

Friarage Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121317
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	313944
Inspection dates	12–13 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Bernard Jones

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	308
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Michael Mewis
Headteacher	Mrs Eilis Siddall
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2004
School address	Longwestgate Scarborough North Yorkshire YO11 1QB
Telephone number	01723 374244
Fax number	01723 507069

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	12–13 March 2008
Inspection number	313944

© Crown copyright 2008

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 three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average school in an area of challenging social circumstances. The large majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds. A much larger than usual proportion of pupils joins or leaves the school at other than the usual time, particularly in Years 3 to 6. In addition, there are a number of families who move into the area for a short period before being re-housed elsewhere and a larger than usual proportion of looked after children. A number of Polish pupils who are new to the country have recently been admitted. This has raised significantly the proportion of pupils in the school who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal is well above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is much higher than average and the percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs is broadly average.

The school has attained Healthy Schools accreditation, the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the local authority's Inclusion Quality Mark.

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 which is improving. Pupils' personal and social development is a strength. There is an emphasis on developing pupils' sense of responsibility and this is reflected in their good behaviour in classrooms. Parents and pupils appreciate the safe and happy environment of the school where pupils are taught to help each other. Pupils show a positive and friendly approach to visitors. Pupils enjoy school as a result of the good pastoral care they receive. Relatively high numbers of pupils join the school later than usual and they settle in well. The progress of all pupils is checked and charted meticulously so the school knows that different groups achieve satisfactorily. Pupils are rewarded for their good efforts. They are informed about how well they are doing and know what they need to do to improve further. Pupils make informed choices about healthy lifestyles. They are adequately prepared in Year 6 to move on to secondary education.

Most children enter the Nursery with skills that are much lower than expected for their age. Standards attained in Year 6 2007 national tests were significantly below average and some pupils did not make the progress of which they were capable. Current standards in Year 6 in mathematics, English and science are significantly below average, but reflect satisfactory progress. Lower ability pupils make good progress in developing basic skills in literacy and numeracy in their booster classes. They do not maintain this good rate of progress when they return to their class, where they have less intensive support. In this setting their progress is satisfactory. There are weaknesses in pupils' writing skills, particularly in sentence construction and the accuracy of their punctuation.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, resulting in most pupils making satisfactory progress. There is some good teaching and some outstanding. However, there is not enough teaching of this quality to lift pupils' achievement above current satisfactory levels. There are positive features that characterise all teaching. All teachers manage classes well. They use assessment effectively to help pupils to understand how well they are progressing and how they can improve further. This leads to pupils enjoying their learning. Where teaching and learning are satisfactory, teachers do not always plan carefully enough for the different needs of pupils. The curriculum is good and is extended by a wide range of well supported extra-curricular activities. Visitors to school and visits out of school further enhance pupils' learning. Good links with local schools and the community further enrich the curriculum, for example, by using the different experience of local Polish families to give an insight into another culture.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Pupils' underachievement in recent years has been tackled successfully. The headteacher provides good leadership in establishing a clear vision for the school's development. She has ensured that all staff are positive about the changes needed and those already put in place. Senior staff and middle managers show the necessary attitudes and energy to take the school forward and the senior team has been strengthened by the addition of the Foundation Stage leader. Self-evaluation is mainly accurate. Systems to check and track pupils' progress are good. While too early in their implementation to measure their full impact on standards, these systems are starting to make a difference to pupils' progress. The school has good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. There are some outstanding features, for example, the drive of the recently appointed Foundation Stage leader that has led to improved achievement. Children join the school with skills that are very low in relation to national expectations. Thorough assessments confirm that they now make good progress and by the end of the Reception year are working nearer to levels expected for their age. This reflects a recent and significant improvement in teaching and learning. Children benefit from a very rich range of learning experiences, some led by adults and others self-selected. Staff are very observant in their assessments and note taking, for example, to capture children's progress in language skills that reflects the success of the school's approach to teaching reading. Children work very purposefully together. For example, a group of children acting as young mothers seriously discussed the relative merits of 'mushing up' some cake for their babies to eat. They are aware of healthy eating and enjoy using their snack time to sit down and talk together. Play is central to children's learning, which is supported by the good range of resources both in and out of the classroom. Leadership and management are good. The impact of the Foundation Stage leader's influence on ensuring good practice throughout Key Stage 1 means that children transfer smoothly from Reception into Year 1. There are strong links with families and parents are actively involved and encouraged to support their children's learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in writing in Years 3 to 6, particularly in using punctuation correctly and in better sentence construction.
- Improve basic skills in literacy and numeracy among lower attaining pupils when taught in the normal class setting.
- Increase the amount of good teaching.

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

Standards at the end of Year 6 are significantly below average. Nevertheless, pupils' achievement is satisfactory in relation to their starting points. This is due in large part to most teachers' good use of assessment that checks progress and helps identify and tackle underachievement. Vulnerable pupils, in particular, have benefited by attending booster classes to improve their progress. Careful charting of progress enables the school to ensure the overall satisfactory achievement of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This is also the case for looked after children, pupils who do not speak English as their first language and pupils who join the school at a later time than normal. Pupils who have been identified as gifted and talented are making at least satisfactory progress and some achieve well in relation to their starting points. There are some pockets of good achievement, for example, in science and amongst lower ability pupils when they are taught in small groups. The school has had mixed success in improving standards in English. Writing remains relatively weak throughout Years 3 to 6. Standards at the end of Year 2 are similarly well below average, but pupils reach their targets and make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils know how to keep safe and to live and eat healthily. Pupils say of healthy diets 'it gives us energy' and they talk enthusiastically about taking part in weekly golf and dance clubs. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Most pupils behave well, which contributes effectively to their satisfactory achievements. However, there are a number of pupils who need extra support to behave well. Attendance is still below average but the school is working hard, and with some success, to tackle this. Pupils mix well and sensitively support each other. School council members talk proudly about raising money to buy a goat for an African village. They are also keen to set good examples to help others to behave well. Pupils are racially tolerant and value cultures other than their own. Pupils reflect respectfully in assemblies and clearly understand the difference between right and wrong.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

A strength in teaching is the consistent way teachers manage pupils, promote good behaviour and minimize any disruption to learning. Where teaching is best, it promotes good learning, relationships are positive and teachers work hard to build pupils' confidence. Teachers' plans take good account of pupils' different needs and teachers are clear about what they want all pupils to achieve. In most lessons pupils share their learning and take some responsibility for their progress. They learn to assess their work and that of others in order to judge how well they and their peers have learned. In such lessons pupils clearly enjoy their work and revel in their achievement. However, some teaching does not challenge nor engage pupils sufficiently. This results in them making only satisfactory progress. Some teachers set pupils targets to help them to know precisely what they need to do to improve their work. This good practice is not yet evident in all classrooms. Teaching assistants make a sound contribution, particularly in encouraging and giving general support to lower ability pupils in small groups.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum places a strong focus on schemes and themes related to the local area, such as the history and geography of Scarborough Castle. This has given the curriculum real relevance for all pupils and makes learning particularly meaningful for them. Pupils' different cultures and backgrounds are used well to enhance their learning. There is an important emphasis on pupils' personal development, especially in promoting their social and emotional skills. Good curricular planning ensures that the needs of most pupils, including those with specific gifts and talents, are well met. The importance attached to information and communication technology is ensuring that pupils' skills are developing appropriately. The introduction of a new way of teaching letter sounds in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, is already improving pupils' literacy skills. There is a good range of popular extra-curricular activities, such as a lunch-time club for Year 6 and additional sports sessions for all ages. Visits and visitors all make a major contribution to pupils' good personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The good quality of pastoral care and academic support clearly reflects the school's aims to include all pupils fully in its work. Pupils say they are, 'like a big family' and parents agree, commenting on the, 'lovely sense of community' they feel when they arrive at school. They overwhelmingly agree that school is safe and their children are well cared for. Teachers and their assistants know pupils very well and are dedicated to supporting and caring for their individual needs. For example, the school works effectively to help those pupils who find it more difficult to behave appropriately.

Child protection requirements and health and safety procedures are in place. Good links with outside agencies provide effective support for the school to help the many vulnerable children in their care. For example, the home school support service is effective in improving attendance and in working with individual families whose children have poor attendance records. Pupils trust the adults who work with them and know where to turn for help. Guidance to support pupils' academic progress is good. It is firmly rooted in effective systems that chart and check the progress made by all groups of pupils. For example, through information from these guidance systems the school has identified the slowing of pupils' good progress made in booster groups when support is shared among larger numbers in the normal classroom setting. Pupils appreciate the guidance teachers give them to support the next steps in their learning, saying, 'targets help us learn' and, 'you know what to do next.'

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher provides a clarity of vision that puts raising pupils' achievement at the centre of the school's activities. As a result, this is an improving school where there is an increased ambition among staff, parents and pupils to drive up standards. Senior and middle managers are developing their roles well. The impact on standards is beginning to take effect. For example, new leadership in the Foundation Stage has led to improved progress among younger children. The school is in a good position to increase the pace of change and fully overcome the barriers to further improvement presented by attendance issues and low aspirations among some pupils. However, action taken as a result of checks made on the quality of teaching and learning has not yet improved it significantly beyond satisfactory. Self-evaluation is mainly accurate. Whole-school planning reflects a clear understanding of what needs improvement. The school's leaders are clearly not satisfied with the present satisfactory levels of achievement. Targets for improvement at all levels are increasingly challenging and are largely met. Parents describe their general satisfaction with the work of the school, expressing appreciation for the loyalty and hard work of the staff. Governors fulfil their responsibilities satisfactorily. There are good partnerships with other schools and outside agencies to support its work.

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
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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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?	2
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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
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**

Inspection of Friarage Community Primary School, Scarborough, YO11 1QB

Thank you all for the welcome you gave to me and my colleagues when we visited your school. Please thank your parents and carers for all their letters and for taking the time to talk to us.

We judge your school to be satisfactory overall, and there are several good things. Your teachers help you to get on well with your work. We enjoyed coming to your lessons, reading your work and talking to you. You were all very helpful and friendly. We would like to compliment you on the way you help to look after your school and the pride you take in the displays in classrooms and around the corridors. We were impressed by your good behaviour in class and the way you all get on so well together during lunch and play-times. Older pupils are particularly helpful towards younger children and you make sure that no one feels lonely. You obviously take your responsibilities seriously, for example, in the way you run your school council. You told us that you like your teachers and the way they take good care of you and teach you to be safe and healthy. We enjoyed the enthusiasm you show for staying healthy and fit. All these things help you to develop into mature young people, who get on well and consider others.

To make things even better, we have asked that teachers help all of you to improve some of your skills in literacy and numeracy and particularly to develop some of your writing skills. We have asked that those of you who attend the booster classes are helped more to continue with your good progress when you go back to your class. We saw some good and outstanding teaching and we would like this to happen all through the school.

I wish you all well in the future.