

Gladstone Road Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121319
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	313945
Inspection dates	13–14 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Robert Robinson

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	5–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	334
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sara Fenander
Headteacher	Mrs Anne Swift
Date of previous school inspection	20 September 2004
School address	Wooler Street Scarborough North Yorkshire YO12 7DD
Telephone number	1723 372566
Fax number	1723 352935

Age group	5–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large infant school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, as is the number of those with a statement of special educational need. Most pupils are White British. Eligibility for free school meals is above average. The school serves an area of relative social and economic disadvantage. There have been significant changes of senior leadership since April 2007 including the headteacher, deputy headteacher and several senior managers. Children have a wide range of previous educational experiences having joined the school from 17 pre-school providers. The school site is shared with the Junior School. There is extremely restricted playground space and no playing field. The school has gained the Activemark, Basic Skills Quality Mark and Healthy School awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Gladstone Road Infant School provides a good education for its pupils. The headteacher has built on the strengths of the previous leadership. She is supported well by the senior management team. Together with an effective governing body, the leadership have a comprehensive understanding of what the school should do to improve further. This is the result of accurate self-evaluation. Most middle managers are new to their posts. They have not yet had sufficient opportunities to work alongside other staff to improve the consistency and quality of teaching and learning. Parents praise the school and it is viewed positively within the community.

The school cares for, guides and supports its pupils well. The staff plan carefully to overcome the inadequacies of the building and the very limited outdoor space. Visits within the local area are being used increasingly to add enjoyment and purpose to learning. In addition, the school is successfully encouraging pupils to broaden their understanding of past and present life in other parts of this country and in other areas of the world. This is extending pupils' experiences and enhancing their cultural development. Pupils gain much enjoyment from school and have a good grasp for their age of how to keep healthy and to keep safe. They behave well and take on responsibilities willingly such as being school councillors and looking after other pupils when they are 'playground buddies'.

Standards by the end of Year 2 have been consistently broadly average since the last inspection. In the 2007 tests at the end of Year 2 a significantly above average proportion of pupils reached the level expected nationally, but fewer pupils than expected reached the higher level (Level 3) particularly in writing. The school has already identified the need to improve the proportion of pupils who reach Level 3 in reading, writing and mathematics. Achievement is good because of the overall good quality of teaching. In Years 1 and 2 there is a wide range within the quality of teaching, including some that is satisfactory rather than good. The school has a robust system to check on pupils' progress. However, the information collected is not used well enough to plan for pupils' different levels of attainment or to set targets for individuals in order to raise standards further, particularly those of the most able pupils. Relationships in all classes are cordial and the management of pupils is good. No time is lost through having to deal with behavioural issues. As a result the pace of learning is brisk and pupils enjoy learning.

Pupils are prepared well for their next stage of education because of their good attitudes to learning and sound grasp of basic skills. The consistency of pupils' good achievement over time and the strengths of the leadership and management of the school provide it with good capacity to continue to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children quickly settle into the school routines. Their skills when they enter the Reception classes are below those typical for their age. The classrooms are well equipped but much of the furnishings and resources are showing signs of need for updating. Access to and available space outdoors does not assist the linking of learning indoors with that of outdoors. Although teachers make strenuous efforts to make best use of the limited opportunities for outdoor education, its weaknesses restrict children's progress and their entitlement to a well rounded curriculum suited to their age. Children make satisfactory progress. The quality of teaching is

satisfactory, but the planning of work for individuals is not linked closely enough with assessments of children's prior attainments to push on their learning at a faster pace. Relationships between staff and children are very positive. Children enjoy learning and take part in independent activities with great enthusiasm and concentration. Standards at the end of Reception are, overall, below national expectations, particularly in communication, language and literacy, though close to being in line with expectations in personal, social and emotional development and mathematical development. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Systems in place to track children's progress during the course of the Reception year are well established in some areas but do not record children's personal, social and emotional development. Relationships with parents are good and they express appreciation of their children's start to schooling at Gladstone Road.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the accommodation in the Foundation Stage to provide more high quality learning opportunities, particularly outdoors.
- Make better use of assessment data to challenge and help all pupils, especially the most able, to reach higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently good or better.
- Develop the roles of middle managers in improving teaching and learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils enter Year 1 with below average standards, particularly in English. Because of good teaching their progress accelerates so that by the end of Year 2 standards are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. The progress of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good as most reach nationally expected standards by the end of Year 2. Whilst the targets the school sets are usually achieved for those reaching the nationally expected level, fewer pupils reach the higher targets, especially in writing.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Relationships are positive and supportive across the school. Pupils are keen to be involved in having a say in how the school is run through the school council. They enjoy coming to school and particularly like the enrichment activities at the end of the school week. Attendance rates are satisfactory despite some parents taking their children on holiday during term time because of seasonal work commitments. The school makes every effort to encourage good attendance and to overcome the adverse effect of absences on pupils' achievements. Pupils are gaining an awareness of the world, for example, through work about 'Fair Trade'. They are starting to understand about fairness, respect, equality and dignity through fund-raising and a curriculum which is increasingly encompassing a global dimension.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Most lessons are at least good. The good planning that occurs in the highly effective lessons is not consistent throughout the school. In lessons that are satisfactory rather than good, teachers' plans are too brief and descriptive. They do not identify what different groups of pupils are to learn, particularly the higher attainers. Lower attaining pupils and pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are given effective help from well briefed teaching assistants. Where teaching is highly effective, teachers' planning is focussed closely on the needs of individuals and groups of pupils. Questioning checks and extends pupils' learning. Pupils are actively and purposefully engaged in learning. Lessons move at a fast pace and no time is wasted. Pupils are happy, confident and work productively together. In these lessons, higher ability pupils are challenged and remark, 'We like to work hard.' The marking of pupils' work is good. At its best pupils' assess their own work and teachers' additional comments are very informative.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum in Years 1 and 2 engages pupils' interest well. A strong approach to developing basic skills is being advanced as the school develops more themes, such as 'Green' and 'Health and Growth', which make purposeful links between subjects. The development of writing skills in other subjects is yet to be fully exploited. Activity weeks add further enjoyment and interest to learning. The wide range of visits within the locality offsets the limitations of outdoor education within the school grounds. Carefully monitored individual education plans assist the learning of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The on-going work to achieve and maintain Activemark, Basic Skills and Healthy School awards is seen in many lessons. New initiatives, such as 'Rights Respecting School', are further strengthening pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

A rigorous approach to health and safety is exemplified by meticulous records for all areas, such as accident books and individual care plans. Well organised safeguarding and child protection procedures with regular arrangements to update staff training are in place. Pupils and parents receive good support from the parental support adviser. This is particularly valued when pupils join the school, move to the junior school, or when they need extra support. Good awareness of risk assessment underpins the many out-of-school visits. The academic tracking of pupils' progress is thorough. It identifies when pupils find learning difficult so that the school can arrange additional support or involve outside agencies for health and therapeutic care. However, the information is not always being used consistently in lessons to move pupils' learning on at a faster pace, as assessments are not clearly linked to pupils' targets for learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The calm, purposeful and effective leadership of the headteacher, strongly supported by the deputy headteacher, other senior staff and governors, gives a clear sense of direction to the school. Leaders work hard to overcome obstacles presented by the accommodation and ensure pupils' safety on the roads surrounding the school. There is evident enthusiasm amongst middle managers to work alongside fellow teachers in their subject areas although this aspect of their role is not fully developed. For example, good practice in teaching in the school is not shared consistently amongst all staff to further improve pupils' learning. Much has been done to make systems for checking the school's performance and the recording of pupils' attainment rigorous. There is good provision for the professional development of all staff and good opportunities for them to bring fresh ideas to the curriculum. For example, initiatives such as the use of specialist skills in music add an exciting dimension to pupils' learning.

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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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

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	2

The quality of provision

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

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?	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	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Inspection of Gladstone Road Infant School, Scarborough, YO12 7DD

The inspection team enjoyed the days spent in your school. It was a pleasure to inspect your school as it provides you with a good education. This is because it is led and managed well by your headteacher. She is helped by the other staff and the governors. Your parents are pleased that you attend Gladstone Road Infants.

We were impressed by your good behaviour and how interested you were in your lessons. You told us that you enjoy being at school, feel safe and are proud of your school. Members of staff look after you well and we were pleased that you all get on so well together. The standard of your work by the time you leave Year 2 is average though more of you could reach the higher level (Level 3), particularly in writing. You are taught well and you make good progress in your learning.

Your school knows what it must do to continue to improve. However, we have asked the school to improve the accommodation in the Reception so the youngest children can have more learning opportunities, especially outdoors. Teachers have been asked to make better use of information they have about your progress to set you targets and plan work which will help all of you to reach higher standards. We would like all your lessons to be good or better. Finally, we want the school's middle managers to spend more time helping teachers to make sure that all lessons become good or even better.

We appreciated talking to you about your work and watching you learn. We know that you will continue to work with the staff and your headteacher to help them to continue to improve the school. We wish you well for the future.