



# Askrigg Voluntary Controlled Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 121602  
**Local Authority** North Yorkshire  
**Inspection number** 292171  
**Inspection date** 21 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Rosemary Rodger

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Yorebridge
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled		Askrigg, Leyburn
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11		North Yorkshire DL8 3BJ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01969 650331
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	58	<b>Fax number</b>	01969 650983
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Andrew Wallington
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr David Eldridge
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 November 2001		

<b>Age group</b> 4-11	<b>Inspection date</b> 21 November 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 292171
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

This very small primary school serves an advantaged rural area on the outskirts of Askrigg in Wensleydale. A very small number of pupils have free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. All pupils are of White British heritage. The headteacher joined the school at the beginning of term.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Askrigg Church of England primary school has much to be proud of. The pivotal role it plays in the local community, the exceptionally positive views of parents, and the dynamic leadership of the recently appointed headteacher all contribute to the judgement that this is a good school. This is supported by parents' positive views such as, 'This is a great small school with happy well rounded children and excellent staff' and 'The school is extremely caring, friendly, and good manners are encouraged and valued'. The headteacher's judgement on its overall effectiveness is accurate, if modest, in some respects and very succinctly and accurately pinpoints what needs to be improved and how this can be done. Much has been achieved in a very short time, such as the actions to improve pupils' attitudes towards mathematics and the involvement and communication with parents. Management and leadership overall are good. The staff carry out their management responsibilities well. The outstanding leadership of the headteacher, despite difficult circumstances, is widely acknowledged by pupils and staff. A day for parents to help support their children in mathematics was judged by them to be 'superb'. Relationships with parents are good. Improvements since the last inspection to the provision for the very youngest children have been good. Quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are good and much improved since the last inspection, especially the well resourced dedicated area that allows the children to make a seamless transition to Key Stage 1. The school has a good capacity to improve. Value for money is good.

Standards on entry to school are average. Pupils maintain above average standards throughout the school in English, mathematics and science. This capability is well reflected in their confidence and contribution to class discussions. Results in the most recent national tests show that there was some underachievement in mathematics for more able pupils. Improvements to resources and targeting of pupils who do not achieve as well as they could in mathematics are now in place. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and work closely with their peers for all their learning. They are supported admirably by committed and hardworking teaching assistants. The work seen during the inspection in art and design and information and communication technology (ICT) is above average. This is magnificently captured in the pupils' elaborate recount of their animated production that resulted in winning a local 'WAFTA' (Wensleydale Area Film and Television Awards) against other schools.

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. A strong level of mutual respect and secure, friendly relationships are consistent features of all teaching. This is a particularly positive feature given the short time the Key Stage 2 teachers have been in school.

Pupils achieve well. They thoroughly enjoy school and their personal development and well-being is excellent. It is extremely well fostered through high quality care, guidance and support. The school has a palpable buzz about it. There is no complacency about the beautiful environment in which the school is located. Pupils fully understand their responsibilities with regard to protecting the wider environment through recycling and other energy saving efforts. The preparation of pupils for their wider roles is well

exemplified by their service on the school council and their financial acumen in fund raising and their support for charitable causes. The curriculum is good and is effectively enriched through the productive liaison with two neighbourhood schools so that staff expertise is used to benefit all pupils. High quality art and design displayed around the school and the rewards pupils achieved recently for their good singing are clear indicators of a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils show great enjoyment of school and they eagerly anticipate involvement in a school production of 'Scrooge' as part of the Christmas celebrations.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Provide a higher level of challenge for more able pupils in mathematics throughout the school.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children's skills on entry to the school are broadly average except in their personal, social and emotional development, which are above average.

Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2. Results in national tests in 2006 and standards in work seen support this judgement. Standards are above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. Results in tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2006 were significantly above the national average, although more able pupils did not do as well in mathematics as they did in previous years. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well and make good progress as a result of the effective support they receive. There is a good impact on standards in other subjects as a result of the priority given to the creative subjects such as art and design and music. Pupils are competent in ICT and standards from work seen are above average.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

The personal development and well-being of pupils are outstanding, although more modestly judged by the school. Pupils know they need to eat healthily. They keep fit through regular swimming lessons, physical education and after school sporting clubs. School is a haven of safety for pupils due to the strong sense of care shown by all staff who know all the pupils extremely well. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is excellent. The strong, caring ethos is well reflected in the views of pupils and parents alike. It is well captured in their views: 'A happy and open school with a strong caring attitude'. Behaviour is outstanding both in classes, the dining room and in the playground. Pupils' enjoyment of school is shown in their above average attendance.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils' excellent attitudes contribute well to their learning and interest in lessons. Whole class group time is used well to engage pupils in discussion and challenge. Teachers make learning enjoyable and promote progress through effective demonstrations and explanations. Pupils' contributions in whole class sessions are valued and praise is used effectively to develop pupils' confidence. Learning in the mixed age Key Stage 1 and Foundation Stage class is typified by well planned lessons that take fully into account the wide range of abilities in the class so that work is generally well matched to pupils' needs. However, higher attaining pupils could be challenged more effectively in mathematics. Assessment procedures are robust and the effective analysis of what pupils have achieved is used well to target those most in need of additional support. Pupils' work is diligently marked so they know what to do to improve their work.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is very well balanced between teaching basic skills and activities which enrich pupils' learning. Pupils contribute their personal experiences well in discussions. A large number of Key Stage 2 pupils enjoy the opportunity to play a musical instrument. They spoke very positively of these experiences. The school makes effective use of the natural environment to foster pupils' personal development. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good and achieves a good balance of indoor and outdoor learning.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 1**

The secure, caring ethos that pervades the school and the approachability of staff contributes to the outstanding judgement for this aspect of the school's work. Arrangements to protect pupils are in place. Staff are vigilant and pupils trust them. Arrangements for the transfer of pupils to secondary education are robust. The youngest pupils make a smooth transition from the local nursery class to the Reception group and from there into Key Stage 1. This is shown very clearly in the confident and assured manner in which the youngest children in school enjoy all they do.

## **Leadership and management**

#### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. Despite considerable staffing changes in the past few months, there is a strong sense of purpose about the school's work.

The headteacher has completed a rigorous review of the future needs of the school and has taken prompt action to involve parents and to improve resources for teaching and learning. Teamwork is a strong feature of the school and staff carry out their responsibilities well. Parents commented very favourably on the positive impact made by the headteacher in a very short time. Governors are very well informed and use their professional expertise to good effect in running the school to ensure they achieve good value for money.

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## Inspection judgements

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

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	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

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

What a splendid day I spent in your school. Thank you all so much for the help you gave me and especially for your politeness and helpfulness around school. You all have much to be proud of in your school. The things that are really good are listed below.

- You work hard and enjoy coming to school.
- Your teachers make your learning interesting and you are given lots of encouragement to talk about your work, especially the drama you were preparing.
- Your teachers plan exciting activities for you in the 'little class' where children skilfully painted owls based on a storybook character.
- The photographs displayed around school brilliantly illustrate some of your work this term.
- Your school drawings for the website are fantastic. I would have found it very hard to select one for the website as they are all brilliant.

Your headteacher and teachers have been asked to do one thing to help improve your learning. You can help too by saying when you find your work too easy.

- Provide more challenging work for those of you who find mathematics too easy.

Thank you again and good luck for the rest of the term. I hope you all enjoy the Christmas production of 'Scrooge'.