



# Sherburn in Elmet, Athelstan Community Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 121461  
**Local Authority** North Yorkshire  
**Inspection number** 292124  
**Inspection dates** 17–18 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Ralph Higgs

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 address</b>	Rose Avenue
<b>School category</b>	Community		Sherburn-in-Elmet, Selby
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		North Yorkshire LS25 6AY
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01977 684037
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	220	<b>Fax number</b>	01977 683172
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Craig Storton
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Karen O'Donnell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 October 2001		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This average size school is smaller than it was at the time of the last inspection as the birth rate has been falling. The school is popular with parents and draws its intake from across the local, mainly residential, area. Pupils come from a wide variety of family circumstances, but more than usual come from relatively advantaged homes. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is similar to that found nationally. The school hold an Active Mark and the Basic Skills Quality Mark. Since the previous inspection, there has been a considerable turnover of staff at all levels. The current headteacher is the second to take up post and the deputy headteacher is also relatively new. In the last two years, nine teachers have left for a variety of reasons and been replaced. Until recently, the governing body has had difficulties in filling vacant positions, and, consequently, in establishing a stable structure to carry out its duties.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This school provides a satisfactory education with several good features. It provides satisfactory value for money. Strong leadership and a determined team effort have recently brought good improvements. The school has a clear picture of its strengths and weaknesses, so it knows where to concentrate its efforts. A stable staffing situation has been re-established after several years of upheaval. Standards are beginning to rise and are broadly average at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils' academic achievement is satisfactory. However, their personal development is good. This is because of the high levels of support and personal guidance they receive from a caring staff team.

Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and improving. Children enter Nursery with broadly average skills, although many have weak literacy skills. They settle well, quickly adjusting to working and playing together. They make satisfactory progress to the end of Reception, as most reach the standards expected for their age. The rate of progress across Years 1 to 6 is also satisfactory. Achievement is not better than this because the pace and level of expectation of lessons is uneven. Whilst there is a general rise in standards, there is room for improvement in English. Standards in writing have been lower than in reading for several years, and improvement has been slow to occur.

Pupils enjoy learning and taking part in all that the school offers. This is reflected in their good attendance and punctuality. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils clearly know how to lead a healthy lifestyle and the importance of exercise. They play energetically and safely, following school rules well.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Although there is some good teaching throughout the school, there are inconsistencies which hold back pupils' progress. In some lessons, the pace of learning is not brisk enough and the more able pupils, in particular, are not stretched. Pupils do not get consistent advice on how to improve their work, and have little involvement in setting their own targets. The curriculum successfully promotes pupils' personal development, and provides good enrichment.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has led the school with drive and clear vision, supported well by the deputy and assistant headteachers. In the last two years, the provision of a new library, computer suite and outdoor play area has added to the quality of education provided. The high turnover of staff has been managed well and the pace of improvement is quickening. The effectiveness of governors is satisfactory and improving. They have adopted a more active role in setting the direction of the school and checking improvements. Staff have responded well to new initiatives to improve the teaching of English, mathematics and science, which are being led enthusiastically by subject coordinators. Although there is more to do, these factors show that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise attainment in all areas of writing.

- Improve the quality of teaching across the school, providing all pupils with consistently challenging work so that they achieve well.
- Involve pupils in assessing their work and setting their targets to ensure they clearly understand what to do next to improve.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Achievement is satisfactory overall from entry to school in the Foundation Stage to the end of Key Stage 2 and standards are beginning to rise across the school. In part this is due to a more settled staff team. In the Foundation Stage, planning is now effectively based on a secure understanding of children's progress. A broader curriculum has also been established, which includes better opportunities for outdoor play.

All groups of pupils make satisfactory progress to reach standards which are broadly average by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Determined efforts to improve the teaching of English, mathematics and science are bringing more consistent progress. Standards have recovered in Key Stage 1 from a sharp drop in 2006, due to a stronger focus on pupils' needs. Results rose in Year 6 in 2006, in all subjects and the school met its targets. This improvement is evident in current work, although standards in writing continue to be a weakness.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are happy in school. They are well behaved, are welcoming to visitors and are positive about school. They are confident to talk about and tackle any bullying that occurs. Pupils have responded well to the school's efforts to sustain and improve their above average attendance. From entry to the school, pupils' social skills come on quickly and well. They develop a good sense of right and wrong and relate positively to each other and to adults.

Pupils contribute well to their own and the wider community, such as through the work of the school council and taking part in charity events. They are environmentally aware, and keenly participate in recycling waste, and initiatives, such as the 'Little Rotters' club. They develop positive self-esteem because their efforts and achievements are valued and rewarded. When older pupils gain 'Golden Time' rewards, they often choose to work with younger pupils. The confidence gained from working together and their sound basic skills equip them satisfactorily for the next stage of their education.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Secure relationships and the effective management of pupils successfully underpin teaching and learning. Where teaching is good, pupils find lessons challenging and fun. Teaching is especially successful when time is used to good effect, and when tasks ask a lot of pupils. Teaching assistants contribute well to the quality of pupils' learning, particularly for lower ability pupils. However, in some lessons, tasks are not matched carefully enough to all pupils' needs. This slows the pace of learning as some pupils do not do enough or find the work too easy. Teachers do not always share with pupils what they want them to learn, or check how much they have learnt, to help them make the best possible progress.

Formal assessments undertaken at regular intervals allow the school to see where additional support is needed. Across the school, however, the frequency and helpfulness of marking is inconsistent. Although pupils generally find the targets they are given helpful, they do not always understand them. This is because they are not specific enough and pupils have not been involved in setting them.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with several good features. It is appropriately planned to meet adequately the needs of all groups of pupils. However, limited attention has been given to extending provision for those with special gifts or talents.

Good planning for personal development effectively promotes pupils understanding of how to live healthy lifestyles and how to keep safe. Increased opportunities for active play in Key Stage 1 are building well on learning in the Foundation Stage. A wide range of interesting visits and visitors is used to extend opportunities for learning. This is further enhanced by a good programme of clubs and sports outside of normal lessons. Teachers are providing a growing range of opportunities for pupils to practise the key skills of literacy and numeracy in subjects other than English and mathematics. However, the use of computer skills to extend learning is less well established.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good overall. However, the guidance pupils receive on how to improve their work is only satisfactory. Whilst common systems for keeping track of pupils' progress across the school have been introduced, they are not yet used consistently to promote good achievement.

The school is very successful in making pupils feel valued and safe. The procedures for keeping pupils safe from harm are rigorous. Parents receive a good range of information, and the great majority express confidence in the school. As one parent

positively commented, 'Pupils at this school are treated as individuals.' The ready availability of fruit and water, and the stress on regular physical activity, shows the school's concern for pupils' health. Support for pupils with learning difficulties is well organised. Close liaison with external agencies ensures they receive prompt attention. Good planning has resulted in a smooth entry to the Nursery and effective transfer to secondary school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Although this is satisfactory, there are some areas of strength and also signs of improvement. Strengths lie in effective senior leadership and in the commitment of the new staff team to the success of the school. Self-evaluation is satisfactory and improving. Until recently, the checking of school performance relied on the senior staff, but is now involving governors and middle leaders well in the process. This is possible because of greater stability in staffing and in the membership of the governing body. Governors have a good first hand knowledge of the school and have begun to focus their attention on strengthening its academic performance, which were areas of relative weakness in the past.

Good links with external agencies and wider school networks have been established, which are used beneficially. For example, the school has used local authority consultants well to help improve aspects of teaching. The school is increasingly taking into account the views of pupils and parents to determine priorities for improvement. This has seen the introduction of more equipment for use at playtimes and the addition of a healthy option for school lunches.

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## 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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
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	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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

<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	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<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.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	3
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 warm welcome you gave to us when the inspection team recently visited your school. We really appreciated the discussions we had with you. Your views helped us a lot to understand your school.

These are the good things we found out about your school, which provides you with a satisfactory education:

- you work hard in your lessons and mostly reach the targets set for you
- you develop well into mature young people because of the good guidance you receive
- your attendance and punctuality are good
- you are right to say that school is enjoyable and that staff are quick to help you
- you behave well and know how to keep safe
- you know which foods to eat to stay healthy and that exercise is good for you
- the staff take very good care of you and keep you safe from harm
- the headteacher, staff and governors are trying hard to improve your education.

To help you even more, we have asked your school to:

- help you do better in your writing, but you will also have to try hard to do this
- find ways to make teaching and learning good in all lessons to help you do as well as possible
- improve the ways teachers help you understand how to reach the next level in your work.