

Burton Agnes Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117973
Local Authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	312765
Inspection dates	16–17 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Linda Murphy

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	97
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sue Thompson
Headteacher	Mrs Jane Watt and Mr Richard Ash (Acting)
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2003
School address	Rudston Road Burton Agnes Driffield YO25 4NE
Telephone number	01262 490320
Fax number	01262 490320

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This small village school serves a very wide geographical and social and economic area. Almost half of the pupils travel from nearby villages and towns because of parental preference. Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is lower than average. A high proportion of pupils join the school at other than the usual times. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than in most schools. The school holds the Artsmark Gold and Healthy Schools award and is an Investors in People. Since September 2007 the school has been led by two acting headteachers.

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 friendly and welcoming village school that provides a satisfactory standard of education and sound value for money. It has the confidence of its parents. Many pupils travel some distance to attend this school because, as one parent's comment sums up, 'Staff are very caring and professional'. The care, guidance and support for pupils is very effective. As a result, the school prides itself on pupils' good personal development. Pupils enjoy school and generally behave well. The achievement of a national award for promoting healthy lifestyles reflects pupils' good understanding of how important it is to be fit and healthy and to keep safe.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils' attainment in mathematics has improved since the last inspection because the school took positive action to raise standards. Standards in reading are higher than those in writing. Weaknesses in making sentences, spelling, handwriting, and the use of punctuation hinder pupils' progress in writing, although their imaginative response to an innovative range of stimuli is positive.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Nonetheless there are strengths, not least in the positive relationships and the management of pupils' behaviour. Teaching assistants are used effectively to support pupils who need help with their learning. Pupils happily work hard and are confident enough to contribute their own ideas and thoughts in lessons. At times, the pace of teaching is too slow and when this occurs, pupils' learning lacks momentum and is not as effective as in the more dynamic teaching.

Teachers' planning for literacy and numeracy is satisfactory and underpins pupils' sound progress in basic skills. A creative approach to the curriculum encourages enjoyment and interest in learning. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is personalised to meet their needs. For example, pupils with learning difficulties in English are given extra help in reading mathematical problems so that they are not disadvantaged in numeracy. Those pupils who learn very quickly have the opportunity to work with older pupils in English and mathematics, which means they are learning at a level appropriate to their ability. Average ability pupils do not always have tasks matched precisely enough to their needs to help them reach the standards of which they are capable.

Satisfactory leadership promotes effective teamwork and involves all staff in making decisions about the priorities for development. This approach reflects the school's Investors in People status. Relevant priorities and plans for further development are in place. Governance is satisfactory and the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

From starting school with skills and knowledge that are typical for their age, children make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage in all the areas of learning. Children settle quickly because they are well cared for and this gives them a secure start to school life. The quality of leadership, teaching and the curriculum is satisfactory and helps children to attain the levels expected by the end of their Reception year. Teachers' use of assessment information is improving in regularity and accuracy, but does not yet make the best use of all the information available. The use of the outside environment is not planned in enough detail to ensure that pupils can make the most of opportunities to play in the fresh air.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing throughout the school so that they at least match those in reading.
- Ensure teaching challenges all pupils to achieve as well as they can.

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.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The satisfactory achievement of children in the Foundation Stage continues throughout school so that standards at Year 2 and Year 6 are average in English, mathematics and science. This is reflected, with slight variation, in the school's national tests and assessment results over the last few years. Girls out-perform boys, but the school is taking timely action to hasten the boys' progress. The impact of this is not yet evident in the school's national test results at Key Stage 1. Extra teaching in Year 6 means that the school's targets are usually met or exceeded in English and mathematics. However, pupils make better progress in reading than they do in writing. This is the main reason why, at both key stages, very few children exceed the expectations for their age in English. Standards in art and design are good.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. They enjoy school and are keen to do well. They form good relationships among themselves and with staff. They work and play well together. Pupils grow into mature youngsters with a good outlook on life. They embrace their school and local communities well, for example, when they produced a play at the Stephen Joseph Theatre. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of living a healthy lifestyle and know how to keep themselves safe. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and supports their growing independence, self-confidence and generally good behaviour. The school does much to promote regular attendance, but attendance is no better than satisfactory because a significant number of families take holidays during term-time. Given their secure basic skills and good attitude to learning, pupils are satisfactorily prepared for moving on to the next phase of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall with strengths and aspects to develop. The best teaching challenges the more able pupils while at the same time supporting average attainers and pupils who find learning difficult. Questioning is deep and meaningful. It makes pupils think really hard, involves them in discussion and encourages imagination. One pupil commented, 'I let my mind run free'. At other times, teaching is less vibrant and as a result, pupils' learning moves at a slower pace. In particular, tasks are not always challenging enough for all pupils to enable them to reach the highest standards they could. In addition, teachers' expectations of basic writing skills such as handwriting, grammar and punctuation are not always high enough. These are the reasons why pupils' progress is no better than satisfactory.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is guided by the school's focus on ensuring that creativity is at the heart of the pupils' learning and reflects the achievement of Artsmark Gold. All pupils have equal access to all that the school provides and parents are particularly pleased with this. Planning encompasses the mixed-age classes and lesson plans generally cater well for pupils' needs, yet the match of work for all groups of pupils is not always precise enough to ensure sufficiently rapid progress. Extra enjoyment is added through visits and visitors which help to bring pupils' learning alive. After-school clubs add interest and enjoyment and the use of information and communication technology in lessons has developed well since the last inspection.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

There is a good quality of care and guidance because staff support pupils' emotional and personal development well. Parents are pleased with the good care and guidance their children receive. Staff show a strong commitment to meeting the needs of their pupils. Warm relationships with staff mean pupils enjoy school and are confident that help is readily available. Government procedures are in place to safeguard pupils and to support their health and safety. Staff training is given a priority and staff are up to date with requirements. Additional group sessions are organised when necessary to enhance pupils' language and social skills. There are clear arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and setting them targets to meet in literacy and numeracy. The school highlights in its development plan that not all teachers use the information gained sufficiently to make sure that all groups of pupils are effectively challenged.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

A strong team spirit pervades the school and leads to staff having a shared focus on improvement. This is particularly evident in the approach to nurturing pupils' personal development and well-being which is high on the agenda for the acting headteachers. It helps those pupils who join the school throughout the year to settle in and happily become part of the school community. The leadership team carry out their roles diligently and provide good role models in their teaching. The satisfactory monitoring of standards and the quality of teaching means that the school has a mostly accurate view of its work. The setting of priorities and the plans for further development have been outlined, but have yet to be translated into a rigorous action plan for the future. Governors provide a balance of support and challenge. This ensures that the school has a satisfactory capacity to build on its sound improvement since the last inspection.

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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?	3
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?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

18 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Burton Agnes Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, East Riding of Yorkshire, YO25 4NE

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me on my recent visit to your school. Through talking with staff and children, joining your lessons, and reading lots about how the school works I found out that Burton Agnes gives its pupils a satisfactory education.

The best things are the way the staff care very much about you, help to keep you safe and go out of their way to help you in lessons and around school. This means that you flourish as individuals and become mature, responsible youngsters who really enjoy school. You behave well and this helps your learning. You play an important part in your school and wider community such as when you put on a play at the Stephen Joseph Theatre. You have lots of opportunities to develop your interests and to be creative. Your parents are pleased that they chose this school for you and like that you are all treated so equally well.

To make yours an even better school, the acting headteachers and other staff are going to help you improve your writing. For this to happen, the teachers are going to make sure that you all have work to do that is just right – not too easy and not too hard. You can help by attending regularly and always doing your best.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Linda Murphy

Lead Inspector