

Carr Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121272
Local Authority	York
Inspection number	313930
Inspection dates	9–10 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Andrew Clark

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	198
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Bingle
Headteacher	Miss C Ryder
Date of previous school inspection	5 July 2004
School address	Ostman Road Acomb York North Yorkshire YO26 5QA
Telephone number	01904 798996
Fax number	01904 787525

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average size school serving a socially mixed area with a high proportion of local authority rented accommodation. The proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal is above average, as is the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A significant minority of pupils are looked after by the local authority. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The school has achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark for the third time and received two inclusion awards.

An independent organisation provides a play group and parentÄtoddler group in the new Children's Centre which is on the same site as the school. An independently run breakfast and after-school club caters for pupils on the neighbouring infant school site.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Carr Junior is a good school. Pupils achieve well because of the good teaching and good leadership and management. All pupils have access to an extensive curriculum and their personal development is good. Parents have a very high opinion of the school: 'The staff at Carr Junior have been wonderful in supporting our son and have always been kind and supportive to us. Nothing is too much trouble to them.' reflects the views of many parents.

Achievement and standards are good. Pupils start school with average standards and leave Year 6 above the national average. Pupils of all abilities, including a significant minority who start school in the later stages of Year 5 and 6, achieve well during their time in school. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. Pupils' basic skills, particularly handwriting and spelling, are above average but they do not show enough imagination in their written work. This is particularly the case for the more able pupils. Speaking skills have significantly improved since the last inspection.

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils are well behaved, polite and thoughtful towards each other. They enjoy the many responsibilities they are given such as opportunities to be peer mediators and playground buddies. Their contribution to the community is outstanding, particularly the school council's role in improving the school building, which has made learning more pleasurable and accessible. Although pupils' awareness of global issues is good, they are less well aware of the multicultural nature of modern Britain. Attendance is above average and pupils are punctual.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils are clear about the purpose of the well planned lessons. Teaching assistants support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities well. The curriculum is broad and meets the needs of the pupils well. There is an excellent range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils are made aware of different faiths and societies around the world, but opportunities to develop an understanding of modern Britain are more limited. The school provides a high quality of care for all its pupils. Staff know pupils and their backgrounds very well and watch carefully over those that may be vulnerable for any reason, such as those who are looked after by the local authority. Procedures to keep pupils safe are in place and meet requirements. There are thorough systems in place to track pupils' progress and ensure they receive the support they need.

The headteacher provides a clear drive towards high achievement. All staff make an effective contribution to leadership through a wide range of monitoring and evaluation activities. Self-evaluation is accurate and reflects the views of pupils and parents. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities well and provides strong support to the school. There has been effective development since the last inspection and the school has a good capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve creative writing skills, especially for the more able pupils.
- Raise pupils' awareness of the multicultural aspects of life in Britain today.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards in mathematics and science are above the national average and standards in English are average. This is reflected in work seen and the most recent provisional National Curriculum

test results. Pupils' achievement from Year 3 to Year 6 is best in mathematics and science and is good in reading. It is satisfactory in writing because pupils, especially the most able, do not always reach their potential in writing creatively. Work is well presented with neat, fluent handwriting and above average standards of spelling and punctuation. The school sets challenging and realistic targets which the vast majority of pupils achieve. Their progress is accurately tracked and the trend of improvement in pupils' achievement is good. The most vulnerable pupils, including those who are looked after and many who start school after Year 3, make good progress because they are given very strong support and learning is closely planned to their needs. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are well behaved and they have positive attitudes to learning. A small minority of pupils who, at times, need help from staff to behave well, make good progress in becoming independent and self-disciplined. Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy life style and the dangers of drugs and alcohol. Although they know what makes a healthy diet this is not always reflected in their lunchboxes, despite the good example set by the school meals service.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils' attendance and behaviour are good. They acquire a strong sense of right and wrong and get on very well with each other. Older pupils provide good support to younger ones. Their self-esteem builds at a good pace through the school's good recognition of all aspects of their achievement. The pupils have a strong appreciation of their own culture through art and music and pupils acquire knowledge of different faiths. However, they have limited first-hand understanding of multicultural Britain.

Parents comment on the positive contribution the pupils' commitment to the community makes to their self-esteem and awareness. They show significant independence in running a school newspaper and managing all aspects of a healthy tuck shop. The school council undertook successful negotiations with the site manager for the construction of new toilet and cloakroom areas and presented their own designs and costings to the governing body. The views of all pupils were taken into consideration in creating the new Children's Centre. The pupils are well prepared for their future learning and they benefit from the strong links with the world of business and commerce.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is good overall. Most lessons are well planned with a clear focus on developing pupils' learning skills. As a result pupils are clear about the purpose of the lessons, attentive and quick to settle to their work. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well. Teachers make good use of drama, role play and information and communication technology to provide 'hands-on' experiences. The work is well planned for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and skilled teaching assistants provide effective guidance. At times, teaching assistants are under employed when the teacher is introducing a lesson. Occasionally teaching is satisfactory and when this is the case the more able pupils complete the work set for average ability pupils before tackling more challenging tasks. This limits the progress they make. Pupils' behaviour is very well managed and there are very sensitive and effective procedures for

supporting pupils with emotional difficulties without disrupting the pace of learning for other pupils. Teachers question pupils well and draw full responses from them, which has a good impact on their speaking skills. The use of techniques to involve pupils more in planning and assessing their own work are developing well. The good use of homework makes a positive contribution to many aspects of their learning, especially as it has the full support of parents.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils and promotes good progress. Pupils enjoy the activities and experiences and, as a result, are enthusiastic learners. The programme for promoting pupils' personal development is effective and makes a particular contribution to the progress made by the most vulnerable pupils. Well planned practical investigations help pupils achieve well in mathematics and science. French is taught through the school and bilingual labels are used well in displays and signs. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop a greater understanding of multicultural Britain. An excellent range of sporting, musical and other activities enliven pupils' lives. Very good use is made of the school's own swimming facilities by both the pupils and the wider community. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities reflects individual needs well and promotes good progress.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Staff work very hard and successfully to include all pupils in everything the school has to offer. The school promotes pupils' personal development very well by providing a strong sense of security and well-being. Highly trained staff create good opportunities to meet pupils and discuss anything which may be troubling them. The climate of trust and respect enables the school to respond quickly to pupils' cares and needs. Procedures to keep pupils safe meet requirements. Procedures to monitor attendance and behaviour are effective. Systems to track pupils' academic and personal development are good and provide teachers with an accurate picture of how well they are doing. Pupils are set targets to guide their learning and they increasingly contribute to reviewing their own work and setting fresh targets. However, some of these weekly targets lack focus, limiting pupils' ability to assess their own progress. Information for parents on pupils' progress is good and they appreciate the easy access to teachers.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, appointed since the last inspection, has maintained a successful focus on raising achievement and including everybody in all that the school has to offer, despite significant senior staff changes. She has worked effectively with parents, governors and the wider community to make significant improvements to the school environment and develop links with the on-site Children's Centre. It is a very inclusive school. The commitment of parents to the school is evident in the very successful and rapid fund-raising for the school's swimming pool refurbishment.

Leadership at all levels is good. There are well established processes to monitor teaching and learning and for action to be taken to improve different subjects. Analysis of achievement data

is thorough and has led staff to accurately identify areas for improvement, such as pupils' writing skills. Although the use of monitoring is good for individual subjects, some opportunities are missed to draw together the information and consider its impact on the school as a whole. Very occasionally, monitoring focuses more on the action of teachers rather than the pupils' learning. This slightly limits the pace of spreading best practice, for instance, in teaching writing. Overall, the quality of self-evaluation is good and the inspection team agrees with the school's judgements about itself. Governance is good and the governing body is well organised and efficient. It contributes well to the monitoring, particularly of personal development. School improvement planning has improved since the last inspection and the web-based system keeps everyone informed of progress.

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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?	2
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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for the warm welcome the inspection team received when we visited your school this week. We especially enjoyed the lovely, healthy meals we had with you in The Woodland Glade Cafe and seeing the games you helped organise for the Children's Centre opening ceremony.

I would like to tell you what we found out about your school.

Carr Junior is a good school. You work hard and all of you make good progress in your lessons. You reach high targets in English, mathematics and science. Although your handwriting and spelling is good some of you do not write with as much imagination as you could. We found that you are well behaved and take good care of each other. You enjoy learning and your attendance is good. You take your responsibilities seriously and help each other in your jobs as peer mediators and playground buddies. The school council has helped make the school a very cheerful place and we especially enjoyed reading the jokes in the newspaper you write and edit.

We found that the teaching is good and you are given lots of exciting and practical things to do. You learn about many different subjects and are learning to speak French successfully. There are many clubs and sporting activities for you to take part in during and after school. Although you learn about many things, you do not know enough about the beliefs and lifestyles of some people in modern Britain. The school takes good care of all of you and teachers make sure you don't miss out on anything the school has to offer. The headteacher and all her staff are good leaders so that things keep getting even better at school.

We have asked the school to help you to improve your imaginative story writing, especially for the most able pupils, and to teach you more about multicultural life in Britain. You can help by keeping up the hard work and continuing to be happy at school.