

Northfield Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117916
Local Authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	290966
Inspection dates	22–23 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Jackie Barnes

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	106
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Berridge
Headteacher	Mrs Lynn Wilson
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2003
School address	Southfield Close Driffield YO25 5YN
Telephone number	01377 257487
Fax number	01377 272112

Age group	4–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is situated on the edge of a small town in an area of mainly owner-occupied housing. The amount of rented property continues to decrease as residents buy their local authority houses. Numbers on roll have fallen in recent years broadly in line with the national trend. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and the school population is stable. The proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal is below average. On entry to school in the Reception class, children's attainment is about as expected for their age. There is a slightly below average number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, with a higher than average number with statements of special educational need.

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, which has the confidence of its parents, above average standards and good teaching. It has a family atmosphere, with staff who take great care of the pupils and encourage them to feel confident, safe and successful. Pupils' personal development is good. They behave very well, make friends and are keen to learn. They have fun at break-times every day, using the school's interesting natural areas and the dedicated play spaces, which pupils have helped to equip. Their enjoyment of learning is well supported by the school's good curriculum, which includes drama, sports events and occasional days that have a special theme; such as dressing as a character from a book they have studied. The curriculum and day to day practice in the school effectively develop pupils' knowledge of how to stay safe and healthy, and the school has recently received an award for encouraging healthy eating.

Pupils' positive attitudes to learning, the systematic teaching of basic skills and well targeted support for individuals make a major contribution to their good achievement. Most have had pre-school experience before they enter the Reception class although there is considerable variety in what individual pupils know and can do. They settle well and make good progress, particularly in their personal development and mathematical skills. By the time they enter Year 1, almost all are working securely at the levels expected for their age and many exceed these. Good progress continues for the next two years, especially for those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who make excellent progress, and by the end of Year 2 the school's overall results in national assessments are significantly above average. The best results are in reading and mathematics, with results in writing being lower, especially for boys, but still above average overall.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. In Year 1, where excellent use is made of a large open area to enable the staff to teach small groups of pupils at different stages of learning, there are examples of outstanding teaching. Throughout the school, lessons are carefully prepared with good use of resources to keep pupils motivated. Pupils' learning is at its best when their tasks are practical and when interactive white boards are used to illustrate the teaching points and reinforce their understanding. Staff have a good understanding of assessment and are generally accurate in their judgements on the standards pupils attain. Less secure are the school's systems for checking pupils' progress, and this occasionally results in lack of progress by individual pupils not being quickly recognised.

The school is well led and managed by an experienced headteacher and knowledgeable governors who take an active interest in the school's improvement. The leadership's focus is clearly on promoting high attainment within a happy school. The generally rigorous procedures for checking the school's effectiveness are well supported by wide ranging consultation, including parents and pupils. Most staff have leadership responsibilities, which they undertake conscientiously, and several have developed successful innovations in teaching and learning. The school has a good capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve boys' progress in writing especially for those close to average and above average standards.
- Use assessment information more rigorously and frequently to check the pace of pupils' progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children enter the Reception class with widely differing levels of attainment. A small number are very capable, and a similar number enter with skills and knowledge that are below the expectations for their age. The school's approach to enabling every pupil to develop to the best of their ability begins from the time they start school. It works successfully and culminates in above average standards by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. Within this overall positive picture there is some variability. For example, in mathematics standards are high. In the school's 2006 national assessments for mathematics all pupils attained at least the level expected for their age and nearly half attained higher. In writing, however, not all pupils, especially boys, make quite enough progress. This is mainly because the school's approach to developing writing is not consistent and pupils tend not to have enough opportunities to use writing skills in different forms. The school's national assessment results, although still above average, have reflected this slight dip for the last two years. The systems for checking pupils' progress do not always identify this slowing in progress early enough. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well supported, enjoy learning and most achieve exceptionally well in reading and mathematics.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are well behaved, confident and positive in their attitudes to learning. Social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. Their personal skills are developed well in the Reception class and they continue throughout the school. By Year 2, most are sensible and quite independent. The positive support and encouragement for every individual that is common throughout is a major factor in the school's family atmosphere. Pupils say they have confidence that they will receive help if they need it and they can go to any adult if they have a problem. They know how to deal with bullying but say it is a rare event and quickly dealt with. Parents confirm their children enjoy school and they also have confidence that they are safe. Most pupils' attendance is similar to national figures. Good standards in basic skills also contribute to pupils' future well being, as does their ability to work co-operatively with others and their experiences of organising events and handling finance. They are well aware of the decisions they need to make at their age in order to stay safe and healthy, and particularly enjoy the physical activities the school provides.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is good. Carefully prepared lessons with interesting resources motivate pupils and systematically develop their basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Staff have good subject knowledge and share their expertise through a sensible and effective programme of specialist teaching, which ensures they each maintain sufficient contact with their registration class. Staff know their pupils well. Pupils' behaviour is well managed, and the excellent relationships underpin pupils' confidence to participate in class discussions and to ask questions when learning in small groups. The Year 1 staff, including teaching assistants, work as a team to plan and manage the pupils' learning. This enables pupils to be taught frequently in small

groups with teaching and tasks that are well matched to their stage of learning. In this context, there are regular examples of outstanding teaching and learning, as teacher and pupils discuss the teaching points and the dialogue moves learning on at a brisk pace. Throughout the school, staff regularly assess pupils' standards of attainment. They also check and record pupils' day by day achievements frequently and often use this information to plan the next activity. However, pupils' overall progress towards the school's targets is not as rigorously checked, and occasionally this results in some slow progress not being identified soon enough.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets statutory requirements and has well integrated provision for personal development. It is enhanced with visits and visitors, and a good range of after school clubs and sporting activities that add much to the pupils' enjoyment. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is part of the school's daily life and enables them to make very good progress. The experiences of the more able pupils, especially in mathematics, generally enable them to attain well, but in some aspects, particularly writing, some are not yet sufficiently challenged by the curriculum provision. The innovative arrangements in Year 1 to enable pupils of all abilities to make the best of the curriculum are very effective.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The staff take excellent care of the pupils' welfare and safety. The school's systems for safeguarding are conscientiously undertaken and meet current government guidelines. Pupils say they feel safe and parents agree. Support for all pupils is good; with teaching assistants contributing effectively to learning, especially for those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who get much extra help. Pupils respond very well to the good quality guidance on personal development and to individual discussions with teachers on achievement in lessons. In their books, guidance through marking work is at an early stage and not yet fully linked to their targets or to the subsequent tasks they are given.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is well led by an experienced headteacher and a governing body that is well informed and committed to school improvement. Good progress has been made since the last inspection despite the challenge of staff redundancies. The provision for pupils' personal development is good and the school's drive for high attainment is mainly successful. Parents are fully supportive of the school and the impact on pupils' learning. The arrangements for teaching and learning are well managed and carefully monitored. The school's self-evaluation is sufficiently accurate to support planning for the future and takes account of a wide range of views. Subject leadership in English and mathematics is strong and there is high expectations for attainment in those subjects. The school provides good value for money.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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	1

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	3
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?	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.

Annex A

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

24 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Northfield Infant School, Driffield, YO25 5YN

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school. You helped me to see how well behaved you are, and how much you enjoy your work and your friends. You are very confident and able to look after yourselves. You trust your teachers to help you if you have problems, and you say you feel safe in school. The good teaching you have helps you to do the best you can. I was very pleased to see how successful you are at reading and mathematics and what good progress you make in each class. You know about how to keep healthy and safe, and you look after each other especially in the playground.

Although you are good at writing, I think the boys can do even better. So I have asked your headteacher and governors to help boys develop their skills and give them plenty of opportunity to write. Your teachers will also help by checking that your progress does not slow down and you have just the right level of challenge to help you. I know you will help too by keeping up your good behaviour and trying to achieve your targets as quickly as you can.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Barnes

Lead inspector