

Skipton, Water Street Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121417
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	292108
Inspection date	21 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Bernard Jones

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	213
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr C Metcalf
Headteacher	Mrs Jean McCrickard
Date of previous school inspection	16 April 2002
School address	Elliot Street Skipton North Yorkshire BD23 1PE
Telephone number	01756 793 026
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Water Street Primary is an average sized school. It is a popular school and draws pupils from a wider than usual area, mainly representing families who are relatively advantaged in their socio-economic circumstances. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below average and only one pupil is at an early stage in learning English. The proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal is well below average. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational need and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well below average.

The school has gained The Healthy Schools Award and the Silver Artsmark. It has gained other awards that reflect good achievement and its contribution to teaching basic skills and to providing for pupils with special educational needs.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Water Street is an outstanding school and gives excellent value for money. It provides a safe and happy environment where pupils flourish and learn to take responsibility well. Parents are pleased with the school and praise the dedication and commitment of the teachers. They appreciate that the school makes a real impact upon their children's all-round development, not just their academic progress. The quality of pastoral care is excellent. Teachers' use of assessment is very effective in helping to guide and support pupils towards their targets. Any underachievement is quickly identified and tackled successfully. The impact of the high quality care is reflected in pupils' excellent behaviour and their very positive attitudes towards school. Pupils have a very open and welcoming approach to visitors. They make very well informed choices about healthy lifestyles and by Year 6, are mature and ready for their secondary schools.

Pupils enter the Reception class with levels of attainment that vary from year to year, but are mainly average or above. Invariably, they achieve well in the Foundation Stage. This is because of good planning and effective use of assessment to chart and check progress made, so that they are ready to move on to Year 1. By the time pupils leave Year 6, many pupils achieve standards that are much higher than average. There are no significant differences in the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make excellent progress from their starting points, in common with their peers. Results in the national tests in Year 6 in 2006 were significantly better than might have been expected from pupils' standards at the end of Year 2, markedly so in mathematics. In particular, pupils gained well above average results at the higher level in English, mathematics and science.

Pupils' excellent achievement reflects the outstanding teaching they receive. Teachers' planning is a real strength. It provides an excellent basis for confident and informed teaching that focuses clearly on getting the best from all pupils. Teaching and learning are characterised by enjoyment. Teachers use a wide variety of approaches that give pupils a great deal of responsibility for their own learning. Classrooms often buzz with excitement as pupils discuss work together with 'listening partners'. Many of the approaches taken are made possible because of the excellent relationships in classrooms and pupils' exemplary behaviour.

Pupils achieve as well as they do because leadership and management of the school are outstanding and focus clearly on standards. This is not done at the expense of providing more widely for pupils. The school's curriculum is excellent. There is an appropriate emphasis on teaching the basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). These skills are further developed across a broad and well-balanced curriculum, where general topics are used very effectively to engage pupils and capture their interest. Outstanding teaching is reflected in pupils' high levels of achievement across this wide curriculum as well as in their well-rounded personal development. Leaders at all levels are effective, whether leading individual subjects or giving clear leadership to the school as a whole. Staff and governors share a common vision for the school and know very well the school's strengths and areas where there can be further improvement. Challenging and realistic targets are set as a good basis for raising standards further. There has been excellent improvement since the previous inspection. The school evaluates its work carefully and honestly, if modestly, because it believes that there is always room for improvement. This is a school that knows where it is going and is not complacent. As a result, the school has excellent capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- The school is very clear on what it needs to do to improve its already high quality provision. It is very well placed to carry out its plans and there are no issues of significance for further improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils make good progress in the Reception class and a significant number make excellent progress. Pupils build on well from their starting points and are well prepared to enter Year 1. In Years 1 to 6, the vast majority make excellent progress. The school sets challenging targets and these were met in the 2006 national tests. Currently, standards are significantly above average in English, mathematics and science and in other subjects. This reflects the school's rich curriculum that ensures breadth and balance in pupils' experiences through the years. Last year, the school identified some underachievement among a few Year 3 pupils in reading and writing. The school was quick to intervene, and put in additional resources to ensure that achievement was back on track in Year 4. Pupils achieve as well as they do in response to the high quality teaching they receive, supported by a very effective system that checks the progress they make and identifies any potential underachievement.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils have excellent attitudes and their behaviour is exemplary. Attendance is well above average. Pupils come to school regularly because they enjoy school life, revel in their achievement in lessons and are keen to take part in the many and various activities the school offers. Pupils develop good literacy, numeracy and ICT skills, providing a secure basis their future economic well-being. They gain an outstanding knowledge of how to stay healthy, reflected in the Healthy Schools Award. Considered and appropriate teaching, particularly in personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) develops in pupils a concern for others and a good understanding of safe practices; for example, in science and physical education. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent because of the school's focus on developing them as individuals. As a result, they make an excellent contribution in school and to the wider community; for example, by their fundraising for a variety of causes. Pupils take very seriously the responsibilities they are given. For example, older pupils help younger children during breaks and lunchtimes and in paired reading tasks. Throughout the school, pupils are given a voice in school affairs and respond with enthusiasm to learn much about the democratic process and citizens' responsibilities in society. They develop their own classroom rules and the school council operates effectively. Pupils become mature, sensible and thoughtful learners, who can make decisions for themselves because the school places great store on providing well for their personal development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

In the Foundation Stage, children are provided with a stimulating environment where good planning, very effective teaching and opportunities to learn through play encourage them to

make choices and learn about the world in which they live. Staff take good account of children's individual needs and use assessment well to track and check their progress. As a result, children achieve well. Teaching in Years 1 to 6 is characterised by confident staff who prepare well to provide rich and interesting activities across a range of subjects that challenge pupils to achieve their best. Teachers use a wide range of approaches that give pupils responsibility for their own learning. Pupils respond very well to this. Typically they work together in pairs and groups, discussing and formulating ideas and assessing and evaluating their own work and the work of others. There is some very mature learning taking place in classrooms right across the age groups. Teachers use homework effectively and mark work conscientiously and to good effect. As a result, pupils know how well they are doing because the marking focuses on standards and informs them what they should do to improve further. The way teachers plan lessons ensures that pupils know what is expected of them. Learning is helped by the excellent relationships teachers have with their pupils and the positive relationships between pupils. Pupils enjoy their learning and meeting their targets. Where teaching assistants are present, they are used effectively to support pupils and help their progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school is rightly proud of its curriculum which is planned with great care to provide a range of rich experiences. It is further enhanced by a wealth of extra activities, for example in sport and music, in addition to the many educational visits and visitors to the school. Children enjoy these extra activities and the residential experiences that are made available to older pupils. The school's partnerships with other local schools and the local and wider community are very strong and further enhance the opportunities extended to pupils. The curriculum is used very effectively to support pupils' personal development. Pupils' topics provide a good balance of different subjects as well as reinforcing basic skills in literacy, numeracy and the use of ICT.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides an outstanding level of pastoral care that ensures pupils are happy and feel safe. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are sound and there is extra support available for pupils when it is needed. Pupils know what bullying is and why it is unacceptable and say that they are confident that there is always someone to turn to if they need help. The school's procedures to assess pupils in order to support, guide and track their progress are used very effectively to identify underachievement. This ensures that any pupil who falls behind in work is quickly identified and helped. More positively, the challenging targets set for pupils motivate them to do their best. The school prepares pupils well for the next stage of learning in secondary schools.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The quality of leadership and management in the school is outstanding. All staff with leadership roles work tirelessly to provide an excellent education and ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they can. The senior leadership team is experienced, able and dedicated and these qualities have been central in maintaining a high quality education. The headteacher makes an outstanding contribution to the development of the school through her clear vision. The raising

of standards lies at the centre of the school's activities. However, the school does not lose sight of the need to provide balance in the life of its pupils, so enjoyment in learning is high on the agenda. Staff morale is high because the relationships engendered in the school are very positive. The school plans well and works hard to ensure that teachers are kept up to date. The monitoring of teachers' work is regular and rigorous. Governors play their part in holding the school to account. They are effective in ensuring the school makes appropriate use of its resources and the skills of teachers so that excellent value for money is obtained.

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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?	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	1
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	2
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	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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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?	1
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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
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	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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 Water Street Community Primary School, Skipton, BD23 1PE

Thank you for being so helpful and friendly to me when I visited your excellent school. I thoroughly enjoyed seeing you and your teachers at work in your classrooms. I also found it interesting to talk with some of you in the playground and listen to some of Year 6 telling me about their life at Water Street School. Please thank your parents and carers for all their letters.

These are the things that are good about your school.

- The way the school helps you to achieve as well as you do.
- Your excellent behaviour and the way you take responsibility, for example on the school council.
- The way you obviously enjoy coming to school and feel safe and secure when in school.
- The many activities and clubs that you enjoy and that help you to develop your talents.
- The way you show concern for disadvantaged people at home and abroad.
- How well your teachers take good care of you. They teach you to be safe and encourage you towards a healthy lifestyle.
- How well the school helps you to develop into mature young people.

It is usual after an inspection to ask schools to improve some things. However, your teachers already know very clearly what else needs to be done and have plans set in place in order to improve further.