

Carr Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121273
Local Authority	York
Inspection number	313931
Inspection dates	2–3 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Andrew Clark

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	176
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Ian Smith
Headteacher	Mrs Sue Bell
Date of previous school inspection	27 June 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Ostman Road Acomb York North Yorkshire YO26 5QA
Telephone number	01904 798266
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Age group	3–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Carr Infants is an average size school which serves a mixed social area with a predominance of local authority rented accommodation. The percentage of pupils eligible for a free school meal is about average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than average. A significant number of pupils are in the care of the local authority. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) includes Nursery and Reception classes. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have both been appointed since the last inspection.

The school has achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark for the second time, Activemark and the Healthy Schools' award.

An independent organisation provides childcare and parental education classes for the school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Carr Infants is a good school with outstanding features. Very effective leadership is leading to rapidly increasing pupils' achievement. Outstanding care and guidance enable pupils of all abilities to develop very well in a safe and positive community; consequently, their personal development and well-being are excellent. 'The staff at this school seem very well organised and very capable. They obviously care about our children,' is typical of parental comments. Pupils make good progress because good teaching and a rich curriculum help them become effective learners. Children have an outstanding start to their school lives in the EYFS.

Achievement is good and standards are above average. Children start the EYFS with below average attainment, especially in their language, mathematics and social skills. By the time they leave Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. There has been a very good trend of improvement over the last three years, which has had a particularly strong impact on the standards reached by the lower attaining pupils and those with a gift or talent. Pupils write well-constructed stories with imagination and enthusiasm, but their handwriting and spelling do not always match these high standards.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and pupils are very thoughtful and positive in their attitudes. Relationships throughout the school are excellent. Pupils behave very well and show tolerance, respect and care for others. Their understanding of healthy living is excellent and they take full advantage of the school's provision for physical activities. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the school and wider community through the school council and charitable collections at harvest festival. Attendance and punctuality are good and have improved significantly since the last inspection.

The quality of teaching and learning is good and improving. Since the last inspection, the school has made significant improvements in rigorously analysing pupils' needs which then enables teachers to set work that challenges pupils appropriately.

The curriculum is good. The wide ranging and high quality extra-curricular opportunities contribute very well to pupils' personal development. There is very good support for pupils with emotional and social needs and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Links between subjects are developing and make learning meaningful to pupils. Personal, social and health education is very effective. Care, guidance and support are outstanding. The school establishes excellent relationships with parents. Systems to track pupils' progress are rigorous and very effectively used to promote higher standards for all.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The clear vision and effective actions of the headteacher and staff have enriched pupils' personal and academic development. The teamwork and leadership shown by all staff is excellent. The positive impact of leaders and managers on raising pupils' achievement, creating outstanding EYFS provision and significantly enhancing the environment, gives the school an outstanding capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Many children enter the Nursery with communication and social skills which are below those typically expected. They leave Reception with at least expected skills for their age and often above the national expectation in early reading and writing. This very good and improving

achievement is the result of the staff's outstanding use of very accurate assessments to set individual steps for children to achieve. Children are very well looked after and feel safe and secure, to such an extent that they proudly show visitors around the classrooms and involve them in their games. Excellent relationships with parents are established and there are many opportunities for them to support their children's learning. The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. The excellent staff team subtly extend learning by careful questions or adding different resources to the well-planned activities children select for themselves. The curriculum is outstanding. Children explore letters and sounds in their own name in many different ways, from smearing clay on glass or tracing vast letters on the interactive whiteboard. The very clear purpose of all lessons and activities is shared with children. As a result, they discuss confidently what they are learning with adults and contribute to planning what they should do next. Leadership and management are outstanding, resulting in year-on-year improvements in children's achievement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' handwriting and spelling to the level of other aspects of their writing skills.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' progress is accelerating year on year because of the excellent use of teachers' assessments to make certain that pupils are set challenging but achievable targets. For example, the school has made skilful use of the nurture class to make a significant improvement to the standards reached by the lower attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Over the last two years, the good provision for gifted and talented pupils has led to more pupils than nationally reaching the highest standards in reading, writing and mathematics by Year 2. There are no significant variations in the achievement of pupils of different gender, culture or social background. However, the school is quick to tackle the slightest variation in pupils' progress in order to secure the best standards. For instance, the focus on developing imaginative and exciting writing over the last two years has been very successful. Although standards of spelling and handwriting are appropriate for pupils' ages, they do not always reflect the same good quality of content of pupils' writing and the school has begun exploring ways to address this.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are excellent. They are attentive in class, listen to each other and play very well together. Pupils feel safe and happy. They are enthusiastic and contribute readily to lessons. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the need for a healthy diet and regular exercise. They know what this involves and identify the contribution made by their own lunch and physical activity. 'We run about a lot at playtime. It's good for your heart,' and 'You mustn't eat much salt,' are the sort of comments pupils make.

Pupils are reflective and thoughtful. They write their own prayers and join in the school prayer in assembly with reverence. Examples of pupils' very good appreciation of a wide range of music and art from all over the world are letter writing to a child in Ghana and the vibrant two- and three-dimensional art influenced by a famous artist. Pupils have a strong sense of community and they value the contribution they make to the school through the school council and as a

playground buddy. Their very good basic skills, keenness to acquire new knowledge and their well-developed social skills, mean that pupils are prepared excellently for their future learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The range of teaching observed was between good and outstanding. Lessons are well planned and teachers' accurate understanding of pupils' achievement means work is very well matched to their needs. There is good teaching of letters and sounds and of the early stages of reading. However, links with spelling and handwriting are not reinforced consistently. Teachers provide very good opportunities for pupils to learn through practical and exciting activities, making full use of the well-planned outside areas. Learning skills are promoted very well by the strong emphasis on independence and decision making. Pupils' and teachers' use of information and communication technology (ICT) is good and has improved significantly since the last inspection. Highly trained teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to learning. Very occasionally, they are under employed when the teacher introduces lessons. The purpose of lessons is made clear to pupils because teachers explain precisely what they expect. All staff set very high expectations and this is reflected in pupils' fast pace of work and their high quality presentation. Teachers make very good use of homework which promotes pupils' learning effectively.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a wide range of interesting activities which supports and promotes all aspects of learning very well. The school has a secure understanding of areas which need further development, such as improving the links between different subjects. The curriculum for key skills, such as literacy and numeracy, is well planned and teachers make very good use of national and local initiatives. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with a gift or talent is extremely well organised and highly effective in promoting their learning. Personal, social and health education is very well planned and strong links with other schools and the new on-site Children's Centre promote many aspects of learning. Regular visits and visitors bring the curriculum to life. The range and quality of extra-curricular activities are outstanding and clubs for music, art and sports are popular and very well attended.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The quality of care is excellent. The high quality nurture class is a prime example, providing the most vulnerable pupils with the support and high quality teaching they need to secure their learning. Parents and pupils are very appreciative of the excellent personal care the school provides. Pupils say how very safe they feel in school and have complete confidence that any problems they have will be resolved quickly by adults who they trust and respect. The school works very closely with outside agencies, other professionals and volunteers to ensure that all learners, including the very high numbers of those most at risk, receive the support they need. Appropriate attention is paid to health and safety, including child protection. The school has productive links with parents, other schools and the wider community, which further enhance pupils' education. A sophisticated system tracks pupils' progress and information is acted on

rigorously to promote high quality learning. They involve pupils in their own learning very well through the 'perfect pink and grotty green' marking system.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

'We are a team,' and 'Everyone has a leadership role,' are typical of the views of teaching and non-teaching staff alike. The headteacher and her deputy have created a fully inclusive model of leadership with clear lines of responsibility. They arrange the training and support necessary to enable everyone to fulfil their role. As a result, there has been very good improvement in leadership at all levels since the last inspection. A key strength is the excellent analysis of a wide range of data by staff and governors and its use in setting a clear direction for development. Checks on teaching and learning are incisive and lead increasingly to ever improving provision. As a result, the school's self-evaluation is highly accurate. The governing body uses the comprehensive reports from the headteacher and local authority very effectively to guide budget planning. The school makes a good contribution to its immediate and wider community. The views of parents, pupils and the governing body are sought regularly and acted upon. Parents support their children's learning well and appreciate the school's high expectations and its very inclusive nature.

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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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

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?	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
The extent to which 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 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?	1

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	1
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 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	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

On behalf of the inspection team, I would like to thank you for giving us such a warm welcome when we inspected your school recently. The friendly way you greeted us when we came into your classrooms and your politeness and helpfulness made our visit to Carr Infants a very pleasant one.

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

Firstly, it is a good school with outstanding features. You make good progress in your lessons and reach high targets in reading, writing and mathematics. Sometimes your handwriting and spelling are not as good as your skills in writing stories. Your personal development is outstanding because you are very happy at school and eager to learn. You behave very well and play and work together happily. You know how to keep fit and healthy. You enjoy school and are very involved through the school council and playground buddies.

You are taught well and are given many exciting things to do in your lessons. There are exciting clubs and sporting activities which most of you take part in. The staff take extremely good care of you and involve you in your learning very well. The 'grotty greens and perfect pinks' really make you think and improve your work. The headteacher and all staff run the school very well so your learning is always improving.

We have asked the school to help you to improve your handwriting and spelling so that it is as good as the rest of your written work. You can help by trying hard in all your work and continuing to love your school.