



Ripley Endowed Church of England School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121580
Local Authority North Yorkshire
Inspection number 292165
Inspection dates 27–28 September 2006
Reporting inspector Margot D'Arcy

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Ripley
School category	Voluntary controlled		Harrogate
Age range of pupils	4–11		North Yorkshire HG3 3AY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01423 770160
Number on roll (school)	89	Fax number	01423 770160
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Wood
		Headteacher	Mrs J Tinkler
Date of previous school inspection	23 September 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small school. Pupils are drawn from its home village and from neighbouring villages, towns and outlying rural areas. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage and none is at an early stage of learning English. Social and economic factors are favourable; no pupils take free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is low. With the exception of Reception children, pupils are organised into mixed age classes spanning two year groups. Most pupils remain at the school for their entire primary education. There is no school hall so pupils have their lunchtime meal at the Town Hall, which is situated across the road from the school. The school has gained the Basic Skills Quality Mark and a Healthy Schools 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 with outstanding features. Good leadership and management ensure pupils are happy here and achieve well. Parents are full of praise for the work that is done to advance their children's all round development. Academically, pupils make good progress. They achieve well and by the end of Year 6, standards are well above average. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Even at this early stage in the year, Reception children come into school happy and smiling, reflecting the significant work done to ensure they feel secure and ready to learn.

Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. Strengths lie in very good relationships and in the interesting and generally challenging work set. The impact of teaching, coupled with the school's broad curriculum is reflected in pupils' enthusiastic comments about lessons across a wide range of subjects. These include, 'Nothing is boring in this school' and 'There are lots of really cool things to do, such as working with electricity.' Whilst mathematics is also a popular subject, a minority of Key Stage 2 pupils say that at times they find it too easy. The school's leadership has rightly identified that mathematics is a subject where pupils can do better. Tests results here improved this year but still show that not all pupils, particularly the more able, reach their potential. A good plan of action to address this has been formulated with the aim of ensuring that future results, particularly at the higher Level 5, more closely match those attained in English and science.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive. They throw themselves wholeheartedly into lessons, their thirst for learning evident in eager and articulate questions and answers. Behaviour is good overall and generally exemplary during lessons and in assemblies. The school's strong Christian ethos ensures pupils develop a keen moral and spiritual awareness and an understanding of how they can contribute to the local and wider community. The good curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to learn about their own culture of which they are knowledgeable. However, their understanding of other cultures, particularly non-European, is fairly sketchy; something the school has recognised.

The school takes good care of its pupils, including teaching them how to keep healthy and stay safe. A strength is that each child is known as an individual and made to feel an important member of the school's special family. Very strong partnerships with parents, other schools and external agencies enable the school to successfully address individual needs, for example, of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The headteacher and senior teacher are dedicated to providing the best for pupils and work diligently to this end. Good improvements have occurred since the previous inspection and last year saw an increased focus on the rigour with which the school monitors its work. In response, improvements to systems for tracking pupils' progress are well underway and providing a clearer picture of achievement in Key Stages 1 and 2; a similar system for the Foundation Stage is being planned. This is leading to more precise target-setting and focused action to secure improvements. Self-evaluation is

good. The school has a secure understanding of its strengths and where it needs to improve. Value for money is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the proportion of pupils gaining Level 5 in mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- Ensure that curriculum provision allows pupils to gain a good understanding of cultures different to their own, and especially non-European cultures.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. Pupils' begin school with standards that are generally above average and leave attaining results that are well above. During the Reception year, children gain a secure grounding in all areas of the curriculum and are well prepared for beginning Year 1. Rapid progress occurs during Years 1 and 2 in response to outstanding teaching. By the end of Year 2, standards are well above average. During Years 3 to 6, progress is good overall, with strengths in English and science. In these subjects pupils almost always reach the expected level and many attain well beyond this. Whilst standards in mathematics are above average, in this subject fewer pupils reach the higher levels and the overall rate of progress is satisfactory rather than good. In particular, more able pupils' do not always build as well as they could on their earlier attainment at the end of Year 2. Pupils' with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because their individual needs are catered for effectively in lessons and through specialised work programmes.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils' exude a real joy of learning. This is reflected in their good attendance and keen interest in lessons and other school activities, such as extra-curricular clubs, residential visits and assemblies. In a poignant assembly, pupils' sat entranced as they listened to a story that enabled them to understand the lasting impact of even very simple gifts. Although pupils say that they enjoy finding out about different cultures, their understanding is less well developed than in other aspects of personal development. Behaviour and relationships are good, but at lunchtime some pupils become impatient and boisterous waiting to enter the hall or walk back to school. Pupils report that there is no bullying. All show a willingness to take on responsibilities, such as older pupils watching over younger ones at breaktimes and being school councillors. Even the youngest pupils are involved as council members enabling them to understand democratic processes and the responsibility of acting and speaking for others. As one five year old put it, 'We make decisions that everyone agrees with!' The school's provision has ensured pupils are aware of how to keep healthy and prepares them well for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good with outstanding features. Teachers have high expectations for pupils' work and behaviour. In response, pupils show respect and work hard. The careful thought given to planning interesting lessons that will motivate pupils reflects teachers' secure subject knowledge and good insight into individual needs. Lesson plans are currently being modified to ensure that additional challenge is always planned to meet the needs of more able pupils. Overall, however, teachers make good use of assessment information to adapt work and questions to pupils' learning needs. Teaching assistants contribute well, both in lessons and in helping to teach specialised work programmes. The needs of the youngest children are well met through good opportunities to learn through play and to use their senses to explore and investigate. Throughout the school, teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to support learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good, broad curriculum that promotes pupils' academic and personal development well. The efforts that go into planning work and enhancing the provision through visits, visitors and links with the community and other schools really pay off in terms of pupils' enjoyment. French and German classes at Key Stage 2, practical investigations and outdoor lessons and assemblies are particularly popular. Pupils also appreciate the work being done to forge links between subjects. For example, they talked animatedly about applying their understanding of symmetry to produce patterns in the Islamic tradition following work done in religious education. Good enrichment opportunities in information and communication technology (ICT) occur on the residential visits for Year 4 to 6 pupils. The school is working with other schools to develop more specific provision for gifted and talented pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Provision is good with some outstanding features. Pupils like the staff and say that they would feel confident to speak to them if they were troubled. The overwhelming admiration from parents for the way the school cares for their children is clearly evident in the quality of relationships and the degree to which staff know every pupil. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported very effectively and achieve well as a result. The school's outstanding commitment to inclusion is seen in the focus being given to ensure nothing stands in the way of pupils achieving their potential. For example, monitoring has identified some disruption to achievement in Year 3, in response to transition arrangements, so these are being improved. Behaviour

management training for midday assistants is having a positive impact. Procedures for child protection, health and safety and vetting of staff are in place.

Pupils' academic progress is generally tracked well. More frequent mathematics assessments are planned for Key Stage 2 pupils to aid earlier identification of any underachievement. Useful strategies to involve pupils in assessing their own learning, together with the setting of appropriate improvement targets provide them with a valuable insight into their own learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has ensured good improvements have been made since the last inspection and is continually striving to achieve more. Given her significant teaching commitment the headteacher's input has been exceptional and is fittingly recognised by staff, governors, parents and the local authority. A senior teacher very ably supports the headteacher and together they form an impressive team. Recent leadership training for both has spurred them on to make additional refinements to systems and procedures, such as monitoring, assessment and inclusion practices that bode well for further improvements to standards, achievement and provision. Self-evaluation and improvement planning are good showing that the school has good capacity to improve. Governors are well involved with the school and support it effectively. They monitor the school's work, including visiting lessons, and ask pertinent questions about the school's provision.

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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?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
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	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	2

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?	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.

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	1
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 contribution to the inspection of your school. I thoroughly enjoyed the two days I spent with you and would like to share with you the main things I found out. I agree with you that Ripley is a good school. I was very impressed with how much you love learning and enjoy school. Of course the good teaching you get and the interesting range of lessons and other activities goes a long way in making you feel so enthusiastic. From Reception to Year 6 you all work hard and achieve well, reaching good standards at every stage, particularly in English and science. Although you do quite well in mathematics, I feel that you could achieve even better in this subject by the end of Year 6. Your school thinks so too and has some good plans to help you do this.

When we chatted it was clear that you have a very good understanding of many subjects. You were a little unsure, however, when we talked about the various beliefs and traditions of people from different cultures. I have asked your school to help you understand this aspect more fully so that you are better prepared for living and working in our multicultural society.

I noticed that you behave very well in lessons and assemblies and try hard to do so at other times.

Finally, your headteacher does a really good job in leading and managing the school. She works extremely hard with all the staff and governors to give you the best she can.