

Sledmere Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118028
Local Authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	291001
Inspection date	13 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Joe Clark

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	44
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Diann Atkin
Headteacher	Mr Tim Brenchley
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2002
School address	Sledmere Driffield YO25 3XP
Telephone number	01377 236267
Fax number	01377 236267

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Sledmere School is smaller than average. There are more girls than boys in the school, which serves a wide rural community. Children come from mixed social backgrounds. The proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal is below average. Children's attainment at entry to the reception class is average. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. All children are of White British heritage and all speak English as their main language. There is a part-time, separately funded Peri-nursery attached to the school.

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 with some outstanding features. Children's personal development, particularly their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent, reflecting the school's strong Christian values. Attendance is well above average and children enjoy coming to school. Standards of behaviour and attitudes to learning are exceptional. The quality of relationships between children, teachers and other adults, and the care and support the school provides for children, are of very high quality.

Children enjoy coming to school because they are well taught and find the lessons interesting with tasks well matched to their needs. Consequently, they learn well and achieve well. Younger children in mixed age classes are often challenged to do the harder work set for the older children and this speeds up the rate at which they make progress. The Foundation Stage provides children with a good start to their learning and by the end of the Reception standards are in line with national expectations. Standards at the end of Year 6 are significantly above average, particularly in English and science. Standards in writing have been a target for improvement recently and are now very high. In mathematics, though still above average overall, standards are not as high, especially in calculation work. Attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) at the end of Year 6 is average, not better because its curriculum is not well embedded in all classes.

The curriculum supports children's achievement well. Enrichment is good. The school works hard to ensure that children, most of who come from small rural communities, experience the life and culture of larger, more urban areas. Links with other institutions are excellent, particularly with the six local rural primary schools, known as the Waggoners Cluster of Schools. Children talk knowledgeably about the importance of healthy eating and keeping fit. They are eager to take on responsibility and their contribution to the life of the community, for example, in the local parish, is good. Good links exist with the local business community and other institutions.

The school is successful because the good leadership of the headteacher, supported by an effective governing body, ensures that the focus of its work is on how well children achieve. He provides clear direction and ensures that challenging targets set for the end of Year 6 tests are consistently achieved. There is good capacity to improve further. Management is satisfactory. The headteacher has a heavy teaching commitment and does not have a deputy headteacher to share the load. Consequently, some aspects of management, such as developing the role of subject coordinators and devising more effective systems of assessment and tracking children's progress, are lagging behind best practice in other schools.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the role of subject coordinators.
- Devise more effective assessment and tracking systems for monitoring children's progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children enter the Reception class with standards that are generally in line with expectations. They make good progress but children who attend for three terms achieve higher standards by the end of Reception than those who attend for only the summer term. By the end of this Foundation Stage, most children are achieving expected levels in most areas of learning.

Throughout Years 1 to 6, all children make good progress, including those with learning difficulties. By Year 2, standards are usually above average but were average in 2006. Such variations are understandable with small year groups. Results in national tests in 2006 for children in Year 6 were significantly above average, particularly in English and science. Results in mathematics, whilst still above average, were not as high, and the school has identified calculation as an area of weakness. Over the last year, there has been a strong focus on improving children's writing and standards in writing are now significantly above average. In Year 6, attainment in ICT is average.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children enjoy coming to school. Rates of attendance are excellent and unauthorised absence virtually unknown. Children's behaviour and their attitudes to their teachers and other adults are exceptional and they all get on very well together. 'We look out for each other,' was a frequent pupil comment. They say they feel safe in school and that there is no bullying. The school promotes their safety very well through providing cycle, pedestrian, and general road safety training. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, reflecting the school's strong Christian commitment to personal values. Children give very generously to local and national charities; for example, the British Heart Foundation. Community links are good, especially with Sledmere House and the local parish. Strong links are being established with the local business community through organisations like the Rotary Club. Links with the Humber Bridge Authority produced some high quality cross-curricular work in Key Stage 2. Children are aware of the benefits of adopting a healthy lifestyle and talk knowledgeably about diet and exercise. They leave school with very good basic English and mathematics skills, which bode well for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching copes very well with the challenge of mixed age classes. Work for the different age groups is well planned and differentiated so that all children can make good progress. Higher attaining children benefit when in the lower age groups by being challenged to do the work set for the older children. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support from teaching assistants and make good progress. Relationships in and out of lessons are excellent and motivate children to want to learn more. Marking is regular and encouraging but assessment does not give children enough guidance on how well they are doing in relation to national norms, and what they need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is well matched to children's needs. Links with other schools, particularly through the Waggoners Cluster of Schools' initiative, are excellent and provide exciting opportunities for children to broaden and widen their curriculum experience often using the expertise of local people. Joint activities and Link Days, such as joint visits to a Bradford Mosque, and the Stephen Joseph Theatre in Scarborough, enable the school to overcome potential problems of small numbers and high unit costs. Links with the local high school are good, particularly in science

and French. Enrichment is good. The lack of outdoor grass areas and a school hall restricts opportunities for in-house after-school sport, but a sports coach, funded by parents and operating from a local village amenity, helps to effectively plug the gap. Residential visits to the Peak District and trips to France provide good opportunities for cultural and personal development. Although satisfactory, the ICT curriculum is not being effectively planned for in all classes.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides very good care and support for its children. Child protection and risk assessment policies, including recent legislation regarding the safeguarding of children, are securely in place. Relationships and communication with parents are good. Children feel safe in school and have confidence in their teachers and other adults. Good links with outside agencies, such as the police and fire service, ensure children are informed and aware of safety issues. Good links with the partner high school and through joint activities with the Waggoners Cluster of Schools, help children transfer to high school at the end of Year 6 with confidence and reassurance. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support and make good progress. Children are given satisfactory guidance on how to improve their academic work. Assessment data is used to track children's progress and identify underachievement, but not skilfully enough. As a result, children do not know clearly enough what they have to do to improve; for example, through having specific literacy or numeracy targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides strong leadership. He has made certain that standards remain high and children achieve well in their academic work and exceptionally well in their personal development. He has ensured that the children in this small rural school look outwards to the wider world and broaden their horizons. The provision of a better outdoor play environment is being successfully pursued with the support of parents and governors. Challenging targets set for the end of Year 6 national tests are regularly achieved.

The school's strengths and weaknesses are clearly and accurately identified. The management systems to effect improvement are adequate but subject coordinators are not fully effective in monitoring the school's work. For example, there are weaknesses in the ICT curriculum and assessment and tracking data to identify pupil underachievement are not in place for all children. This situation is due in great part to the heavy teaching commitment of the headteacher and the lack of an effective and supportive management structure. Consequently management is only satisfactory.

Governance is good. Governors support but also challenge the school and have developed good systems for monitoring how well the school is doing. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory. Links with parents are good. Parents expressed overwhelming support for the school in their Ofsted questionnaire returns. As one parent wrote 'Whilst I am occasionally envious of the resources that some of the larger schools have at their disposal, I would not want my son to go anywhere else but Sledmere.'

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Annex A

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?	1
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	1
The attendance of learners	1
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	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	3
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

Sledmere Church of England Primary School

Sledmere

Driffield

YO25 3XP

13 March 2007

Dear Children,

Thank you so much for your warm welcome when I visited Sledmere School recently. I really appreciated how friendly and helpful you were and the interesting things you told me.

These are some of the things I thought about your school.

Your school is a good school; it does some things brilliantly; helping you develop into responsible and caring young people with excellent behaviour and attitudes to work, for example. It also helps you achieve very good results in your SATs at the end of Year 6. (Which I hope helps Year 6 children who don't think they will do well this summer to relax a little!)

You really enjoy school and your attendance is much better than the vast majority of other schools.

Your teachers teach you well and the standards you achieve in English and science are very much higher than in most schools.

You are very generous and each year you raise an amazing amount of money for charity.

I have asked the school to help you do even better by:

- carefully tracking your progress as you move through the school, so that your teachers can spot if you start falling behind in your work and then help you improve.

Thank you once again for being so friendly and helpful, and good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Joe Clark

Lead Inspector