



Mount Pleasant Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 117982
Local Authority East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number 290989
Inspection dates 14–15 September 2006
Reporting inspector Geoffrey Yates

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Princess Road Market Weighton, York East Riding of Yorkshire, YO43 3BY
School category	Voluntary controlled	Telephone number	01430 873338
Age range of pupils	7–11	Fax number	01430 873338
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Chair	Mr John Bralant
Number on roll (school)	227	Headteacher	Mr Ian Merryweather
Appropriate authority	The governing body		
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
7–11	14–15 September 2006	290989

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

An average sized junior school serving a rural area of mostly private housing. Almost all its pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion eligible for free school meals is below the national average. There are a small number of looked-after children. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. On entry into Year 3 the school's evidence shows pupils' attainment to be broadly average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school judges its overall effectiveness to be good and inspection findings agree. It has successfully addressed issues raised by a period of falling standards and these are now rising. Pupils make good progress and achieve well. The school has compelling evidence to demonstrate that pupils are attaining above average levels in English, mathematics and science, with higher attainers achieving well. This has been achieved as a result of improvements to teaching and the curriculum. For example, the introduction of teaching groups based on pupils' prior attainment has improved standards, and gender issues have been successfully tackled. Pupils have been given plenty of opportunities to write for different purposes and as a result, writing standards have risen. The opportunity provided for children to link art work with that done in mathematics has substantially improved pupils' mathematical skills and also their enjoyment of the subject.

The good curriculum is enhanced by an outstanding range of clubs and activities outside normal lessons that contribute to pupils' enjoyment of school. Teaching and learning are of a good quality. Teachers work well together to improve their teaching and raise standards. They readily acknowledge that the major emphasis placed on raising standards in English was to the detriment of mathematics but this issue has now been addressed. However, in mathematics and science, insufficient work is set to ensure that pupils have enough opportunities to use mathematical problem-solving skills and skills of scientific investigation. The good support provided for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities ensures that they achieve well as do the small number of looked-after children. Parents rightly feel that the school meets their children's needs. One parent commented, 'This is a very caring school, working hard towards children's progress.'

The outcomes of the school's provision relating to the 'Every Child Matters' agenda are of a good quality. Pupils have a good understanding of the need to keep healthy and the daily queue at the healthy food 'tuck' shop bears witness to their enthusiasm to eat healthily. Children like school and this is demonstrated by their good attendance and the high level of involvement in extra-curricular activities. Opportunities for pupils to act as mentors to other children and to be school's council members ensure that they develop the skills to enable them to make a positive contribution to the school community. Children say they feel safe in and around school and show a high degree of care for each other. Their above average skills in information and communication technology (ICT), English and mathematics mean they are developing well the skills needed for economic well-being.

The school provides good value for money. The headteacher leads by example and has the support of an active and knowledgeable governing body. Good leadership and management mean that the school has an accurate view of its overall effectiveness. The school knows where it is going and the inspection findings did not identify anything the school was not alert to. For example, it is aware that effective use is not made of assessment information to set sharply focused targets to help individual pupils improve their work. The school's capacity to improve is good because it examines its performance

carefully and takes action to make things better. This is exemplified by the positive and highly appropriate action taken to improve writing standards and girls' performance in mathematics.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use assessment information to set specific, individual targets to help pupils improve on their previous best.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical problem-solving skills and scientific investigative skills in order to raise standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The overall attainment of pupils joining school in Year 3 is broadly average. Progress is good and inspection evidence demonstrates that all groups of pupils achieve well during their time at the school.

Standards attained by pupils in national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2005 were above average in English, average in science but below average in mathematics, with girls' performance below average in mathematics. In English, more able pupils did particularly well which reflects improvements to teaching and the curriculum. For example, there are more opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills with much of the work produced of an exceptional quality. The school realised that the emphasis placed on English meant that standards in mathematics had been neglected and successfully addressed this issue. As a result, standards in mathematics in the 2006 National Curriculum tests improved with no gender differences and no particular group of pupils underachieving. Initiatives such as teaching girls in a single gender group and providing a broader range of experiences led to higher standards. The standards in English were similar to those in 2005.

The school has compelling evidence that suggests that the momentum of recent improvements has continued with pupils in English, mathematics and science expected to reach above average standards in the 2007 National Curriculum tests. As such, the less than satisfactory progress highlighted in previous years has been addressed successfully with all pupils now making good progress throughout school and achieving well, particularly in English. The good use made of assessment information, especially with regard to improving the progress girls make, the organisation of teaching groups based on prior attainment and accurate moderation of results on entry from the Infant school are key reasons as to why progress and standards have improved.

The school has not rested on its laurels and is rightly working to improve further pupils' mathematical problem-solving skills and also their skills in carrying out scientific investigations. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and make good progress. This is because the work they are asked to do is matched to their needs and the school's inclusion policy ensures that they are involved in all activities.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal development and well-being of pupils are good. Pupils benefit enormously from the distinct Christian ethos the school provides. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good. The school has worked hard to improve multicultural provision which is now satisfactory and rightly recognise that still more needs to be done. Pupils have good spiritual, moral and social awareness. They know the difference between right and wrong, respect their teachers and each other, and understand how people from other cultures perceive the world. Their cultural development is enriched by a range of activities and visits, particularly those linked to environmental issues. Pupils are keen to accept responsibility and take an active part in the running of the school, for example, by being members of the school council. This results in pupils quickly becoming responsible members of the school community.

Older pupils mediate conflict situations well in the playground and, as a result, small squabbles do not escalate. Pupils love school and attendance levels are above average. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and appreciate the strong focus school has on promoting a healthy and safe lifestyle. The school's Sports Activemark and environmental (Eco) status ensure that pupils are well prepared to become healthy, safe and environmentally aware adults. The pupils confidently run small budgets, organise fetes, musical entertainments and raise money for charities. Recently they have improved their play area by planting shrubs in a butterfly garden.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is good and as a result, pupils make good progress and their learning needs are met. A major strength of teaching is the emphasis placed on developing pupils' writing skills. As a result, there is good quality writing for a range of purposes in most subjects. Work is planned well and teachers have good relationships with pupils which contribute to good class management. Good use is made of teaching groups that are based on prior achievement in order to raise standards. The work done in these groups is highly effective. Teaching is well paced, there are high expectations of pupils and activities are well prepared and interesting. A good feature of teaching is the good use made of ICT in other subjects of the curriculum. Most teachers share learning intentions with pupils and tell them what they need to do to improve when they mark work, but this is not consistent throughout the school. Good improvements since the last inspection have been made to the teaching of science and mathematics.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. While inspectors agree that the extra-curricular provision is outstanding, they disagree with the school's judgement that the curriculum as a whole is outstanding. This is because there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use their problem-solving skills in mathematics and science. Curriculum strengths include the many and varied opportunities for pupils to use their writing and ICT skills. As a result, standards in writing and ICT are above average. Pupils gain some understanding of life in other cultures through activities such as those experienced in the 'multicultural day'.

The well structured programme of personal and social education helps pupils to stay safe and healthy and prepares them well for the future. Almost all pupils take part in environmental activities and the many musical and sporting events. Pupils greatly appreciate all that is available to them. One child offered the opinion, 'you are spoiled for choice!' The school has good links with local industry, which enhance the pupils' economic awareness. The school is resourced well but the library stock is rather sparse.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good care, support and guidance for pupils and, as a result, pupils' personal development and their achievements are good. The school's Christian ethos ensures an environment for learning that is highly supportive. Pupils are happy, feel safe and get on well with each other. They know that they can turn to adults for help and say that they are listened to and treated fairly. Appropriate arrangements for ensuring child protection and health and safety are in place. Looked-after children are cared for well. Good procedures for dealing with any absence help to ensure good attendance. Good partnerships with parents and the agencies which support learning help to ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. Good relations with partner infant and secondary schools mean that pupils are supported well when they move between the schools.

The school has good systems to collect data about pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science but the whole-school approach to its effective use in setting targets for pupils is too general and takes insufficient account of each pupil's prior achievement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is well led and managed. As such, pupils are supported well and current standards are above average. A major strength of the school is the way in which all pupils feel valued and are included in everything the school offers. The headteacher leads the school well. Teachers at all levels are involved in the management of the school. In their role as coordinators, they set clear directions for improvement and

regularly monitor the development of their subjects. This is combined with a programme of observations by the headteacher and provides a comprehensive picture of how planning and teaching strategies are carried out. A good example of how effective this has been is the whole-school focus on writing, which led to standards well above average.

Governance is of high quality. The governors know the school well and are quick to identify possible concerns. Governors have correctly assessed the work of the school and identify its priorities for future development. The whole process of school self-evaluation has involved all members of staff and parents. It has resulted in an overview of the work of the school, which was largely confirmed by inspectors. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

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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 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	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.

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

The Pupils

Mount Pleasant Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior School

Princess Road

Market Weighton

York

East Riding of Yorkshire

YO43 3BY

17 September 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you for helping me during the inspection. I would like to tell you about my findings. You will not be surprised to know that I found many good things out about your school. The writing you do is some of the best I have seen. I enjoyed being in your school, watching you learn and talking to you. You are very fortunate to have the excellent healthy food tuck-shop. The list below shows some of the many things I liked about your school.

- You work hard.
- The school's council members past and present enjoy having a say in what goes on in your school.
- You use your writing and ICT skills very well and that should help you to get a good job in the future.
- You like your headteacher, teachers and other members of staff and the way they make learning exciting.
- Teachers expect you to behave well and work hard. All the adults in school work very hard to care for you.
- You enjoy the visits you make to different places and the many clubs after school.

We have asked your teachers to look at a few things to make your work even better.

- To make sure they help you improve further by giving you targets that allow you to see how to make your work even better.
- To provide you with more challenging opportunities to use your number skills in solving mathematical problems.
- To give you more opportunities to carry out scientific investigations.

Yours sincerely

Geoffrey Yates

Lead Inspector