



Heworth Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121605
Local Authority York
Inspection number 292174
Inspection date 14 November 2006
Reporting inspector Christopher Keeler HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	53 Heworth Road
School category	Voluntary aided		York
Age range of pupils	4-11		North Yorkshire YO31 0AA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01904 424742
Number on roll (school)	131	Fax number	01904 424742
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr John Hattam
		Headteacher	Mr David Brown
Date of previous school inspection	16 September 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

This smaller than average school serves a mixed residential area close to the centre of York. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage. A lower than average proportion of pupils is in receipt of free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly above average.

The school has gained the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Healthy Schools Accreditation, the Gold Arts Mark and is an FA Charter Standard School.

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 and rapidly improving school. This is because of the very good leadership demonstrated by the headteacher in collaboration with a highly supportive senior leadership team. The inspectors' view is shared by the overwhelming majority of parents who recognise the high level of care and support offered by the school in which every child matters. Most of all, they value the openness and approachability of the headteacher and his team which enables good home/school relationships to prosper. The high quality relationship between staff, pupils, parents and governors are the hallmark of this school and reflects the strong Christian ethos that prevails.

Pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, enter the school with attainment above national expectations and achieve well. Due to outstanding teaching in the Foundation Stage pupils make good progress and often exceed national expectations by the time they enter Key Stage 1. Pupils usually continue to make good progress as they move through the school to Year 6. However, in 2006 the results of assessments at the end of Year 2 were below average. This was against the trend of previous years and was mainly due to inconsistent teaching which restricted progress. These pupils are now in Year 3 and the issue regarding inconsistent teaching remains. In the national tests for Year 6 pupils in 2006, the results in English, mathematics and science in relation to higher achieving pupils were significantly above the national average. Work undertaken by pupils in the current Year 6 indicate that similar results can be anticipated in 2007 and this reflects the schools' expectations.

The quality of teaching is good overall with outstanding practice in the Foundation Stage and at the end of Key Stage 2. This is why pupils make good progress overall. Lessons are interesting and fun. Teachers involve the pupils in their learning with good opportunities for discussion and teamwork. Systems are in place to track pupils' progress as they move through the school. The link between the assessment of pupils' progress during lessons and future planning is not fully established throughout the school.

The curriculum is well planned and meets the needs of mixed-age classes. It is enriched with a range of extra-curriculum activities, visit and visitors that extend pupils knowledge and skills.

Care and support are very good and this impacts on pupils' progress and well-being. This is acknowledged by parents. Pupils get on very well with their teachers who are approachable and concerned for their welfare. They speak enthusiastically about their experiences, for example, 'This is the best school I have been to. If we get stuck with our work the teachers always help and encourage us.' Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their attendance which is good. They know what it means to live a healthy life and are able to converse with some authority on the dangers of substance abuse.

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher and his team have a clear vision regarding the future direction of the school, based on accurate self- evaluation. Monitoring systems with regard to improving teaching and learning have been put

into place. Subject leaders do not have sufficient opportunities to evaluate and monitor standards in areas for which they are responsible.

The capacity to improve is good and the school gives good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils in Year 3 receive stable and consistent teaching.
- Improve assessment during lessons in order to plan future work that will enhance pupils' progress.
- Involve subject leaders in evaluating and monitoring standards in areas for which they are responsible.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

When children first enter school, their attainment is generally above that typical for their age in language, communication and mathematical development. Overall, children, and particularly the boys, are not as skilled in writing and begin from starting points similar to expected levels. The strong provision in the Foundation Stage means that children are quick to reach and often exceed the nationally expected levels for their age by the start of Year 1. Work in lessons and children's books confirms that progress is generally good as children move through the school to Year 6 to reach challenging targets. The 2006 Year 2 assessments were untypical of recent trends and were below average in all core subjects, particularly in mathematics and writing where too few pupils reached the higher levels. This was due to inconsistent teaching over a four year period. Furthermore, six pupils were new to the class in the months leading up to the assessments and the group included a greater number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities than is usually the case. The current Year 3 pupils are making satisfactory progress but in order to make good progress the issue relating to teacher stability needs to be addressed.

In the national tests for Year 6 pupils in 2006, very nearly all pupils achieved the expected standards in English, mathematics and science. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels was significantly above the national average in all subjects. Pupils in the current Year 6 are making good progress towards reaching their targets for 2007 because their work is well planned, challenging and well taught.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress with regard to their personal development. They are confident, welcoming and feel they belong to a close and caring community. Relationships between the pupils and between pupils and staff are very good. A typical comment made by pupils during the inspection was, 'This is a good school because everyone gets on.' Pupils enjoy their schooling and refer to lessons as 'fun', 'interesting' and 'stimulating'. Attendance is good. Pupils are developing good working habits. In

nearly all lessons they listen carefully, focus on activities and respond to the teacher in a polite manner. Behaviour is consistently good during lessons and in the playground. Pupils mix well socially and are developing a clear understanding of right and wrong.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The curriculum affords pupils experiences through visits and visitors to appreciate their place in the wider world. The school council gives pupils an opportunity to contribute to the school community and prepares them well for making a positive contribution to society. They learn about the complexities of decision-making and the importance of listening to the views of others. At present too few pupils benefit from this valuable experience. Pupils are well prepared for their future economic well-being through the acquisition of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills as well as opportunities to work in teams. Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and are learning about the dangers associated with drug and alcohol abuse.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Strong relationships and the teamwork of teachers and support staff are the centre of the school. They contribute significantly to the children's good progress. The quality of teaching and learning is good with examples of outstanding provision seen in the Foundation Stage and Year 6. Where learning is most effective teachers have good subject knowledge, pupils are challenged and tasks are tailored well to their needs. In these lessons teachers engage pupils in lively discussions and focus their attention through a range of practical and exciting activities. As a consequence, pupils work hard, are well motivated and achieve well. Activities maintain a brisk pace with skilful questioning keeping pupils 'on their toes'. Children say the teachers make learning fun. This was very clear in lessons where teachers engaged pupils in energetic and stimulating dialogue which resulted in high levels of concentration and enjoyment. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of the strong support they receive in lessons. Continual disruptions in staffing in the current Year 3 over the past twelve months have resulted in inconsistencies in teaching and the achievement of children.

Assessment procedures and the tracking of pupils' progress as they move up the school are in place.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good, meets all requirements and includes a wide range of learning experiences that enable children to develop well, as confident and independent learners. Pupils from Year 3 upwards enjoy and benefit from learning French and German. There are an increasing number of clubs and extra-curricular activities such as those in arts,

sports and music. These opportunities are popular with the children, well attended and contribute strongly to their health and enjoyment. The planning of opportunities for pupils to consolidate basic skills in other subjects is gaining momentum. The onus is on individual teachers to plan this type of work. However, the school recognises the need to extend this practice to all classes.

A sound programme of personal, social and health education supports pupils' good personal development. Visits and visitors are used well to fire children's interest and develop self-esteem. Children in Year 6 speak proudly of their residential visit to Robin Wood earlier in the year and have benefited greatly from the focus on building teamwork and working together.

The school has correctly identified that the provision for outdoor play activities in the Foundation stage is limited at present, due to accommodation issues. This is being addressed with support from the governing body and, as a result, features strongly in the school's development plan over the next year.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good overall. The quality of care and support is very good and this impacts on pupils' progress and well-being. Parents confirm that their children are very well cared for and supported. Child protection measures are in place and arrangements for health and safety are good. Good links exist with external agencies to support the welfare and progress of all pupils. Pupils feel safe and secure because they know that all staff are very approachable. They do not experience bullying, but are confident that if the issue was to arise it would be quickly and effectively dealt with.

Procedures are in place to record pupils' attainment and to set challenging targets. Guidance for pupils is generally satisfactory. The practice of assessing pupils' progress during lessons and using the information to plan future work is not well established. Some teachers give constructive and helpful feedback to pupils when marking their work, but this is not consistent throughout the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. He has a very clear understanding of what needs to be done to improve the school and this is borne out of accurate self-evaluation. With a clear focus on raising standards he has successfully identified and addressed a number of key issues relating to teaching and learning. This has required taking difficult decisions when introducing initiatives and in managing change. As a result of his determination and careful management, the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils are good. The other members of the senior leadership team demonstrate a good understanding of their roles and share the vision of the headteacher. Most importantly they lead by example, particularly

with regard to the quality of teaching. As a consequence, expectations with regard to both teachers and pupils are high. There exists a strong sense of teamwork at all levels of management.

The school improvement plan is a useful mechanism to help plan and bring about change. Many initiatives are still to bear fruit, however, signs of progress are evident. In some cases the impact on pupils' learning is not made clear at the planning stage and this inhibits progress. Arrangements to monitor teaching and learning by the senior management team are in place. Subject leaders, however, do not monitor standards or teaching with regard to their areas of responsibility.

The governing body are supportive, while focussed on improving standards. They hold the headteacher to account and set challenging targets. Progress since the previous inspection has been good. The capacity to improve further is very good.

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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	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	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 very much for welcoming Mr Isherwood and me to your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and watching you work during lessons. The information you gave us helped us to understand a great deal about your school. You told us it's a good school and we agree.

The main strengths of your school are:

- the headteacher provides very good leadership for your school and is well supported by the senior teachers
- that teaching is good throughout the school and outstanding in the Foundation Stage and in Year 6
- the high standard of work in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6
- the care and support that you receive from all of the staff is outstanding
- your good behaviour in lessons and in the playground
- the relationships between pupils and between staff and pupils
- you know what to do to keep healthy and safe.

To help you do even better we have asked the school to:

- ensure that pupils in Years 3 have one teacher throughout the year
- make sure that teachers look very closely at how you are doing during lessons and as a result give you work to help you do even better
- give teachers who are very good at certain subjects the chance to see what you are doing.