as individuals. As a result, they are beginning to understand what it means to be an upright member of a community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers' enthusiasm is infectious so pupils enjoy learning, particularly when they are engaged in 'hands-on' and collaborative activities. The school is fully committed to involvement in the TALK project and the impact of this was obvious in the lessons observed. For example, pupils often reasoned, argued and came to decisions for themselves before involving the teacher. Teachers are training pupils well to keep their personal targets in mind, both in oral and written work. Marking is meaningful because pupils can see how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve. Teachers are flexible in their approach to planning for lessons. They modify weekly and daily plans to take account of pupils' progress, or lack of progress, in previous lessons. This planning, together with work in the small 'intervention groups', maintains the momentum for individual pupils and raises their self-confidence. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to lessons. They complement the work of the teacher so that, between them, they provide good support for pupils' academic and personal development. When lessons move at a fast pace and teachers use a wide range of strategies, pupils' maintain interest and rise to the challenge of completing work within set deadlines. The pace of learning in some otherwise satisfactory lessons, is not as brisk. These lessons lack the sense of urgency that exudes from the good lessons. In the Foundation Stage, there is a good balance of adult-led and free-choice play activities. This provides well for children to learn through playing, sharing and talking to each other whilst being eased into more structured, formal learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets pupils' needs well and satisfies statutory requirements. Literacy and numeracy are given high priority and significant progress has been made in these areas over recent years. The identification of small groups for short, sharp bursts of intensive teaching in English and mathematics is moving pupils on. The school is innovative and far-sighted in its planning. The overlapping of provision across subjects and age groups in Key Stages 1 and 2 encourages pupils to transfer skills and to cross-reference learning. There are good links between the planning for the Nursery and the Reception class, but less so between the Reception class and Year 1.

The provision for extra-curricular opportunities is extensive, although more so for the older pupils. The school positively encourages pupils to be ambitious, for example, by arranging for them to visit high schools and colleges in the local vicinity to raise their aspirations.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. The safeguarding of pupils has high priority and procedures are well known by all staff. Child protection procedures and risk assessments are carried out responsibly. Parents are kept well informed of their children's progress and they are involved in the setting of targets for pupils in Years 2 and 6. The targets are meaningful, exemplified by the fact that pupils talk about their success in achieving them. Parents are invited to class assemblies and opportunities are provided for them to remain in school for workshop sessions. As a result, they are enabled to support their children's learning at home. Pupils are confident that there is always an adult they could turn to if they needed help. Guidance for pupils in their academic work is good, backed up by a very good assessment system that keeps all staff informed regularly of the progress of individual pupils. As a result, pupils with moderate or severe learning difficulties and disabilities receive timely support when their needs are diagnosed.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership, management and governance are good. The strong and proactive leadership team, spearheaded by the headteacher, drives the school forward on many fronts simultaneously. Good consultation and discussion with the staff lead to accurate self-evaluation and decisive action. This impinges directly on pupils' progress. It is currently enabling Key Stage 2 pupils of middle ability to make better progress. Teaching and non-teaching staff are united and knowledgeable about what needs to be done to raise standards. Professional development and training are targeted on the key priorities in the 2006/07 school improvement plan. Management for the development of literacy and numeracy skills is well established and effective, as

demonstrated by pupils' ability to apply these skills across the whole curriculum. Leadership of some areas of learning is relatively new so there is the scope for further development, for instance, in the Foundation Stage. There has been a good start to these developments. Governors support the school actively and challenge its actions. They have a good understanding of what it does well and where further improvements are possible. Finances are spent prudently.

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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?	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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
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	1

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	1
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

Appleton Primary School

Appleton Road

Hull

HU5 4PG

9 February 2007

Dear Pupils

Thank you for your welcome and for talking to us so openly about your school. Judging by what you told us we think that you must really enjoy coming to school. We agree that you have reason to value the success that the school helps you to achieve, not just in your academic work but in every other aspect of your personal development.

What impressed us in the two days we spent with you? Initially, it was the way you set about getting down to the day's work. The school assembly gave us a good insight into what you think about yourselves and your future. We were very impressed with the conviction with which you said 'I can' when you thought about the personal targets you had set yourselves for this half-term. It didn't matter whether these were short or long-term goals, only that you were honest in assessing whether you were making steps towards achieving them. Those of you who stood up and talked about this were brave. By opening up your thoughts to others you encouraged them to realise that some goals may take years to achieve, but are worth striving for. We came to the conclusion that you achieve well by the time that you leave the school because you behave well and respond properly to your teachers' hard work and planning for your learning. They want you to develop into good citizens with the education and consideration for others that will make life better for society as a whole. This means thinking about worldwide issues as well as those in your local community.

Your headteacher and staff are anxious that all of you should achieve as well as you can. Most of you do, but your progress is not always consistent year-on-year. Records show that in recent years some of you in the middle groups have not made as much progress as you could have done in Years 3 and 4. Your teachers are now checking your progress very carefully each term to see that you all achieve as well as you can all of the time. You must play your part too by working hard, especially with your writing which is fundamental to your ability to communicate with others and get the most out of life. Your teachers will also be developing further the links between the Foundation Stage and Year 1 so that there is smooth progression in learning for all children at this very important stage.

Thank you once again and very best wishes for your future success!

Yours sincerely

June Tracey

Lead Inspector