

Norton-in-Hales CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123491
Local Authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	292686
Inspection date	21 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Alison Cartlidge

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	90
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tracey Edwards
Headteacher	Dawn Herriott
Date of previous school inspection	18 February 2002
School address	Main Road Norton-in-Hales Market Drayton TF9 4AT
Telephone number	01630 653084
Fax number	01630 653084

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	21 March 2007
Inspection number	292686

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Pupils come from the village of Norton-in-Hales and the surrounding area. Their attainment on entry to the Reception class is broadly in line with that found nationally. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is average. The school provides after-school clubs. A new headteacher joined the school in September 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school that is particularly successful in supporting pupils' good personal development and well-being. This is because caring and friendly members of staff ensure that pupils feel valued. The new headteacher has established a clear understanding of what needs to be improved and is moving the school in the right direction.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children make a sound start to their education in the Reception class. Members of staff provide sensitive support, enabling children to make satisfactory progress. Most children are working at the levels expected for their age when they start in Year 1. Teaching is satisfactory throughout the school, although there are good elements to teaching in all classes. Consequently, standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 remain broadly average. Too few pupils reach higher than the expected standards in writing by the end of Year 2 because they are not expected to write enough in English or other subjects. Good pastoral care enables pupils to feel safe and to behave well. Good relationships and the positive management of behaviour help pupils to become polite and considerate. Nevertheless, care, guidance and support taken together are only satisfactory because teachers do not always make enough use of assessment information to ensure that pupils' differing needs are consistently met. This mainly affects the more able pupils, whose progress slows when they are not challenged to do hard enough work.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Members of staff and governors want the best for the pupils. There is a strong commitment to improving pupils' progress and a willingness to make better use of information on pupils' performance to set more challenging targets. The satisfactory curriculum has good additional activities, including visits and visiting specialists. These contribute well to pupils' enthusiasm for school and give them good opportunities to learn new skills, such as working with an animator to make a short film about Ironbridge.

The school has good links with its parents and other schools in the area. Most parents are pleased that their children come to this school and find members of staff to be approachable. Typically they say, 'My children run into school every morning and they absolutely love it. This tells me they feel happy, enthusiastic and safe'.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers consistently provide challenging work for more-able pupils.
- Provide younger pupils with greater opportunity to improve their writing skills.
- Improve the use of assessment information to set challenging targets and to ensure that all pupils learn quickly.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children make satisfactory progress in the Reception class. Most children are working at the levels expected for their age, although few are working beyond those levels by the end of the Reception Year. Sensitive support enables children to do well in personal, social and emotional development. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in Years 1 to 6. Standards are broadly average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. Targets are not always challenging enough for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and, as a result, too few pupils reach higher-than- expected levels, particularly in writing.

Across the school there are occasions when more-able pupils make insufficient progress because teachers are not sufficiently demanding in the activities they set.

Support from well-trained teaching assistants enables pupils with learning difficulties to be fully included in lessons and to make similar progress to other pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Relationships are very strong. As one pupil said, 'Everyone knows everyone'. It is a delight to see the positive way that pupils of different ages help each other during the 'creative art' afternoons. Children in the Reception Year make new friends quickly and develop good levels of independence. Throughout the school, pupils are polite and courteous to visitors. Most behave sensibly and are happy at school, with rates of attendance being above average. Pupils work conscientiously, although they are right when they say that their work is sometimes too easy.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are happy to take responsibility. There is a hard-working school council that has good ideas about how the school could be improved. For example, they are keen about choosing paint colours for the walls to make the school a 'brighter place'. Pupils take an active part in the community by raising funds for charities and helping to keep the environment clean by recycling waste. These activities, along with secure basic skills, prepare the pupils satisfactorily for the next stage of their education, although the development of their writing skills is not as fast as it could be.

Pupils have a good awareness of how to stay safe and healthy. They enjoy taking part in exercise at playtime and are very conscientious about eating healthy foods.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

There are good features to teaching in all classes. In the Reception class, calm and sensitive support from adults helps children to settle quickly. The teacher has good expectations for children's personal, social and emotional development and this helps children to make good progress in this area of learning. Throughout the school, teachers manage behaviour well and have very caring relationships with the pupils, leading to good levels of enjoyment. Teachers make good use of resources such as the interactive whiteboards and plan interesting activities that engage and motivate pupils. There are occasions when the pace of lessons is too slow and pupils are not encouraged to work with sufficient urgency. Teachers do not always expect enough of the pupils and work is sometimes too easy, particularly for the more able.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

There is a satisfactory curriculum for children in the Reception class. There is a good focus on developing personal and social skills and this is effective, helping children to learn new routines and make friends quickly. In Years 1 to 6, the curriculum helps pupils to build steadily on what they have already learnt, although planning does not always take enough account of the needs of more-able pupils. There are too few opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills both in English and in other subjects. This slows the pace of learning, especially for younger

pupils. The new German lessons are popular with older pupils because they will give them 'a good start at secondary school'.

The curriculum is enriched well by visits and visitors. These help the school to overcome the problems caused by the lack of a hall. Specialist sports coaches teach tag-rugby and hockey skills and pupils visit a local facility to receive specialist teaching in gymnastics. Older pupils are particularly enthusiastic about their residential trip where they learn new skills such as abseiling and canoeing. As one said, 'It was the best time ever!'

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils are right when they say that the school has a 'friendly feel' to it and that 'teachers are kind'. Pupils are given good quality pastoral support and this helps them to be happy and keen to do their best. The school works well with outside agencies and parents to safeguard children. There are good systems for promoting good behaviour that are clearly understood by all pupils.

Academic support is satisfactory. Pupils' progress is assessed regularly. Teachers use this information to set targets for the levels that each pupil should be reaching by the end of each year. These are not always challenging enough, especially for younger pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Satisfactory leadership and management by the headteacher, governors and senior staff have ensured that the school provides a satisfactory education and that pupils make satisfactory progress. The headteacher has identified the school's strengths and weaknesses and has an accurate understanding of the overall effectiveness. She has brought new ideas to the school and there is a good awareness of what needs to be done to improve provision and standards.

The school's procedures for self-evaluation are satisfactory and recent changes in provision are already beginning to have a positive impact, demonstrating the school's satisfactory capacity to improve. For example, parents and governors have noted improvements in the behaviour of pupils since the introduction of the new behaviour policy. All members of staff are enthusiastic and ensure that pupils receive good pastoral care. Subject leaders are dedicated and carry out various monitoring activities diligently.

The school has collected suitable data to show how well pupils are doing and members of staff realise that this is not analysed in enough detail to set and achieve more challenging targets, particularly for the end of Year 2. Recent strategies to increase the rate of pupils' progress are beginning to have a positive impact, although it is too soon for there to be evidence to show sustained improvement.

Governors are supportive and well informed. They are aware that they are not proactive enough in finding out information about the school for themselves.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	-----------------------

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	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
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	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	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?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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	3
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

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for sharing your work with us. We are pleased that you enjoy coming to this school, which provides you with a satisfactory education. Your parents and carers are pleased that you come here.

Here are some other things about you and your school.

- You make sound progress.
- You behave well, are polite and friendly and good at helping others.
- Teachers do a satisfactory job and use the interactive whiteboards to make lessons interesting.
- You have a suitable range of things to do and interesting additional activities, including learning to speak German and having creative art weeks. We were especially interested in the animation project for older pupils. This sounded great fun.
- All adults in school are kind and caring and look after your personal needs well.
- Your headteacher, other teachers and governors are working together satisfactorily to make your school even better.

What we have asked your school to do now.

- Make sure that you are always given hard enough work.
- Provide more opportunities for younger children to improve their writing.
- Make sure that teachers are consistently helping you to know what you need to do to improve your work.

We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you about your work and watching you learn. We wish you all well for the future and hope you continue to work hard.