



Skipton, Ings Community Primary and Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121416
Local Authority North Yorkshire
Inspection number 292107
Inspection dates 18–19 October 2006
Reporting inspector Peter Howard

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Broughton Road
School category	Community		Skipton
Age range of pupils	3–11		North Yorkshire BD23 1TE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01756 793159
Number on roll (school)	63	Fax number	01756 793159
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Pamela Knowles-Fitton
		Headteacher	Mrs G Wilson
Date of previous school inspection	11 June 2002		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–11	18–19 October 2006	292107

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school serves a diverse ethnic community of mixed housing in an area of above average social and economic deprivation. The school is much smaller than the average primary school and the numbers attending are falling, reflecting a decline in the local birth rate. A very large majority of pupils are now of British Asian origin. A small number of travellers also attend the school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. There have been significant changes to the teaching staff over the last two years, including the appointment of a new headteacher this term.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and improving school. It is beginning to emerge from a period of turbulence, which saw major changes to leadership and staffing, variability in the quality of teaching, and a period of falling standards. With strong support from the local authority and under the effective leadership of the recently appointed headteacher, the school is addressing these issues. Over the last year, the staffing situation has stabilised and improvements to teaching have begun to have a positive impact on pupils' achievement.

Although the school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory, its performance in two respects is inadequate. Before its next section 5 inspection, Ofsted inspectors may visit the school to monitor the progress that it has made in remedying these weaknesses. The school would receive two to five days notice of these visits.

- After a period of broadly average attendance, it fell last year to well below average and as a result, pupils miss important work. The school has no clear understanding of why this happened. Much absence is related to parents taking their children out of school for religious festivals and extended holidays. However, the school has not been sufficiently active in its actions to improve overall attendance levels.
- Governance is inadequate. There are currently no parent governors and only two governors who are not members of staff of the school. The governing body does not effectively discharge the key responsibilities of representing the local community, setting the strategic direction of the school or holding the management to account for its performance.

Pupils enter school with low levels of skills and knowledge for their age and many are in the early stages of learning English. They make a good start in Nursery and, overall, quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. In recent years, uneven teaching has resulted in some underachievement. This has contributed to well below average standards of attainment at the end of Year 6. However, more effective systems for checking on pupils' progress and setting targets is leading to accelerated progress and helping pupils to catch up. In this context, and given their low starting points, pupils are making satisfactory progress.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Pupils are happy in school and their behaviour is good. Changes to the curriculum, making it more relevant to the interests of learners, are having a positive impact on pupils' motivation and thus on achievement. However, there is insufficient teaching of key skills in English and mathematics across all subjects and this restricts pupils' progress. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to pupils' care and learning, providing a valuable element of continuity during recent years. All staff are very caring and academic guidance to pupils is effective in helping pupils identify what they need to do to improve. However, the statutory requirements to safeguard learners are not fully in place.

The recently appointed headteacher has a good understanding of the needs of the school and has quickly gained the confidence of all members of the school community.

She is providing effective leadership and a clear vision to move the school forward. Middle managers and subject leaders are developing in their roles and becoming increasingly effective. The success of recent improvements to teaching and the curriculum and the strong teamwork that has developed among staff indicate that the school's capacity to improve further is satisfactory. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Work with parents to reduce absence.
- Strengthen governance to ensure that it can fulfil its statutory responsibilities.
- Improve the consistency of teaching to ensure pupils make good progress in all lessons.
- Extend the learning of key skills in English and mathematics across the wider curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Many of the pupils of Asian heritage speak little or no English when they enter school in the Foundation Stage. Assessment shows that their skills in their home language are also limited. Pupils are given a satisfactory start in the Foundation Stage. The school is building well on developments in the Foundation Stage Unit and the good support for pupils learning English as a second language. However, this improvement is not yet reflected in assessments at the end of Foundation Stage, when many pupils reach below average standards overall, but basic skills in English and mathematics are still weak. At the end of Year 2, pupils attain standards in writing that are well below average and in reading and mathematics that are below average. In national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2005 and 2006, standards attained in English, mathematics and science were well below average. Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching made a contribution to pupils achieving less well than expected, but this has been substantially addressed by recent improvements and pupils' current work shows that progress is now accelerating. Given the low starting point on entry and the need for many pupils to learn English as a second language, pupils make satisfactory progress. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those from minority ethnic and cultural groups are accurately identified and they also make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Spiritual, social, moral and cultural education is satisfactory. Pupils are proud of their school and the school community is friendly and welcoming. Staff work hard to ensure that all are included and pupils are tolerant of ethnic and religious differences and are caring of each other. Pupils enjoy school; although some have passive attitudes to learning, they respond positively to the frequent praise and encouragement given by staff. Pupils value opportunities to contribute to the school community. Older pupils

appreciate the responsibility of being 'buddies' and take their responsibilities seriously. The school council is effective, helping, for example, to make decisions about playground equipment and contributing their ideas about making school better. Pupils are aware of the benefits of leading a healthy lifestyle and are beginning to make healthy food choices and participate in physical exercise. Their readiness for the next stage in learning and the world of work is constrained by low levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The proportion of good teaching and learning is increasing, although the impact is not yet seen in national tests. However, practice throughout school is not yet consistent. For example, in some lessons, teachers ensure a good balance between the introduction and the activities, whilst in other lessons teachers talk for too long. Teachers manage their classes well and, as a result, pupils are respectful to adults and classrooms are calm and orderly. Lessons are generally well planned and teachers have effectively implemented improvements to assessment arrangements to aid their matching of work to pupils' abilities. Teachers ensure that pupils understand what they are expected to learn and marking is helpful in showing pupils how to improve. Teaching assistants give good support to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as a second language. For example, this is seen to very good effect in the cooperation between the class teacher and the Punjabi speaking assistant when they collaborate to tell a story in Foundation Stage.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The practical curriculum in Nursery and Reception is well designed to meet the needs of young learners and helps them settle into school routines. In Years 1 to 6, emphasis is rightly placed on developing pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy. However, these skills are not applied and practised sufficiently in other subjects. As a result, the curriculum misses opportunities to extend and motivate pupils' learning by not providing sufficient interesting situations in which to use basic skills. A developing focus on personal, social and health education is having a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to work and their behaviour. The curriculum benefits from a good range of clubs and extra-curricular activities and the school is committed to improving the range of visitors and visits to enrich the curriculum further.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The commitment and care offered by staff promotes pupils' personal development and helps to raise achievement. With good support from the local authority, the school

has recently implemented effective procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and setting targets for improvement. As a result, pupils are now making satisfactory progress, catching up after previous pockets of underachievement. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported by effective individual learning plans and their needs accurately matched to appropriate additional help. Arrangements for health and safety are thorough, but the statutory requirements to ensure child protection are not fully in place.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher's leadership is effectively establishing a shared view of how the school can improve. Post holders for the Foundation Stage and for learning difficulties and/or disabilities give strong support, for example in their leadership of staff in their areas of responsibility. With good support from the local authority, subject leadership is increasingly effective. However, governance is inadequate. Despite the strong commitment of the chairperson, the governing body finds it difficult to recruit members and struggles to fulfil all of its responsibilities.

The school's self-evaluation, underpinned by increasingly effective checks on teaching and learning, is generally accurate. Since the last inspection, effective steps have been taken to improve provision. Although the impact has not yet been reflected in national tests, recent acceleration of progress is evident in pupils' work and plans to ensure further improvement are soundly based. After the uncertainties of recent years, communication with parents has improved, initiatives such as the women's group are drawing the community together, and parents are voicing their support for the school.

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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	4
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
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	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	No
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 very much for welcoming me to your school and being so polite and friendly. I enjoyed my visit very much.

What I liked most about your school:

- how well you behave and that many of you work so hard
- how well you get on with each other, for example, sharing celebrations for Eid and Christmas
- how hard all the staff in school work, how well they look after you and how much they want you to do well in school
- the way that teachers help you to learn in English and maths by the way they mark your work and set you targets.

I think there are some things the school could do to make things even better:

- work with your parents and carers to help make sure that more of you attend school every day
- involve more adults from the community to help Mrs. Wilson run the school
- involve you more in some lessons so that you learn even more
- give you more chances to use your skills in English and maths in other subjects.

You can help your teachers by continuing to work hard and by taking advantage of all the opportunities offered by school.

I wish you all the very best for your future at Skipton, Ings School.