

Ruswarp Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report - amended

Unique Reference Number	121525
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	292148
Inspection date	10 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Roger Gill

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	95
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Elaine Spilman
Headteacher	Mr Harvey McCarthy
Date of previous school inspection	2 December 2002
School address	Ruswarp Whitby North Yorkshire YO21 1NJ
Telephone number	01947 602029
Fax number	01947 602029

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	10 July 2007
Inspection number	292148

Amended Report Addendum

Healthy School award now received.

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small primary school situated in a relatively advantaged area close to Whitby. Most pupils come from further afield. All pupils are of White British heritage. A below average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities; none has a statement of special educational need. The school has experienced a great deal of change since it was last inspected, including changes in leadership and staffing. Recently, there have been some significant changes to the school grounds which have enhanced opportunities for play and personal development. The school has recently been recognised as an Eco School (Bronze level) and has received the Healthy School Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. It has some outstanding features including pupils' personal development and the care, support and guidance the school offers to pupils. Parents and their children commend the improvements they see in the school. The dynamism generated by the headteacher is infectious. As a result, the vast majority of parents support the view that their children come home, 'smiling, happy and relaxed'. Pupils also feel the benefit of their time at Ruswarp. 'The past six years have been an amazing journey for us,' is the typical view of Year 6 leavers this year.

The top quality care, guidance and support that pupils receive have a powerful effect on their personal development and well-being, which are outstanding. Pupils benefit greatly from the vastly improved links with parents, excellent features of the good curriculum and the major enhancement of the school grounds. Older pupils respond admirably to some demanding challenges, which reveal the confidence and valuable life skills they have acquired. For example, they organised and promoted the first Whitby Film Festival and are about to mount a Leavers' Disco for themselves and Year 6 pupils from surrounding schools to be held in the Whitby Coliseum. The social, artistic and business acumen generated is vast.

Academic standards and pupils' achievements have improved greatly this year.

There can be variations from year to year because results in the small year groups are influenced excessively by individual high or low scores. However, the school recognised there was scope for higher standards at the end of Year 6 and this has been proved this year. Learning had been interrupted in the recent past because of changes in staff, however, the position is now more stable. The headteacher quickly identified that progress in Years 3 to 6 could be improved. This has been achieved to the extent that in Year 6, standards are now well above average, which represent good, and in several cases outstanding, achievement for these pupils.

The previous good progress made by children in the Foundation Stage (Reception) has been further improved and is outstanding this year. The new outdoor facilities for the Reception class have made all the difference. Children can now play, socialise, investigate or just enjoy the fresh air in a stimulating area, which matches their imaginatively designed classroom. This has had a positive impact on how well the children learn.

The driving force behind the school's resurgence has been the clear plans for improvement. These are produced by the headteacher, staff and governors incorporating views from children and their parents. The agenda for change included improvements in the standard of writing throughout the school. This goal has been fulfilled in many respects. By the end of Year 6, the majority of the pupils attained an above average level in writing this year. In fact, standards in English overall are exceptionally high. Moreover, pupils in Year 5 are doing very well. By contrast, there is still scope for even better progress in reading and writing in Years 1 and 2, where, although attainment is good, achievement is satisfactory. This is a relative weakness in a good school. The school's good self-evaluation is generally accurate and has pinpointed accurately areas for development. The school provides good value for money and the capacity for further improvement is good.

Good teaching has contributed well to the improvements in personal development and academic progress. The planning of lessons is guided helpfully by the school's generally successful system of assessing pupils' attainment, recording the results and identifying next steps in learning.

The system is not quite so thorough in Years 1 and 2, which is a contributory factor to the slightly slower rate of progress in reading and writing.

The school is innovative. The use of information and communication technology (ICT), for example, is superb as seen in the frequent use of the camcorder by pupils to communicate their ideas. Moreover, the first-hand experiences pupils get from local studies in and around Whitby echo through the curriculum in a fresh and powerful way.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the rate of progress in Years 1 and 2 in reading and writing to match the pupils' good achievement in mathematics.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children start school with skills and knowledge typical for their age. This can vary greatly from year to year: for instance, this year children were generally younger and less well advanced than usual. Standards fluctuate year on year because of the small numbers and the different make up of each year group. Nevertheless, test results coupled with the school's own records show that children achieve excellently in Reception owing to the imaginative purpose behind the curriculum and teaching provided. Thereafter, the pupils make good progress and attain standards that are well above average in Year 6. Standards in reading and writing could be better by the end of Year 2, but these relative shortcomings do not detract from the good achievements made generally. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of the skilled support that they receive. Achievement is also good in ICT, history, geography, design and technology, and art and design as a result of the enriched curriculum and the imaginative use of ICT in every subject possible.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils talk spontaneously, over lunch, about ways in which they fulfil their potential. This indicates how much they have absorbed messages from the school's mission statement. A family atmosphere prevails, which results in care and respect for others. Bullying and poor behaviour are so rare that pupils cannot remember them happening. Exemplary behaviour creates pupils who are eager about everything including being on the school council and acting as a playground pal. Pupils help to prepare the new 'wild' area even when inclement weather threatens to dampen their spirits. Above average attendance indicates pupils' appetite for school. Those parents who voiced opinions during the inspection mused correctly that pupils relish the school's quest for enjoyment and the pursuit of excellence. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Learning is steeped in local culture, but children have wider perspectives as well. They have grown, for example, from meeting followers of Islam and their visit to a Sikh Gudwarah.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good, with some examples of exceptional practice. In Reception, for example, learning prospered when children competed to find some buried

treasure; collecting clues and using metal detectors to help them. Equally learning came alive for older pupils when they used the new stage in the playground to present their findings or made a film to show why a temporary road closure outside the school was necessary. Pupils in Year 5 were inducted outstandingly into the subtle nuances of advertising. This helped them write their own advert for the Mexican meal they are organising before the end of term. Hands on experiences that grab pupils' attention and enthuse them to learn predominate. The assessment of pupils' work is good and in most cases influences new lessons well and has a positive effect on the progress made by pupils with a learning difficulty. Sometimes teaching is satisfactory because activities are not planned rigorously enough to guarantee maximum involvement from the pupils. In Years 1 and 2, information from assessment is not used sufficiently well to improve progress in reading and writing.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum has a good effect generally on pupils' learning and is a strong determinant of their personal development. There are comprehensive programmes to teach essential skills in literacy, numeracy, science and ICT. Beyond this, many other subjects are cleverly combined into themes. These accentuate local possibilities for study and capitalise on educational trips further afield. A topic on rivers in geography integrated the 'Wind in the Willows' in literacy, water sounds in music and field trips to the River Esk. Here, classes collected information to use in mathematics. This provides an outstanding example of planning that adds relevance to pupils' learning. Breadth and depth are added to the curriculum by the inclusion of French for every class and the many clubs such as for photography and gardening. Successful education for health, safety and business enterprise helps pupils acquire the knowledge, skills and flexibility so essential in later life.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides high quality care and support, which results in pupils' excellent personal development. In lessons, older pupils, in particular, consider that teaching has helped them a great deal because it is relentless in its drive for high standards. Furthermore, parents talk about the great progress made by children who find learning difficult. These views are justified particularly because teaching assistants play such a useful role in lessons. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils including risk assessments are in place and working well. Support for healthy living is excellent. The school has provided its own healthy meals for many years using fresh and locally sourced produce. Pupils appreciate this immensely. Parents welcome chances to find out what is going to be learned and to be shown how to help their child at home. Pupils receive good guidance about how to improve their work. Targets are on display and used in a variety of good ways to develop motivation through self-assessment.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management have accurately assessed the strengths and weaknesses of the school, resulting in improved achievement by the end of Year 6 and outstanding progress in Reception. The capacity to tackle areas for further improvement is good. Moreover, other recent developments including the innovations in the curriculum have a strong bearing on

future success. The school has identified the right things to tackle its relative weaknesses. The emphasis up until now has been largely on Years 3 to 6, so now the school is ready to concentrate on Years 1 and 2. Governors have played their part well, but the headteacher has been outstanding in driving developments forward. Subject leaders have gained a lot from being involved in the analysis of standards and achievement and now provide good support for the headteacher.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
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?	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?	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?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
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

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

Inspection of Ruswarp Church of England VC Primary School, Ruswarp, Whitby, YO21 1NJ

Thank you for your help when I inspected your school. I thoroughly enjoyed my day with you. I was unlucky enough to miss those of you in Year 6, but your interesting letters made sure that I knew what you think about the school.

You go to a good school with some first-rate features. The way that you enjoy what goes on and the care that you are given are superb. I know that you enjoy yourselves greatly because my lunchtime companions told me so. I also saw it with my own eyes in lessons and around the school. When I studied photographs of the many exciting opportunities, for learning, out and about in the locality, I was amazed. Furthermore, your masterminding of the Whitby Film Festival was a real achievement. You told me that teaching is mostly good and helps you to learn well and I agree. I really like the way that lessons often contain drama, ICT, lively discussion and many opportunities to practise reading, writing and mathematics. Your headteacher has played a leading role in creating the type of school you have today. As a result, your parents are proud of it and you are well known in the area for your ICT work and business enterprise. In fact, one of your Year 6 pupils was so convinced about the school's outward looking character that they wrote, 'Working within the community is a jigsaw piece that makes Ruswarp School, Ruswarp School'. Nicely put, I think. It sums up my feelings very well.

I know everyone wants to do even better and I have suggested one thing to help. This will complement all the other things that you and the adults want to do. Your headteacher, subject leaders and staff need to make sure that pupils' reading and writing in Years 1 and 2 progress as quickly as other aspects of the curriculum.

You can all help the school do better by always encouraging your school mates and, in particular, praising their progress in celebration assemblies.