

# Stillington Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121324
<b>Local Authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	292081
<b>Inspection date</b>	22 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Les Schubeler

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	35
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs G Sanderson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs J Hearne (Acting)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 October 2002
<b>School address</b>	Main Street Stillington York North Yorkshire YO61 1LA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01347 810347
<b>Fax number</b>	01347 810347

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a very small village primary school. The number of children in the school has begun to rise again after a considerable decline and is set to increase further. All pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average. There are two mixed age classes in the school, but arrangements are made at times to teach the Years 3 to 6 classes in two separate groups. Owing to the headteacher's absence, there has been an acting headteacher in post for part of this year. The school has received a Leading Aspects Award for its work in supporting pupils for when they transfer to secondary 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 and improving school in which the devotion of the staff and whole school community ensures there is a happy and harmonious atmosphere. Good leadership and management place the needs of all pupils, regardless of age or ability, at the heart of the daily life of the school. There is a firm focus on the learning and all-round development of individual pupils. Good teaching and good care, guidance and support enable pupils to achieve well and contribute substantially to their good personal development.

Children's standards on entry to Reception vary from meeting expectations for their age to below expectations. Children settle quickly into the combined Reception/Year 1 and 2 class and make good progress in most areas of their learning. Their mathematical skills are less well developed than their language skills. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school. Standards at the end of Year 6 vary. In the last two years overall standards were broadly average but current standards in Years 5 and 6 are higher, particularly in English. Progress in mathematics is not as rapid as in English and the school now has a strong focus on improvement, particularly in mental mathematics.

A carefully planned curriculum contributes significantly to pupils' good overall progress. In the Foundation Stage a well chosen range of activities promotes children's good learning. However, shortcomings in the outdoor provision, which are imposed by the physical layout of the school, limit the experiences of children in some areas of their learning. Children do not have enough opportunities to reinforce and develop their classroom learning in outdoor activities. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved since the last inspection and it is being steadily developed to support pupils' learning across all subjects.

Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in their good attendance. They have positive attitudes to learning and greatly appreciate the help provided by all the adults who work with them. Throughout the school pupils behave well because of clear expectations and very good relationships. They have a good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles and enthusiastically participate in the wide range of physical activities that the school offers. They feel that one of the strengths of the school is that, 'we care for each other'. The school's family atmosphere, coupled with the staff's concern for each individual, means that pupils feel safe and valued. Parents have a high regard for the work of the school and are appreciative of the improvements that have been made in recent times, notably in pupils' behaviour. They are confident that their children are well looked after and voice the opinion that the school is 'amazing' in the support given to pupils' individual needs. Positive relationships with parents and valuable support from outside agencies contribute considerably to pupils' good personal development and progress.

The quality of teaching throughout the school is good. Teachers, well supported by committed and effective teaching assistants, cope very well with the mixed age classes, ensuring that activities meet the needs of the gifted and talented as well as of those who need more help with their learning.

The good quality of leadership and management is a major reason why this school has improved its performance. The headteacher inspires confidence among parents, pupils and staff. As a result of accurate self-evaluation, the school's clear view of how to improve is now paying dividends in pupils' higher standards and achievements. Thus, the capacity for continued improvement is good. The acting headteacher has continued the good work and maintained

the momentum of improvement. Consequently, morale in the school remains high and all adults work together very well to help pupils mature and to make progress. Governors are committed, perceptive and skilled. They are resolute in their support of the school, rigorous in holding it to account and help it to provide good value for money.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve standards and achievement in mathematics.
- Improve the outdoor provision for children in the Foundation Stage so that they can more freely extend their experiences in all areas of their learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

The achievement of all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is improving in comparison to recent years and is now predominantly good. Overall standards fluctuate from year to year because of the small number of pupils. They make good progress in reading as a result of effective teaching. In the last two years the school has placed a strong focus on improving writing skills and this is now paying dividends in terms of improved standards in English at the end of Year 6. In the current Year 6 pupils are attaining above average standards, representing good achievement. More able pupils are now beginning to more consistently reach the higher levels in national tests. In contrast, standards in mathematics are broadly average and achievement only satisfactory. In consequence, the school is now focused on raising standards in mathematics to match those in English. Standards in science were below average, but as a result of school action taken to place more emphasis on the development of investigative skills they are now above average and achievement is good.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are considerate, friendly and polite. They are keen to help one another and cheerfully take on responsibilities in the school, locally and in the wider community. They respect the environment and take part in projects that have involved planting trees and re-cycling mobile phones. They take full advantage of opportunities to raise funds for charities. The school council is active. Pupils are well prepared for future life by being involved in managing its budget, consulting with others and making democratic decisions on which actions will be of most benefit to the school population. Improvements have been made to the toilet facilities and the pupils' plans for a quiet area are being acted upon.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teachers know pupils well and plan English and science lessons that interest and challenge them and result in their good progress. The school recognises that there has not been sufficient challenge for pupils in mathematics, particularly in mental mathematics, in the lower part of Key Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4). Teaching assistants provide good quality support, enabling all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, to progress well. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is good, informing pupils about how well they have done and motivating

them effectively by giving guidance on how they can improve. A good range of resources, including ICT, is used to sustain pupils' interest. Pupils' behaviour is well managed and this ensures that pupils are attentive and concentrate on their work.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

Although the Foundation Stage curriculum does not offer enough outdoor learning opportunities, the school's curriculum is good overall. It is significantly enriched by additional activities that broaden pupils' interests and experiences. The school has many clubs that are well supported by adults and pupils. Teachers bring learning alive with numerous visits to places of interest such as the Beamish Museum. Visitors, such as regular sports coaches, come to the school to develop pupils' knowledge and skills further. Such a wide range of activities, including residential visits to an outdoor activity centre, make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, enjoyment and personal development. The school also pays good attention to the development of pupils' personal, social and health education and their understanding of how to develop healthy lifestyles.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The good care is evident in the effective routines and practices to ensure pupils' safety and health. Arrangements to support children joining Reception and transferring to secondary school are handled well so pupils feel at ease. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well and included in all aspects of school life. Arrangements for child protection, risk assessments and the vetting of all adults are in place. Academic guidance is good. Pupils are given targets, but they do not all have a clear understanding of how they can use these to improve their learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher knows pupils and staff well. She involves all staff in reviewing the school's performance. Outcomes in relation to pupils' personal development are good, underpinned by good care and support. The curriculum is particularly effective in promoting pupils' good achievements in English. Good improvements have been made in tackling the issues from the last inspection report. The school's view of its performance is realistic and honest putting it in a good position to plan sensibly for future developments. There are strong and productive links with other local schools. Gifted and talented pupils visit the high school for a Spanish day. Good advantage is taken of some of these links so that pupils are not penalized by the school's small size. For example, arrangements are made with a cluster of small primary schools to share sports activities.

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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	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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**

Inspection of Stillington Primary School, Stillington, York YO61 1LA

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave to me when I visited your school recently. I would like to thank you for being so courteous and friendly. I enjoyed talking to you and listening to your views about the school. I spent a lot of time finding out how well you learn in your lessons, looking at your work and talking to your headteacher and school staff. Stillington is a good and improving school.

I think your teachers and teaching assistants care for you and look after you well, keeping you safe and healthy. I know too, that you are proud of your school and that you have worked hard to make sure that the school is an attractive environment. It was very pleasing to see that you get on well with one another and all the adults who work with you. I was impressed by the consideration shown by the older pupils to the younger ones. I think that you are working well and are making faster progress than before. However, I think that you could do better in mathematics.

To help your school to become even better, I have asked your teachers to try to improve the outdoor facilities for children in Reception so that they can learn more by taking part in a wider range of activities.

I am sure that you will carry on enjoying school and continue to build on the improvements that you are making now. Most of all, I hope that you will continue to work hard and help all the staff to make Stillington an even better school in the future.