

Gillamoor Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 121493 |
| Local Authority | North Yorkshire |
| Inspection number | 292137 |
| Inspection date | 22 March 2007 |
| Reporting inspector | Joy Frost |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | 44 |
| School | |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Rev Canon D Purdy |
| Headteacher | Mr G Bennett |
| Date of previous school inspection | 3 December 2001 |
| School address | Main Street Gillamoor York North Yorkshire YO62 7HX |
| Telephone number | 01751 431643 |
| Fax number | - |

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|--------------------------|---------------|
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a very small school situated on the edge of the North Yorkshire Moors. It serves a rural community as well as outlying villages and farms. The 44 pupils are taught in two mixed age classes. The proportion of pupils who are entitled to a free school meal or who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average. Pupils often travel long distances. Many parents choose to send their children to Gillamoor even though they have to provide their own transport because they live outside the catchment area. All teaching staff, except the headteacher, are new to the school since September 2005 and the leadership team is newly established.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness is satisfactory with a number of good features. Pupils' good personal development and well-being, along with the good level of care, guidance and support given to them, is a strength of the school. One parent's comment mirrored the views of many when she wrote, 'The care and support given to my daughter by the staff and pupils at Gillamoor School has enabled her to have confidence and self-esteem in everything she does.' This was verified during the inspection when pupils were friendly, courteous, polite and helpful to each other and to adults in and around the school. The behaviour of all pupils and their contribution to the community are outstanding. Pupils enjoy coming to school and take part with enthusiasm in all aspects of the curriculum, which is especially broad and rich with a strong international dimension. Pupils correspond with schools in other countries receiving first hand evidence of other lifestyles which enhances their cultural awareness.

Pupils start school with skills and knowledge typical for their age except in language and communication development, which is below average. The good provision in the Foundation Stage enables them to make good progress so that by the time they enter Year 1 they are doing as well as, or better than, expected for their age. The good progress continues throughout Key Stage 1 due to good teaching and a wide range of activities well matched to pupils' abilities. By the age of seven, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. This has been reflected for several years in the school's good results in the national tests for pupils in Year 2.

Over a number of years, Key Stage 2 pupils have not achieved as well as they could, especially in mathematics and science. Nevertheless, standards have been broadly in line with those expected nationally for 11 year olds with fluctuations year on year. In 2006, standards in English rose to above average but standards in science fell to below average. This represented only satisfactory progress for pupils from the end of Key Stage 1. The school has recognised this and has employed extra staff to boost the learning of pupils in the Key Stage 2 class. Pupils' progress was good in lessons and in their books since September; standards are starting to rise.

Teaching across the school is good. Teachers are planning activities which closely match pupils' abilities. The good deployment of support staff and small group teaching, especially for pupils at Key Stage 2, is impacting positively on progress in lessons. However, the good systems to track pupils' progress are not used consistently across all subjects. Where the monitoring of progress is consistently applied, for example in writing across the school, standards have improved.

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory and the school demonstrates satisfactory capacity to improve. Although senior leaders and governors have made an accurate assessment of the school's strengths and weaknesses, they are not always evaluating fully the effectiveness of recent strategies for improvement. The governing body is very supportive of the work of the school. It is kept well informed by the headteacher and governors are beginning to ask challenging questions.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in Key Stage 2 particularly in mathematics and science.
- Ensure that the school's systems for tracking pupils' progress are consistently applied across all subjects.

- Improve the rigour by which leaders, managers and governors monitor and evaluate the work of the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils enter the school with average attainment except in language and communication development which is below that expected for their age. Pupils' good progress through the Foundation Stage continues into Key Stage 1 so that, at the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Good progress has not continued throughout Key Stage 2. Standards for 11 year olds have varied year on year and been broadly in line with the national average in English and mathematics, declining to below average in science in the 2006 national tests. This represents only satisfactory progress. In 2005 the school introduced new systems to track how well pupils were doing throughout the year. In English, they have been used consistently and effectively by all staff to track pupils' progress in writing. However, these systems are not applied rigorously enough in all subjects and consequently, have not been used to raise standards in mathematics and science. Standards are beginning to rise because pupils are learning well in lessons. Recent changes in staffing and the good deployment of extra teachers are having a positive impact on the learning of those pupils who are taught in small groups for much of the day.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils said that they feel safe in school and that they all take good care of each other. Pupils are courteous and polite to adults at all times and older pupils were seen to help and support younger ones in and around the school. Their attitudes to learning are exemplary and their behaviour is outstanding. The good personal, social and health education they receive enables them to make informed choices about living healthy lifestyles and the need for a healthy diet. Pupils enjoy their education and have good attitudes to learning. They take part with enthusiasm in all the school offers. Pupils say that there are no incidents of bullying and that they know an adult they can talk to if they have any problems. They make an outstanding contribution to the community through the many opportunities they are given to experience life outside of the school. The active school council makes informed decisions and ensures that pupils have a voice within the school. The good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is a strength of the school. Links with children in other countries give pupils the opportunity to reflect on many different lives and cultures. They work hard to raise funds for local and international causes and their contribution to the development of the local playing field and the new play equipment in the outdoor area is a credit to them. Pupils leave the school with the basic skills necessary to ensure their economic well-being and have a good command of financial matters. The attendance of pupils is only satisfactory due to some parents taking holidays in school time.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching across the school is good. Teachers are closely matching activities to pupils' abilities regardless of age and ensuring that all pupils can access the curriculum at an appropriate level.

The teaching of English is good. Recent work to improve writing across the school has had a positive impact on standards of presentation as well as in the range and quality of writing. In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 class teaching is good because effective links are made between different areas of learning and there is a good balance between direct teaching and structured play opportunities. The teaching assistant is well deployed; she is skilled in developing pupils' language and, together with the teacher, uses assessment well to plan future activities. In Key Stage 2, teachers' planning is thorough with a range of exciting activities matched to pupils' abilities. Teachers ensure that lessons have a quick pace and they plan opportunities for pupils to talk about their work with each other and explain their thinking. Pupils in Year 6 have individual targets for English and mathematics and know what to do to improve their work, but this practice is not yet consistently applied across all subjects and year groups.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum provided by the school is good: it is rich and varied. French is taught throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 and pupils are confident to talk to each other and the teacher using a good accent. Pupils have pen pals in other countries and gain first hand evidence about other cultures. Given the isolated location of the school, pupils are very aware of the world as a whole and have a good understanding of life in other communities. The school does much to overcome the lack of provision within the school for physical education by using the local playing field and the swimming pool in a nearby town. The school offers a good range of extra-curricular sporting activities. With so many pupils not able to attend after school clubs, because of transport arrangements, the lunch time clubs give all a chance to participate. There is a good range of planned visits linked to the curriculum and the school hosts many visitors to the school, for instance teachers from Sweden, Germany and Austria, who help to bring the curriculum alive. The over reliance on published work sheets in some subjects, especially in history and science, curtails the opportunities for pupils to write at length.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good overall. Procedures to ensure pupils' safety, and the support for vulnerable pupils, are good. Staff are well trained and in this small school they know and care for individual pupils very well. The school works hard to ensure that all are safe and happy. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and gifted and talented pupils receive good support. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school: all agreed that the school is providing very good care for the pupils. Systems to ensure the safeguarding of pupils are in place and meet government regulations. There are good examples of academic guidance in the way teachers compile individual records of pupils' progress. However, the tracking systems are not used consistently across all subjects.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The day to day running of the school is smooth and the headteacher has deployed new staff well to work with small groups of pupils and to boost learning. It also allows the headteacher more time to concentrate on leading and managing the school. The monitoring and evaluation of the school's work is satisfactory overall. However, leaders, managers and governors are not

implementing strategies with sufficient rigour to help them determine the impact of their work. The new governing body supports the school very well but the governors have not fully developed their role as a critical friend. The financial management of the school is satisfactory: a larger than average surplus is being held to retain good staffing levels despite predicted falls in pupil numbers. Improvement since the last inspection and the school's capacity to improve further are satisfactory. The school offers satisfactory value for money.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| <i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i> | School Overall |
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Overall effectiveness

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| 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? | 2 |
| The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage | 2 |
| 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

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| How well do learners achieve? | 3 |
| The standards ¹ 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

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|---|---|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 2 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners | 1 |
| The attendance of learners | 3 |
| 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 | 1 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 |

The quality of provision

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|---|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs? | 2 |
| 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? | 2 |

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

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| 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 | 2 |
| 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 |

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you very much for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. I found that your school offers you a satisfactory education with a number of good features. I was especially impressed with your behaviour, which I thought was outstanding at all times, and the wonderful way you all get along together and care for each other. Your attitudes to learning are also good. You told me that you like coming to school and that you work hard because you like your teachers and everyone looks after you well and I agree with you.

I have asked your governors, headteacher and staff to make the following changes.

- To check how well you are doing in all your subjects so you achieve as well as you can, particularly in mathematics and science.
- To be more critical in how they judge whether their work has helped you to do the best you can.

Finally, let me say what a pleasure it was to meet you all and see how well you are doing. Your school gives you lots of opportunities to understand about life outside of your area and I thoroughly enjoyed having lunch with you and watching the heritage DVD you made about 'Heather and Maple'. You can help your teachers to improve the school by continuing to do your best and working hard. I have every confidence that with your excellent behaviour and attitudes you will all continue to do well - well done!