



Drifffield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 117974
Local Authority East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number 290984
Inspection date 16 November 2006
Reporting inspector Eric Jackson

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	St John's Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Drifffield
Age range of pupils	4-7		YO25 6RS
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01377 253094
Number on roll (school)	224	Fax number	01377 272229
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Elizabeth Gooch
		Headteacher	Mrs Janet Spencer
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Drifffield Church of England Infant is a large school for its type. Pupils attend from a wide area. Almost all the pupils are White British, with very small numbers of pupils of White European, minority ethnic and mixed heritage. Pupils' attainment at entry is broadly average, as are socio-economic conditions locally. Smaller numbers of pupils than are usual in a school this size are identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has achieved a number of national awards, including the Silver Artsmark, Healthy School and Investors in People status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Drifffield Church of England Infant is an excellent school, better than its own cautious self-evaluation suggests. Pupils' academic achievement and personal development are outstanding, as are the staff's care, guidance and support for them. The atmosphere for learning created by the staff is highly effective in encouraging pupils really to enjoy what they do, and to make very good progress. This leads to well above average standards in reading and mathematics and good standards in writing in Year 2 national tests. Children in the Reception classes make good and sometimes excellent progress, and achieve above expected levels by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils also achieve very well in other subjects such as science, art and design, music and dance. One parent summarised many parents' views in writing, 'The standards of education, behaviour and the premises are all excellent. My child loves school and is very, very happy!'

The quality of teaching is always good and often excellent. It is based directly on children's needs through detailed planning, providing a rich and varied diet for learning from Reception to Year 2. The pupils learn well how to be safe and lead healthy lifestyles. The indoor and outdoor learning areas have been improved further since the last inspection, so that they provide even more stimulating and exciting opportunities to learn and play. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) are fully included and make good, and sometimes very good, progress, as do those who are learning English as an additional language. Able, gifted or talented pupils are also challenged effectively to reach high levels.

Pupils' personal development is excellent, founded in strong working relationships and attitudes at all levels in the school. Pupils behave very well, and show active pleasure in the interesting and challenging activities planned by the staff. For example, walking through the indoor play area on a wet morning risked being surrounded by small, growling, costumed 'bears', fully in role and having the time of their lives. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Year 2 pupils make a valuable contribution to the school and wider community, and are well prepared to continue their education in junior school.

'We have an excellent headteacher who knows all the children and cares for them as if they were her own.' This parental comment typifies many. The headteacher leads the school with energetic confidence, motivating and inspiring staff, pupils, governors and parents. Other senior teachers complement her skills superbly so that leadership and management focus the school's work directly on the pupils' well-being and achievement. The rest of the staff, including support, administrative and other staff contribute well to the high quality of educational provision, overseen well by governors. The school gives excellent value for money, and is very well placed to continue to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing by encouraging pupils to write regularly and often, using more of their own ideas.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils' achievement is excellent and standards are above average. Children make a very good start in Reception, and quickly learn the well-organised routines. All the children make good progress so that most have achieved, and some are working beyond, the expected levels when they move to Year 1. New outdoor facilities have improved opportunities for outdoor learning for all children in Reception, including for physical development. Pupils' good and often very good progress builds well on Reception achievement in Years 1 and 2. High standards in reading by the end of Year 2 have been a strength for some years. Mathematics test results were also significantly above average in 2005 and 2006. Standards in writing have varied, and fell from significantly above average levels in 2005 to above average in 2006. Girls achieve higher levels than boys, but boys and girls outperform boys and girls nationally. A real strength of the school is pupils' high achievement across the curriculum. For example, Year 2 pupils used well-developed historical understanding thoughtfully to decide which of a wide range of communication opportunities would have been available in 1666 to report the Great Fire of London.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is excellent, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Their well-being is the very centre of the school's Christian mission. Pupils add to the great atmosphere set by the staff with their good attendance, smiling friendliness and lively but very good behaviour. Children in Reception make very good progress in managing themselves and developing their social skills. The school has welcomed the national focus on helping pupils to be safe and develop healthy lifestyles, earning the Healthy School Award and the Heartbeat Award for school meals. It is also working towards 'ECO' school status, and the pupils are aware of their important role in caring for the environment. Older pupils have a range of jobs that help them contribute well to the community, including as School Councillors. The school has achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark three times, and pupils are well prepared for the transition to junior school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

A parent wrote, 'I feel that my child has gone from Reception to University in three years at this school.' Many other parents agree that the staff help their children learn extremely well, exceeding their expectations. Underpinning this very good learning are thorough and specific curricular and lesson plans. These are translated into enjoyable but challenging activities for the pupils. The strength of the working

relationships between staff, between them and the pupils, and among the pupils allows lessons to flow like a river of progress. There is a sense of controlled excitement throughout the day, in class and in the playground. The teaching of English and mathematics is very good, and innovative practices are being adopted to improve boys' writing in collaboration with other local schools. This is timely as, while good, it was the weakest aspect of performance in the 2006 tests.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school provides an excellent and very exciting curriculum from Reception to Year 2. There is a strong focus on personal development and learning core skills in reading, writing and mathematics. The wider curriculum is also rich and varied, with learning carefully planned in themes to help pupils to connect their developing ideas through information and communication technology, art and design, music, and other subjects. Teachers understand that learning through play and practical activities are very important for younger pupils, and they organise tasks to promote an investigative approach to finding out. This is based in a very good understanding of what the pupils need to do next to improve. Parents also commented on the value of the provision for extra clubs such as French, and activities such as gym after school, and how this extends their children's quality of education.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are excellent. Reception children are very well supported when they first join the school and parents comment on how quickly they are settled. The whole staff work together to look after the pupils and procedures to safeguard pupils are in place. Support staff ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress towards their individual targets. Those few pupils learning English as an additional language are well supported to make good progress. Indeed, a member of the support staff has recently attended extra training to equip her to help these pupils further. Systems for keeping an overview of pupils' progress are very good, covering all aspects of their learning. The school's business manager has prepared a database that records this information so that it is easily accessible for staff to influence their planning of the next steps in pupils' learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are excellent. A parent wrote, 'The school is a lovely place which makes learning fun and every child is made to feel special.' The inspection confirms this view. Central to this success are the staff, led very competently by the headteacher. She is an excellent leader who keeps staff, governors and parents very-well informed, setting high expectations for everyone's work. Other senior staff also have a strong influence on the high quality of the school's provision. The excellent

atmosphere for learning generated by the staff is recognised and welcomed by the good governing body, which is closely involved in monitoring the school's work. The school's self-evaluation is very good and leads to an agenda for improvement that is specific and accurate, and one with which the inspector agrees. Improvement since the last inspection has been excellent, including major improvements in standards and to the indoor and outdoor environments. The headteacher encourages very good developmental links with other schools and institutions. For example, the local council has adopted the pupils' 'Robbie the Robot' model as its recycling logo.

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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
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	1
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

Drifffield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Infant School

St John's Road

Drifffield

YO25 6RS

20 November 2006

Dear Children

Thank you for looking after me when I visited you last week. I enjoyed myself, but it's the first time I have nearly been attacked by growling bears in a school!

You will remember that my job is to check how well your school looks after you and helps you to learn. I think that you are very lucky children to have such a good school, and I know that you and your parents think the same.

The staff care for you really well, and make sure that there is always someone to help you if you need it. They help you to learn to read, write and do mathematics very well, and they also give you lots of chances to paint, dance, play, bake, speak French, sing, and make models.....

You help the staff by behaving very well and trying hard with your work.

You also know how to be safe and healthy, and I think your 'ECO' club is great – those plants should look good when they grow, and it is for a good cause.

I have asked the staff to let you write more about things you want to write about, using your own ideas, to help you improve your stories and written work. From all the good ideas you shared with me, I'm sure you will do this well.

Thank you again, and I hope you enjoy a lovely time at Christmas.

Mr Jackson

(Lead Inspector)