



St Cuthbert's Church of England Primary School, Pateley Bridge

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121549
Local Authority North Yorkshire
Inspection number 292156
Inspection dates 15–16 November 2006
Reporting inspector Lesley Clark

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	King Street
School category	Voluntary controlled		Pateley Bridge, Harrogate
Age range of pupils	3–11		North Yorkshire HG3 5LE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01423 711407
Number on roll (school)	92	Fax number	01423 711407
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Dr Gavin Lewis
		Headteacher	Mr Ian Thomson-Smith
Date of previous school inspection	11 June 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

St Cuthbert's has very close links with the nearby church from which it takes its name. A small rural school, it draws most of its pupils from Pateley Bridge; about 10% come from further afield including the nearby US airbase. Pupils come from an extremely wide range of backgrounds with about a third of pupils from disadvantaged socio-economic circumstances. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is much higher than average but there is a correspondingly large proportion of pupils identified as more able. The number with statements of special educational need is broadly average. There are high rates of mobility with roughly a third of pupils joining the school at times other than the usual.

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 with many outstanding features. It successfully cares for all pupils, nurturing their individual talents. The school knows itself extremely well and is justly proud of its achievements since the last inspection. The improvement is outstanding and the quality of education the school provides is substantially better than it was. This is because St Cuthbert's is well led and managed and previous issues identified for the school have been tackled with admirable thoroughness with full support from the governing body. The headteacher's calm, rational, systematic approach has borne fruit and standards have risen as a result. The school's aims, 'to give each child a valuable day every day' and 'to foster an awareness of the needs of others as well as themselves', have been at the forefront of all developments. To its credit, the school has achieved a large measure of success in both. Pupils are quite sure that this is a good school and say they like 'the spacious playgrounds and the teachers who are kind. When you get something wrong they talk to you and help you put it right.' The school gives good value for money and is in a good position to improve further.

Provision in the Foundation Stage is outstanding. Children quickly become confident, purposeful learners because they enjoy everything on offer and develop at their own pace. A varied and creative range of indoor and outdoor activities such as giant cardboard boxes with large pieces of material and a torch instantly set children's imaginations to work, developing their thirst for knowledge and the need to communicate. Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. The school's more cautious evaluation of this aspect is coloured by the behaviour of a small minority of pupils who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school gives them outstanding support, and discussion times at the start of each week have successfully altered the way pupils behave and treat each other. Behaviour is good. Pupils have a real say in what goes on at their school and respect the needs of others.

Standards are above average and pupils achieve well. This is because they are well taught. An outstanding feature is the use of assessment books which are kept by teachers to record what their pupils know and understand and to help them determine what to teach next. Pupils themselves are not consistently required to show whether they found the work easy or difficult. They are not yet involved sufficiently in learning from their mistakes through checking their work and identifying where they might improve.

Results in English and science tend to be better than in mathematics. Although numeracy skills are well taught, pupils have comparatively few occasions to use mathematical language and skills in a wide variety of real and imaginary situations. Consequently, some pupils lack confidence in this subject.

Pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are given excellent care, support and guidance both academically and personally. The curriculum provides an outstanding range of opportunities, including learning another language, as well as many activities at lunchtime and after school. 'Creative days' each term promote learning in a wider context. A healthy lifestyle is advocated well, as is care for the

environment. Pupils respond enthusiastically, aware of fitness issues and the need to save the earth's resources. The school prepares pupils extremely well for their future economic well-being. In such a setting, pupils develop into well rounded, articulate and confident individuals with a touch of exuberance, conscious that what they say and do matters.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics by creating more opportunities for pupils to use mathematical language and skills during lessons in all subjects.
- Help pupils to learn faster. Give them greater responsibility for checking their learning and involve them in deciding what they need to do to improve the quality of their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. When they join the Nursery, children's standards are broadly in line with national expectations. They get off to a flying start in the Foundation Stage learning a wide range of new skills through exploration, discussion and working together on stimulating and thought-provoking activities. Their personal, social and emotional development is outstanding and they are extremely well placed for more formal learning at the start of Year 1. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 to 6 with notable success in reading, speaking and listening by the end of Year 2. Standards are above average by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science, with pupils' performance generally stronger in English and science than in mathematics. The school sets extremely challenging targets which it usually meets, with most pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities reaching nationally expected levels and a substantial proportion of average and the more able pupils exceeding them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils get on well together and show sensitive understanding and tolerance of each other's needs. They are used to discussing issues that affect them and are confident that their views matter and are taken into consideration. As a result, they are happy, lively and energetic and keen to come to school, as shown by the well above average attendance. Pupils take their job seriously as playground buddies, claiming that this has helped eliminate bullying and bad behaviour as 'there are more interesting things to do now.' The democratically elected school council fully represents pupils' views and plays an important role in 'making the school a better place'. Children in the Foundation Stage quickly settle in and show good levels of responsibility, constructing a scene together out of cardboard and other materials to help them tell a story, for example. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They learn to appreciate the lifestyles and beliefs of others through the school's extensive community and charity links as well as close involvement with the church.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching quality is good with examples of outstanding practice in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. Pupils learn well and teachers strive to make lessons interesting and relevant. Behaviour management is good in every class. Outstanding features include assessment of pupils' learning to determine what should be taught next and frequent opportunities for pupils to talk and work together. In the Foundation Stage, children learn through a seamless sequence of activities punctuated by very short bursts of teaching exactly matched to children's developmental stage. Teaching assistants work with great sensitivity with pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and so they learn well. Less strong elements of teaching are a tendency for teachers to talk for too long and to ask questions which are not precisely targeted to develop the learning of different ability groups. Marking is scrupulous, making clear what is good and what needs to be improved. However, pupils are rarely involved in this process and so they feel little urgency to learn from their mistakes. While teachers include literacy imaginatively throughout the day, opportunities are more limited for pupils to practise their numeracy skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum, including that in the Foundation Stage, offers an outstanding range of rich learning experiences for all pupils. Those in Years 1 and 2 benefit from plenty of practical activities, sharing many of the resources available to Foundation Stage children. Termly 'creative days' are used as an imaginative starting or ending point to draw together different elements of the curriculum. This gives both pupils and teachers a chance to work imaginatively, applying what they have learned or taught so far. Provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education is particularly good and has been instrumental in improving behaviour and boosting pupils' confidence. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or those who are more able follow an adapted curriculum which extends their capabilities. The school makes good provision for pupils to learn about the customs and cultures of a multiracial society.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

There is outstanding provision for all aspects of pupils' welfare, and child protection procedures are strong. The systems to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the more able are very effective and the school has the capacity to cope successfully with a wide range of needs and abilities. Parents of pupils who have joined the school at times other than at the beginning of a term express their delight at how well the needs of their children are met and at their growing confidence. The systems to support academic progress are outstanding and have been instrumental in

raising standards and improving the work of the school as a whole since the last inspection. They give a clear overview of progress and lead to challenging targets for pupils. It is easy to track the progress of different pupils and so support is targeted precisely when and where it is needed. Pupils are involved in setting their own targets but seldom refer to them during lessons.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Rigorous self-evaluation has enabled the school to improve radically since it was last inspected. Much has been accomplished in a short time because of methodical management which has tackled the underlying causes impeding achievement. The school has embraced wholeheartedly the idea that pupils learn best if they enjoy what they do. The high attendance at the many different lunchtime and after-school clubs plus enthusiasm for the school plays and pantomimes testify to this. Assessment has been used outstandingly well as a tool to improve teaching and learning. A flexible curriculum has been established which is not narrowly focused on developing literacy and numeracy skills. As a result, standards have gone up and behaviour, once an issue, is good. Pupils now feel that the school belongs to them and the questions they prepared for the selection panel for the new headteacher show that they believe self-discipline and interesting activities to be important features of their school. The governors both support and challenge the school, giving freely of their time to ventures such as the school newspaper, initially instigated by pupils. Monitoring of teaching and learning has emphasised adult rather than pupil participation: the next stage of development is to focus on learning. Most parents appreciate the care and support given to their children and the well rounded education they receive.

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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?	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	1
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
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?	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.

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	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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for your help when I inspected your school. I thoroughly enjoyed my visit because everyone was so welcoming and friendly. I enjoyed talking to you, in French as well as English, and think all the playground buddies do a really good job at making sure you have interesting things to do when you play outside together. Your school gives you a good education and I should like to share with you the reasons why.

These are some of the things that are really good about your school.

- You achieve good standards in your work, especially in English and science.
- I like the way you are encouraged to have a say in what goes on at school through your school council.
- The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is outstanding because they are always busy learning new things, many of which they find out for themselves.
- You have an excellent curriculum with the chance to learn many different things both in lessons and at other times.
- Your school prepares you exceptionally well for your future lives.

Part of my job is to point out what would make this good school get even better. These two things would make a difference.

- Your teachers need to give you more opportunities to use what you learn in mathematics in lots of different ways so that you become more confident at applying what you know.
- Your teachers spend a great deal of time and effort marking your work. They should now include you in this so that you learn from your mistakes and have a say in what you think you need to do to improve the quality of your work. It would also help your teachers if you told them whether you find the work too easy or too difficult so they know how to help you.