



Wistow Parochial Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121596
Local Authority North Yorkshire
Inspection number 292169
Inspection dates 7–8 February 2007
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	Wistow
School category	Voluntary controlled		Selby
Age range of pupils	5–11		North Yorkshire YO8 3UU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01757 268378
Number on roll (school)	116	Fax number	01757 269325
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Ms Dorothea Howland
		Headteacher	Mrs K Tissiman
Date of previous school inspection	29 October 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This small rural school, three miles from Selby, has doubled in size in the last ten years. It serves an increasingly wide area beyond the local parish from which it takes its name. Pupils are of White British heritage. A larger than usual proportion of pupils enter or leave the school at times other than the usual. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average but the number with statements of special educational need or who are vulnerable is higher than usual. For the past three years, the school has run a global education programme involving close links, including staff exchanges with schools in several different countries. At the time of the inspection the Year 6 teacher was in a partner school in Ghana.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Wistow Parochial CE Primary fully meets its aim to create 'a happy learning community, providing a high quality holistic education with a global perspective in a caring, safe, Christian environment'. It is an exceptional and happy school that is much loved by its pupils, staff and governors. Outstanding leadership and management ensure that pupils are extremely well prepared for their future lives. Standards are above average and achievement is outstanding because pupils are taught exceptionally well in all classes. The school's self-evaluation correctly identified its strengths, acknowledging many outstanding aspects, but concluded that it was good overall because it is still developing. It has made good improvement since the last inspection, particularly in the Foundation Stage where provision is now outstanding. The school gives outstanding value for money and has excellent capacity to improve further.

An excellent, all round education with a strong emphasis on personal development enables pupils to develop into mature young people appreciating their rights and responsibilities as individuals. Pupils thrive here because they take a lot of responsibility for their learning themselves. Year 6 pupils agree that 'personalised learning is the best thing about our school and gives you a really good opportunity to show what you are capable of.' They have a great deal of choice as to how and where they work, who they work with and how they present their finished product. This allows pupils to work in the way that suits them best. Pupils say, 'We all do what we want to at our own level.' 'We've noticed that we do better work and get more done. We have to think for ourselves.' The pay-off is seen in above average standards which are rising each year, with significant progress made by all groups of pupils and high levels of enjoyment as pupils learn with great interest and independence. Attendance is above average and would be very high if families did not take their children out of school during term time for holidays.

Children in the Foundation Stage become confident learners. Exciting and thought-provoking activities both inside and outside the classroom help them to develop their communication and language skills and to gain a wide understanding of the world around them. The strong emphasis on learning through experience starts most effectively here and this approach is now increasingly used in the rest of the school. There is an exciting and rich curriculum which promotes active, healthy living and learning through enjoyment. The frequent opportunities to practise literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills generate excellent learning. The school's strong emphasis on global education, fostered through links with schools in other countries as well as through exploring issues around fair trading, recycling and sustainability enables pupils to have a mature grasp of complex world issues.

The systems to support pupils' personal development and to guide them academically are outstanding, ensuring excellent progress for all pupils at each stage of their education. Pupils assess their own learning, which helps them to have a very clear understanding of what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils do not have

enough opportunities to write about things that relate to their own experiences, which limit their achievements in this area of their learning.

The school thrives on teamwork, demonstrated by both staff and pupils, who have a strong voice in what happens at school. They readily take on responsibilities and speak with quiet confidence and assurance because they receive great support and encouragement. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are vulnerable are fully included in the school's work and are given discreet but highly effective assistance. Parents are mostly very positive about the school and appreciate its happy family atmosphere but a substantial minority would like their views to be taken more fully into consideration.

What the school should do to improve further

- Give pupils more real purposes for writing so they want to write well.
- Seek further ways to involve parents through consultation and continue to work with them so family holidays do not interrupt schooling.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement is outstanding and standards are above average. From a below average starting point, especially in their communication, language and literacy, children make an excellent start in the Foundation Stage and continue to make excellent progress in every class. Reception children benefit enormously from working with Year 1 pupils, who in turn blossom as they learn through stimulating play and investigative activities. Good standards of reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 give pupils a good foundation when they start in Year 3. By the end of Year 6, standards are comfortably above average especially in mathematics and science, in which subjects roughly half the pupils exceed nationally expected levels. The proportion is usually smaller in English. The trend in the school's results is upwards and pupils make significant gains during their time in school with results in 2006 confirming this. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do exceptionally well because of the intensive individual support they receive to help them learn effectively. Those who join the school at times other than the usual make similar progress. The school sets challenging targets which it meets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and work and play with great enthusiasm and confidence. They relish the many different sporting opportunities and extra-curricular clubs. Most tellingly they appreciate 'personalised learning' because 'You're allowed to work with who you want and where you want and so you always try your best.' Pupils are proud of their achievements. They behave well and older pupils are very kind to younger ones. Lunchtimes are especially pleasant occasions when pupils sit

and chat while they eat and older ones serve each other at table. Pupils are sure that there is no bullying, saying 'sometimes there's a little hint of it but it's quickly sorted out.' If they have any major concerns they ask for a class discussion to help them resolve it. The school council fully represents pupils' views, organising fair trade events, for example, or suggesting new playtime equipment such as skateboards, stilts and knee pads. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They have a sensitive appreciation of other cultures and countries and a strong sense of human rights, social justice and the importance of health. They are exceptionally well prepared for their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Lessons are fun, interesting and challenging. From Reception through to Year 6 the focus is firmly on learning. Investigation, problem solving, using practical resources and making independent decisions are the norm. Lessons quickly get underway as teachers intersperse demonstrations and teaching points throughout as the need arises. This allows pupils to get on quickly and to cover a great deal of work as a consequence. Pupils are encouraged to ask questions and teachers' effective questioning enhances pupils' learning by encouraging them to explain their thinking. Scrupulous planning, adjusted at the end of each day in the light of what pupils have learned, results in highly effective learning for all. Marking is excellent with pupils setting more targets for themselves than the teachers do.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

This outstanding curriculum ensures that the promotion of essential skills is balanced by enjoyable, thought-provoking projects that challenge pupils to use these skills effectively. The emphasis on individual learning ensures that pupils of all abilities access a curriculum that matches their needs extremely well. This greatly benefits higher achievers as well as those who find learning through doing easier than through listening. The school's outstanding global education programme successfully helps pupils understand that decisions and actions may have negative as well as positive implications. A good range of extra-curricular clubs further expand pupils' educational opportunities. Foundation Stage children follow an outstanding curriculum which fully utilises the outdoors as a learning environment.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school gives outstanding care, guidance and support for all its pupils. Child protection procedures are robust and procedures for safeguarding pupils meet current

government requirements. The systems to support pupils with learning difficulties are outstanding. Talented or gifted pupils are also catered for extremely well so they can pursue their interests independently. The systems to support academic progress are outstanding and lead to highly effective learning. The school's extensive provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education, with twice-weekly discussions about important issues in which pupils often take the lead, promotes outstanding personal development. While parents fully appreciate the support given to their children and the regular information they receive about their progress, they would like to be consulted more often so their views can also be considered.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The school's outstanding direction is firmly founded on teamwork and a passionate belief in individual learning as part of a global community. The leadership team works extremely efficiently because responsibilities are sensibly divided and shared fully. As new projects arise, other members of staff are invited to join the team for a fixed period so they too gain leadership experience. The headteacher does a full share of teaching and therefore leads by example to promote effective learning and generate innovative teaching methods. The assistant headteacher's work in analysing test data and in assessment effectively ensures that pupils make the best possible progress. Management is highly efficient because the school runs on simple systems that work. Through creating a more flexible curriculum and regrouping pupils in the afternoons, the school ensures at a stroke a rich education as well as giving each teacher planning, preparation and assessment time each week. This, together with pupils taking greater responsibility for their learning, has further cemented the team spirit that is so palpable in this school. Governors are warmly supportive of all that the school does and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and relative weaknesses. Pupils thrive in this happy, equable atmosphere. The end result is lively and inquisitive young people with a strong sense of justice and fair play, who attain good standards of literacy and numeracy that equip them very well for their future lives.

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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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
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	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

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?	1
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?	1
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	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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 very much for your warm welcome and for talking to me about your school. I really enjoyed meeting so many of you and looking at your work. My visit was part of the inspection system for the whole country that assesses how well pupils are learning. Yours is an outstanding school and I agree with those of you who said 'personalised learning' is what makes your school really special. You all help to make it a very happy school.

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

- you achieve good standards in your work and you really work hard to meet the targets you set yourself
- you are fully included in what goes on at school, both in lessons, through all the jobs you do about school and through your school council which fully represents your views, including those of the younger children
- you behave well and look after each other very well indeed
- your attendance is better than in most other schools though some of you miss several weeks through taking holidays in term time
- your teachers make learning interesting and fun and they help you to make excellent progress because they take such care with marking your work and involving you in checking what you need to do to improve it
- I was impressed at how much you know about important global issues such as fair trading, recycling and sustainable resources
- your school is extremely well led and managed and prepares you exceptionally well for your future lives.

It is part of my job to point out things to make your school even better. Your writing would improve if you had more real reasons for writing well, for example for a school newspaper. Also, some of your parents would like your school to take their views into account as well as yours. These two things would certainly make your school even better.