

New Earswick Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121661
Local Authority	York
Inspection number	292194
Inspection dates	9–10 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Peter Howard

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Paul Hudson
Headteacher	Miss Carole Farrar
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2002
School address	Hawthorn Terrace New Earswick York North Yorkshire YO32 4BY
Telephone number	01904 768228
Fax number	01904 750535

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Although the school is voluntary aided, it is not attached to any particular religious denomination, but is related to the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust. The school is situated in a model village established by the Trust. As a result of changes in the local population, the number on roll is falling and the school is now a little smaller than average. The area has higher than average levels of social and economic deprivation and the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average. Most pupils are of White British heritage and none are in the early stages of learning English. The school is presently involved in major reconstruction to improve its facilities and to house a new Children's Centre. The school holds the Investors in People Award, the Inclusion Award, the Healthy School Award, the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark and Artsmark Gold.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This improving school is satisfactory overall, with a number of good features. The headteacher, governors and senior staff are steering the school effectively during a period of a falling roll, reduction of staff and through the current rebuilding programme. This process is well supported by the good partnerships the school enjoys with a range of agencies and other schools. Leadership and management are satisfactory. While constructive improvements to teaching and assessment have contributed to raising standards, they have not yet been applied with sufficient consistency to accelerate progress beyond the present satisfactory level. Nevertheless, based on what has been achieved so far and the effective collaboration of senior staff, the capacity for further improvement is good. The school successfully places a strong emphasis on its work with the local community; parents are increasingly engaged in their children's education and they give the school their overwhelming support.

The school provides a lively and caring environment in which all pupils are valued. They are offered many opportunities to be involved in school life and enjoy undertaking responsibilities. These include participating in the effective school council, acting as peer mediators and helping others to manage their own behaviour at playtime. Staff know the children well and relationships between pupils and staff are good. As a result, behaviour is good and the atmosphere in school is calm and purposeful.

Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage because of imaginative teaching, which is well geared to meeting the needs of young learners. After a period of several years, during which standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Years 2 and 6 were below average, standards have risen to average. However, the progress made by pupils in English and mathematics is not yet consistent across the school and, as a result, achievement by the end of Year 6 is satisfactory. Improved assessment practices, including talking to pupils to find out what they think, and a wide range of strategies to involve them in their own learning have been introduced. These have contributed to the rise in standards. While the quality of teaching is improving, it is inconsistent and, as a result, not all pupils make the progress of which they are capable. In some teaching, work is well matched to pupils' needs, activities engage their interest, pupils are actively involved in assessing their own learning, and they are working towards targets they know and understand. When these features are not present, the rate of pupils' progress slows. The good curriculum makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning and to their personal development. There is a strong commitment to enrichment through the arts, imaginative use of information and communication technology and a varied programme of visits and visitors. While a strong focus on teaching writing and mathematical skills is having a positive impact on achievement, there is insufficient teaching of the key skills of English and mathematics across all subjects, and this restricts pupils' progress.

Changes to staffing in recent years, including those holding posts of responsibility, have been well managed and staff leadership teams play their part effectively. The school has secure systems for self-evaluation and knows itself well. Senior staff and subject leaders check on teaching and learning regularly and give teachers constructive advice. Planning for school improvement is detailed and thorough. Governors are actively supportive of the school but do not play their full part in holding the school's leadership to account and planning for the future.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the consistency of teaching to ensure that pupils make good progress in all lessons.
- Extend the learning of key skills in English and mathematics across the wider curriculum.
- Ensure greater governor involvement in setting the strategic development of the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children's skills and knowledge on entry to Nursery vary from year to year, but are generally below the level expected from children of that age. They are given a good start in the Foundation Stage, where they make good progress, and in 2006 pupils at the end of Reception attained average standards. Standards in Key Stage 1 have improved year on year from 2004, and in 2006 at the end of Year 2 they were in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.

After a period of several years when standards at the end of Year 6 were below average, attainment in English and science in 2006 was average; mathematics remained below average. Pupils currently in Year 6 are working at average standards in English, mathematics and science. Given pupils' starting points, they are making satisfactory progress. This positive picture reflects improving systems for assessing pupils and tracking their progress, improving teaching, and effective strategies to promote pupils' personal development. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive effective support and make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Most pupils are well behaved, polite, welcoming to visitors and positive about school. They enjoy learning, developing new skills and taking part in all that the school provides. Pupils develop self-esteem and confidence because their efforts and achievements are valued and celebrated. They have regular opportunities to develop initiative and independence. Bullying and racism are rare, but when they occur they are dealt with swiftly and effectively. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. However, pupils' understanding of other religions and cultures is at an early stage of development. Pupils have a good sense of right and wrong and relate well to each other and to adults. They make a positive contribution to the wider community by fulfilling a good range of responsibilities, such as peer mediation and participation in the school council, which is introducing an award scheme to encourage pupil volunteers. Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. They recognise the importance of eating fruit, drinking water and taking regular exercise. They develop satisfactory skills to equip them for the next stage in their learning. Attendance is average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Staff have worked hard to ensure that, despite the major construction work taking place, classrooms are bright and stimulating places in which to learn. Lessons are generally well planned and improved assessment arrangements are having a positive impact. Teachers are making increasingly effective use of a wide range of strategies to involve pupils in their own learning. For example, pupils are encouraged to discuss their work with a 'talk partner' and think for themselves how well they have understood the lesson. These improvements have contributed to rising standards throughout school. However, practice is not yet consistent. Better teaching maintains a lively pace, ensures that planned activities meet pupils' needs well and engages their interest. However, teaching sometimes over-directs pupils, worksheets are used too often and pupils are not given a sufficiently active role in their own learning. Lessons are not always well paced and this results in pupils covering less work than they might. Teaching assistants give pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, effective support.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Children in the Foundation Stage enjoy a wide range of practical experiences, with a good balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities, which support their learning and personal development. In Years 1 to 6, a strong focus on English and mathematics, based on national strategies, is contributing to rising standards. However, too few links are made between subjects and pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to practise the basic skills of English and mathematics in other subjects. A consequence of this is that children have insufficient opportunities to write at length about subjects inspired by wider study. The curriculum is extended and enriched by a strong commitment to the arts, visits and visitors and a good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities. Visits to Beningbrough Hall and visitors, such as African drummers, help to bring learning to life. The curriculum offers many opportunities to develop pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school takes good care of all of its pupils and all staff have a high concern for their welfare. Support for vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well organised and effective. The school tracks pupils' academic attainment carefully so that weaknesses can be identified and overcome. As parents comment, 'The school is very perceptive of individual needs and works hard to meet these and realise children's potential'. While some pupils know their targets for improvement well and are involved in setting and reviewing them to help them learn, approaches are not yet consistent across the school. Health and safety systems are good and there are effective arrangements for child protection. There are good arrangements in place to facilitate transition when pupils join and leave the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leading the school through a period of change, the headteacher has worked successfully to create a strong team ethos among the staff. The school has a clear vision for the future and senior staff and managers at all levels provide sound leadership. This has contributed to securing the good level of personal development experienced by pupils and improvements to achievement and standards in all phases of the school. The school's self-evaluation, underpinned by effective checks on teaching and learning, is accurate and this provides a good foundation for further improvement. As a result, the school has a good understanding of what needs to be done to raise standards further and ensure pupils make good, rather than satisfactory, progress. Senior managers have not yet ensured that teaching is as consistent as it should be. Governors are an active presence in school, but do not play their full part in holding senior staff to account or planning for the future. The issues raised in the last inspection have been dealt with effectively and the school gives satisfactory value for money.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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?	3
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?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

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	3
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
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	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

The inspection of New Earswick Primary School, York, YO32 4BY

Thank you very much for the friendly welcome you gave to the inspection team. We enjoyed our visit very much. Here are some of the things that make New Earswick a satisfactory school.

- Nursery and Reception children learn in imaginative ways.
- Many of your parents are getting more and more involved with your education.
- You are getting better at your work.
- Many of you behave well and get on well with each other.
- You involve yourselves actively in school life by doing jobs and joining in with the school council.
- Staff in school work hard and give you good care and support.
- Exciting new facilities are being created.
- Good displays help you learn.

We have suggested three things that your school should do to make New Earswick an even better school.

- Make sure you are making good progress in all lessons.
- Give you more chances to use your skills in English and mathematics in other subjects.
- Help the school's governors play a bigger part in planning to make things better.

You can help your teachers by working hard, behaving well and taking advantage of all the opportunities offered by school.

On the behalf of the inspection team, I would like to wish you all the very best for your future.