



Headlands Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121367
Local Authority York
Inspection number 292090
Inspection dates 28 February –1 March 2007
Reporting inspector Doug Lowes

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Oak Tree Lane
School category	Community		Holly Tree Meadows, Haxby
Age range of pupils	4–11		York, North Yorkshire YO32 2YH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01904 762356
Number on roll (school)	228	Fax number	01904 762356
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Julie Dickinson
		Headteacher	Mr Mike Schofield
Date of previous school inspection	11 November 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Headlands serves the population on the northern edge of the City of York. The proportion of pupils who take free school meals is much lower than in most schools. There are very few pupils from an ethnic minority background with a very small number whose first language is not English. The percentage of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly in line with the national average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. The headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher, governors and senior leadership team, provides extremely clear vision and direction to the work of the school. Leadership and management are good overall. Accurate self-evaluation has resulted in clearly identified areas for improvement. The headteacher is passionate about the school and determined to provide the best possible education for all pupils. In this, and other features of the school's leadership, the inspectors' view is shared by the overwhelming majority of parents. Staff work very effectively together and pupils demonstrate exceptionally good behaviour and attitudes to their learning. Comments from parents can be summed up as: 'Headlands is a fantastic school with a dedicated team of teachers.'

Pupils make outstanding progress during Key Stages 1 and 2 and standards are exceptionally high. The school has set further challenging targets to build on this in 2007. Teaching is outstanding: work is always well planned and stimulating, based on careful marking and assessment of pupils' work. The very good leadership of the special educational needs department and the work of the very effective teaching assistants ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make the same exceptional progress.

Generally the curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. There remain shortcomings in the current provision to enable children to learn through structured play. However, strong teaching and comprehensive assessment ensure that work is well matched to children's individual needs, allowing them to make good progress, especially in literacy and numeracy. The curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2 is good and successfully promotes a broad range of skills and knowledge to equip pupils for the future. As part of its drive to improve standards further, the school recognises the need to extend opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills across the curriculum. An extensive enrichment programme, including educational visits, and a wide choice of after-school activities, sustains pupils' interest and makes learning fun.

Care, guidance and support are outstanding and promote pupils' excellent personal development, progress, enjoyment and well-being. Pupils say that they enjoy school and like their teachers. This is evident in the very good relationships that exist between adults and pupils throughout the school. Pupils behave extremely well, try hard and help each other. They know what it means to be safe and how to live healthy lives. Most of all, they know that their achievement is first rate and this gives them confidence on which they can build in future years.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve resources and provision to ensure that all children experience a balanced Foundation Stage curriculum.
- Ensure there are sufficient opportunities for pupils to use and practise their writing skills across the curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Children's attainment when they start school is broadly in line with national expectations. By the end of the Foundation Stage children have made good progress. Pupils make outstanding progress in Years 1 and 2. This is reflected in the 2006 national test results, where pupils did particularly well in reading and mathematics. Sustaining improvement in writing has been identified by the school as an area for development. Pupils continue to make extremely rapid progress throughout Key Stage 2 with many attaining well above the national average in English, mathematics and science. Standards, already exceptionally high, are continuing to rise. The current Year 6 pupils are well on course to exceed their challenging targets. All groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those from minority ethnic groups, achieve outstandingly well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The pupils' outstanding personal development is reflected in their exceptional attendance and punctuality, their great enthusiasm for school, and their very positive attitudes and often exemplary behaviour. Older pupils are protective towards younger ones and those with learning disabilities. 'School is a bit like a very big family,' said one pupil.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Children in Reception make good progress in learning how to share, take turns and help one another. Pupils take a very active part in school life, readily taking responsibility, for example as monitors, peer mediators and Playground Pals. The well established pupil council has a strong impact on many aspects of school life, such as playtimes and school meals. Pupils enjoy contributing to the community through their singing performances, fundraising for charity and their links with the local council and three churches.

Pupils show an extremely good understanding of how to keep safe and of the importance of healthy eating. Many enjoy taking exercise through the very good range of sporting activities. Pupils' outstanding personal and social skills and their very well developed literacy and numeracy skills create an enormously secure foundation for their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Teachers are conscientious, enthusiastic and committed to doing their best for the pupils. They are skilled in explaining what pupils are going to learn and then reviewing this at the close of the

lesson. High expectations lead to calm and focused lessons, which usually proceed at a rapid pace. However, there are occasions in Reception when the children's learning is adversely affected by their being inactive for too long and insufficiently involved in their own learning. Very good relationships underpin the teaching and learning. Very good support from teaching assistants ensures that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress commensurate with that of their classmates.

Good quality assessments, which begin with effective strategies in the Reception year, are used well to monitor pupils' progress. Marking is also consistently good in showing the pupils how to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good quality curriculum instils positive attitudes in pupils. Links between subjects are often very effective and enable pupils to develop and apply an array of skills. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise writing. Information and communication technology (ICT) is a strong feature and is used effectively to support learning in all subjects. The innovative introduction of the 'virtual learning environment' has contributed well to pupils' research and communication skills. Gifted and talented pupils are clearly identified and effective programmes of special activities help them to develop their skills further. In the Foundation Stage outdoor play arrangements do not provide well enough for children's creative development and, in class, they are given insufficient time to learn through structured play.

An outstanding programme of enrichment is available to pupils of all ages. Educational visits, along with visitors to school, provide very good first-hand experiences and add considerable interest to pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

A typical parental comment is: 'All members of staff are committed to the children and their needs.' The extremely high quality support of the staff makes this a happy school where pupils aspire to give of their best. 'This is a lovely school,' said one pupil. Pupils know that they can turn to adults if they need to. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit greatly from excellent partnerships with support agencies. The pupils confirm that the school is a community where bullying is not tolerated. All necessary checks are in place to ensure pupils' safety, protection and welfare.

Academic support is very good. Thorough assessment systems, notably in literacy and numeracy, ensure that any pupils who do not make the expected progress are identified and supported quickly. Pupils understand their targets and recognise what they need to do to improve. Where targets are most effective, pupils are closely involved in assessing and improving their own work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good with some outstanding features. Through a clear vision the headteacher provides secure direction that enables the school to strive continuously for improvement. As a result, the school has made good progress since the last inspection. The headteacher understands the needs of pupils and has high expectations of them all. He ensures that the focus is kept firmly and successfully on developing opportunities to raise standards even higher. Consequently, the school's capacity to improve further is outstanding. Caring leadership supports the work of staff and they are encouraged through professional development to further improve their skills.

Subject and phase leaders are successful in supporting staff and effective in appraising the quality of teaching and the impact of this on pupils' work. While relatively new to the role, these leaders are well placed to secure further improvement. However, development of the Foundation Stage provision has been at a slower rate than for that of Key Stages 1 and 2.

Governors are fully involved in the life of the school and are active in its direction. They are well informed about school priorities and, through regular monitoring, contribute well to school improvement, providing both support and challenge to the school leadership.

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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?	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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
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	1
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	2
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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	1

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?	2
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?	2
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	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

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave to us when we visited your school this week. We enjoyed listening to you singing in assembly and seeing you take part in lots of exciting activities, especially World Book Day. In particular, we enjoyed being in your lessons, seeing how hard you work, talking to you and finding out about all the interesting things that you do at school.

We have judged your school to be an outstanding one and the way you work in lessons has helped us make that decision. We could see that you like your teachers and really enjoy coming to school.

We think that these are good things about your school:

- you help to make your school a happy and friendly place where everyone is welcome
- your behaviour is outstanding and you work hard in lessons
- your headteacher and staff help you to make very good progress in your learning
- all of your teachers and support staff really care about you and want you to do well
- the school is bright with lots of your very good work on display for everyone to see
- your teachers are very good
- there are lots of activities for you to get involved in
- your headteacher and deputy headteacher are good school leaders.

Your headteacher and all the adults want you to do well so we have asked them to do a few things to make the school even better:

- make it possible for the youngest children to have lots of opportunities to be creative and learn through playing
- help you to become even better writers by giving you more practice.

The inspectors pass on our very best wishes to each of you.