

Airmyn Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117940
Local Authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	312755
Inspection date	9 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Steve Isherwood HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	97
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Alan Stirling
Headteacher	Mr Peter Denwood
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2003
School address	Percy Drive Airmyn Goole DN14 8NZ
Telephone number	01405 762086
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Introduction

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

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' achievement, the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation. Evidence was gathered from the school's own data, test results, teachers' records, observations of teaching, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with the headteacher, staff, pupils, the chair of governors, the school

improvement partner and the local authority (LA). Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average school, situated in the village of Airmyn close to the town of Goole. Pupils are drawn from a wide range of social backgrounds and the vast majority are of White British Heritage with a small number from minority ethnic groups. The area served by the school is semi-rural and a number of families live outside the immediate locality. A lower proportion of pupils than normal are entitled to a free school meal and a smaller than average percentage has a learning difficulty and/or disability. The school has gained several awards including the Healthy Schools Standard, PE Activemark and the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Airmyn Park is an outstanding school. Pupils' achievements are excellent. They usually reach well above average standards in their work and make exceptionally good progress in their personal development. Their behaviour and attitudes to learning are first class. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and recognise that they have responsibilities towards their peers and the adults in the school. As a result, relationships are very good, older pupils take good care of younger ones and pupils show concern and respect for others. Pupils love their school and greatly enjoy their learning as demonstrated by their good attendance and their enthusiasm for the wide range of opportunities that the school provides. They are encouraged to make decisions, express opinions and show initiative through circle-time sessions and the active school council. When asked to identify the best things about the school pupils emphasised that learning was often fun with plenty of outdoor and environmental activities, they feel very safe and everyone gets on well together. As one child said, 'We are like one big family.' They found it very difficult to think of any improvements that they would like to see. There was strong praise for the way that staff can always be relied upon to listen, help and support them. Pupils have an excellent awareness of the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle through regular exercise and a balanced diet. Gaining the Healthy Schools award and the Activemark confirm the school's strong commitment to pupils' health and well-being.

Being a small school, teachers know the pupils and their families very well. This means that staff are highly tuned to the needs of every child and are extremely caring and vigilant in their response to each individual. All required checks and systems are in place to safeguard the pupils' well-being.

The school has gained an enviable reputation in the community and has forged outstanding partnerships with other agencies and local schools. Parents certainly have a very good opinion of the school. One parent's view was typical of many: 'Airmyn is an excellent environment for children to reach their potential with lots of interesting activities in the curriculum to excite and challenge all pupils'. Another commented: 'The school goes the extra mile to ensure that children have the widest range of learning experiences possible'.

Pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, come on in leaps and bounds from the moment they enter the school. By the time they leave in Year 6, the proportion reaching the level expected at age 11 has been normally well above average in English, mathematics and science. This represents outstanding achievement considering their starting points. However, standards as reflected in the latest test results for 2007 are broadly average at the end of Key Stage 2. This is because standards can fluctuate due to the small numbers of pupils involved and the different characteristics of each cohort. In addition, the pupils' abilities in this year group were less strong than in previous years although many made better than expected levels of progress during their time in the school. Nevertheless, the school is aware that the progress some pupils make in writing is not as rapid as it is in reading. This is because some of the more able pupils do not always make sufficient strides in their learning. The school has responded swiftly and its actions are beginning to bite. However, senior leaders are correct in recognising that recent improvements in this area could go further.

A significant factor in pupils' high achievement is that teaching is outstanding overall. In the very best lessons pupils are encouraged to test and deepen their knowledge by taking responsibility for their own learning and directing their own activities. Expectations are high,

the pace of learning is brisk and pupils are given every opportunity to discuss and share their ideas with others. For example, in an outstanding literacy lesson in Year 2, pupils used their initiative and skills of inquiry by researching significant facts to share with others about the forthcoming Olympic Games. One child discovered, much to the interest of his peers and the adults in the room, that BMX biking is a brand new event this year. Elsewhere, pupils in Years 3 and 4 made excellent progress in their understanding of how to compile an advertisement that would encourage parents to send their children to the school. One child showed maturity in her thinking when she suggested that if the advert was too glowing, the reader might become suspicious. Occasionally, where teaching is less successful, pupils' work is sometimes over-directed and opportunities that allow the learning to emerge from the pupils themselves are not always fully exploited.

The school is driven forward by outstanding leadership and management spearheaded by the headteacher. He is passionate about maximising the potential of the 'whole-child' in a caring and structured environment where confidence and self-esteem are high on the agenda. He is very well supported by an equally committed team of staff and governors who share his vision and sense of purpose. As a result, morale is high, teamwork is strong and staff are forward thinking and reflective. As a group they constantly seek ways to improve further the current position. This is demonstrated in their plans to promote more creativity in the curriculum, in their aims to provide more opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills in other subjects and in their commitment to develop the role of subject leaders further. There is clear agreement on the strengths of the school and where further improvements can be made. For example, senior leaders are well aware that the school improvement plan requires some fine-tuning to ensure an even stronger focus on raising achievement and sharper criteria for measuring success.

The governing body plays an effective role in shaping the school's direction and in holding it to account. Its members are extremely committed and offer good levels of challenge and support. They confidently ask questions and are involved in monitoring and evaluating the school's performance. As a result and along with its other strengths, the school is very well placed to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The good provision for children in the Reception year gives children a solid foundation and ensures that they achieve well. When children enter the school their skills and abilities vary but overall are typical for their age. Within a short space of time they settle quickly into a well structured environment where activities are targeted effectively on key learning goals that match well their stages of development. The early skills of learning to read are taught very well, providing a strong foundation for the exceptionally high standards in reading that pupils attain in the rest of the school. The warm and welcoming atmosphere provides a positive climate for learning where children feel safe and secure. As a result, children show positive attitudes to their work and grow in confidence and self-esteem. Teaching is good; questions challenge children's thinking and opportunities are provided for children to play purposefully in a variety of settings. Their natural curiosity is harnessed well through a range of stimulating activities. For example, in one session, children were encouraged to develop their language skills in a role-play ice cream shop. Elsewhere, children made good progress in their mathematical development by using different coins to work out shopping bills. Outside, a group of confident talkers took great pride in showing the inspector their vegetable plants growing in the small allotment.

Staff continually assess how well children are achieving and use the information to plan further challenges. This means that by the beginning of Year 1, children reach the national goals for their age, with some going beyond them.

What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate pupils' progress further in writing so that more pupils reach the higher levels.

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Annex A

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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?	2
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.

Annex A

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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

10 July 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Airmyn Park Primary School, Goole, DN14 8NZ

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently to find out how well you are learning. I really enjoyed chatting to you around the school, in your classrooms and in the interview with the school council during 'toast and juice time'. You stated your opinions very clearly and they were very helpful to me. I am writing to let you know what I found out.

Firstly and most importantly, I would like you to know that you go to an outstanding school. You make excellent progress in your work and are very well taught. You told me how much you enjoy coming to school and having spent the day with you, I can understand why. I was very pleased to see how well you behave and how you help one another in class and around the school. I could also see how the adults look after you really well, and your parents told me this too. I was delighted to hear how you all pulled together in bringing your school pond back to life and how some of you made carvings on posts and sculptures in stone and concrete with the help of a local sculptor. The adventure visit to Kingswood sounded great fun for those of you in Class 4. What a lot of activities you took part in. Abseiling would be a leap of faith for me too. Well done also to those of you in Year 6 who organised the school fish tank. I agree with you, it has a calming effect.

Mr Denwood and all the staff work extremely hard to make the school as good as it can be and I am confident that it will continue to improve. To help with this, I have asked them to ensure that some of you make faster progress in your writing. You can help by having the confidence to use your writing skills in lots of different subjects and by telling your teachers what makes your lessons exciting and what helps you to learn.

Keep trying hard. You are a credit to your mums and dads and carers. I can see why your teachers enjoy working with you every day. I wish you and your families all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Steve Isherwood

Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools