

Scarborough, Overdale Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121336
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	313952
Inspection dates	1–2 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Joy Frost HMI

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	237
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Peter Bowdidge-Harling
Headteacher	Mrs Karen Hyatt
Date of previous school inspection	21 February 2005
School address	Hawthorn Walk Eastfield Scarborough North Yorkshire YO11 3HW
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Overdale is an average-sized primary school in Scarborough, North Yorkshire. The catchment area suffers from high levels of social and economic disadvantage. Pupils who attend the school are predominantly White British with a few who are from minority ethnic backgrounds, although none are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion who are entitled to free school meals is nearly double the national average at 31%. The proportion who have a learning difficulty or disability is in line with the national average, but the proportion who have a statement of special educational needs is below the national average. This masks the fact that some pupils have complex social and behavioural needs.

The school has suffered from a falling roll in recent years, and long term staff absences have caused difficulties to the continuity of teaching and nearly half of the staff are new to 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

This is a good school. Years of staff turbulence including long term sickness absence have hindered the school's ability to move forward. The headteacher, who works three days a week, and the relatively new deputy headteacher, who leads the school two days a week, are setting a very clear direction for the school. Together they have forged ahead with planned actions for improvement which have had a very positive impact on all areas of school life. A new Foundation Stage leader is having a positive impact on early years education, which is giving children a good start to their education and building good foundations for future learning.

Standards across the school are around average and improving year-on-year. Achievement for all groups of pupils is good. In Key Stage 1 standards are still slightly below the national average in reading and writing and average in mathematics, representing good achievement from very low starting points. Attainment in writing, though improving, is historically weaker than other subjects across the school.

The school's good target setting system is soundly based on accurate data about pupils' progress, and staff set realistic and challenging targets which take increasingly good account of national benchmarks. The analysis of progress in English and mathematics is used effectively to plan the curriculum and to direct the focus of work on specific areas of need in the daily 'target time' and guided reading sessions. Pupils are well-informed about their level of development and they particularly value these well structured and enjoyable short sessions of targeted learning. The development of this approach to assessment and planning has contributed significantly to the increased progress of pupils.

Teaching and learning have improved in all areas of the school and the majority is now good and often very good in the teaching of basic skills. Planning is detailed and takes account of different abilities within the class. Where teaching is weaker it is because activities do not match closely enough all pupils' needs. Teaching assistants are used well to work intensively with small groups of pupils across the school. Pupils with learning difficulties and those with behavioural difficulties are well supported and make good progress. There are still pockets of satisfactory teaching and the school is working hard to make all teaching good. The use of interactive whiteboards and information and communication technology (ICT) is developing well, but there are currently too few opportunities for pupils to use computers in classrooms to enrich their learning.

Personal development and well-being are good. Pupils say they enjoy school and their learning. Pupils are polite and courteous and well aware of the school's code of conduct which the vast majority follow. They told inspectors that they feel safe in school and are knowledgeable about how to live a healthy lifestyle. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils make a good contribution to the community through many fundraising opportunities. Pupils are well prepared for the next steps in their learning because of the good transition arrangements and improvement to their basic skills. Leadership and management at all levels are good. The headteacher acknowledges that due to staffing difficulties pupils' progress slowed in recent years. However, the school is now back on track and her drive to raise standards and achievement across the school is shared and understood by all staff. The governing body is very well informed about the school and works in partnership with senior leaders to ensure that planned actions are carried out. The school's self-evaluation is accurate, leaders know what is needed to be done and actions have

had a major impact in raising standards and achievement. The school has demonstrated good progress since the last inspection and has a good capacity to continue to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the Foundation Stage (Nursery) with knowledge and understanding that are well below that expected for their age, especially in linking sounds and letters, reading, writing, and personal and social development. They make a very good start to their education because teachers and support staff work intensively on developing their personal and social skills so that they are soon ready to start learning. Most recent assessments show that they now leave the Foundation Stage (Reception) with most having reached or exceeded the learning goals expected for their age which represents very good progress. Teaching and learning are consistently good and often outstanding and the unit is very well led and managed by the new Foundation Stage leader. There is a good balance of teacher-led activities and activities children choose for themselves within a well planned play-based curriculum. Teachers and support staff develop children's speaking and listening skills well through good questioning and support, which enables children to make the most of their learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards and achievement in writing across the school.
- Make sure that teaching is consistently good.
- Improve opportunities for pupils to use ICT in classrooms.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are average and improving and achievement is good. Previous underachievement over a number of years has been successfully eradicated. In the most recently published data, 2007 national tests for 11-year-olds, standards improved and were just below national average in English and science and in-line with national average in mathematics. Fewer pupils attained the higher levels in English due to weaker writing skills. This represented very good progress for these pupils especially in mathematics where progress was in the top 10% of schools nationally. Pupils' basic skills when they enter the school are below what would be expected for their age. By the end of Key Stage 1 standards are still below national average in reading and writing and in-line in mathematics. This represents good achievement.

The school's involvement in the 'Intensive Support Programme' for the last two years has raised standards significantly and the latest test results which arrived during the inspection show that standards are continuing to improve and are now in line with national average in all subjects for the first time for the current Year 6 pupils, although writing remains a weakness. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported by experienced teaching assistants, both individually and in small groups, which helps them to make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. They learn about other faiths and cultures through art, religious education and

assemblies. By Year 6 the majority of pupils are confident youngsters with a good sense of moral justice and fairness.

The school is a well ordered environment and pupils throughout the school demonstrate an awareness of right from wrong and the majority of pupils happily follow the behaviour code. Pupils say they enjoy school: 'We like everything about it and want to change nothing'. They are encouraged to play a part in the life of the school particularly through the work of the school council and many fundraising opportunities. They say they feel safe and are confident that any incident of bullying is quickly dealt with. They feel adults listen to them and would help them if they were worried.

Attendance has improved and is now satisfactory. Pupils increasingly understand how to keep safe and healthy and value key elements of healthy lifestyles, such as diet and exercise, through an effective programme of personal, social and health education. Visitors such as 'Crucial crew' provide good guidance on drugs, alcohol and appropriate sexual health. Pupils are well prepared for moving on to secondary school through good transition arrangements and induction days at which they are accompanied by buddy pupils from their next school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school has successfully eradicated any unsatisfactory teaching. The school is recovering from a legacy of numerous staffing changes over recent years. Many improvements have been made and the majority of teaching is good. There are still some inconsistencies due to the number of new staff and the necessity to repeat previous training. The school is aware of this and is working alongside teachers to improve the consistency of good teaching. In the best lessons, there is a clear focus on identifying what the children need to learn with identified success criteria, the pace of the lesson is brisk, pupils are managed well, work is well matched to pupils' abilities and they are actively involved in a range of interesting activities. Teachers have positive relationships with pupils and the behaviour of the majority of pupils is satisfactory. Some pupils do not conform to the school's behaviour expectations. However, this is managed effectively to avoid any disruption to the education of other children.

Rigorous assessment practice contributes significantly to rising standards, and target time and key skills recall, 'KIRFS', significantly promotes learning. Teachers plan and prepare lessons well and show secure subject knowledge. Teaching assistants support pupils' learning well when delivering specific programmes of work with small groups of children. Effective use is made of interactive whiteboards and the information and communication technology (ICT) suite; however, computers in the classroom are underused.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. This agrees with the school self-evaluation and is a marked improvement since the last inspection. The school has worked hard to make learning interesting and relevant to its pupils by restructuring its curriculum. This helps pupils enjoy their learning. The school is making useful links between subjects and recognises it is now well placed to enrich it further to make a creative curriculum more specifically tailored to the needs of its pupils. A good range of opportunities for pupils to extend their learning exists in lunchtime and after-school clubs,

such as football, ICT and rugby. Year 6 pupils enjoy their residential visit to East Barmby. One child wrote, 'I enjoyed canoeing on the River Esk and drinking hot chocolate with a Kelly kettle . delicious!' During the inspection Year 1 and 2 pupils enjoyed a visit to the Sealife centre.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Teaching and support staff are highly committed to the care and welfare of pupils. Staff know individual pupils well and have access to good systems for identifying and reviewing their needs and for providing a range of additional support. The school works well with other agencies to help individual children with health, attendance, behaviour and learning difficulties. The quality of marking and feedback to pupils is good, pupils are provided with key pointers on how they can improve their work.

A very small number of pupils, mainly boys, have behaviour difficulties and the school has provided additional training for teaching and support staff to deal more effectively with their challenging behaviour. This has been partially successful but there are still times when a few pupils are off task when lessons are not sufficiently interesting or challenging.

The school complies with the legal requirements for safeguarding and promotes pupils' health and safety.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is well led and managed. New appointments have strengthened the leadership team. The headteacher and deputy headteacher now job share and the senior leadership team works well together with a common focus on raising standards and achievement across the school. Their rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures ensure that planned actions are having the required impact across the school. Their participation in the 'Intensive Support Programme' has enabled the school to focus on the actions necessary to improve basic skills across the school through improved teaching and learning, target setting and monitoring. These systems are now in place and understood by all staff. Subject leaders play a key role in monitoring and checking progress. Good support is offered to staff to improve their practice including coaching and team teaching, lesson observations and feedback. All of these actions are linked to rigorous performance management procedures.

The governing body has developed its skills from acting as a critical friend to constantly supporting and challenging the school's work. Governors have high expectations of what the school can do and have supported the school in making radical changes which were not always popular in the community. The chair of governors has a very good understanding of where the school is and is realistic about how it can continue to improve. He is committed to the planned improvements and has encouraged his colleagues to become involved with the school and extend their knowledge so that many of them are now experts in various fields of the school's work.

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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	2
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	3
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?	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	2
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	2
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	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 very warm welcome you gave to me and my colleague when we visited your school recently to see how well you are doing. I am writing to tell you what we found. We think you go to a good school. We were impressed with how well you get on with each other and how well your teachers care for you. We think you are all now making good progress with your work and we especially enjoyed talking to you about your daily target sessions which you told us you enjoy enormously. You are knowledgeable about how to lead a healthy lifestyle and get many opportunities to go on visits which helps you to have a good understanding about the wider world. The youngest pupils get a very good start to their education and really enjoy working together in the Foundation Stage unit.

We agree with you that your school has improved very well over the last few years. We have asked Mrs Hyatt and Mrs Tandy to make some improvements which will make your school even better.

- We would like all of your lessons to be consistently good.
- We want you to improve your writing so that it is as good as your reading.
- We have asked that you get more opportunities to use the computers in your classrooms to enrich your learning.

It is not just down to your teachers, you have your part to play too! You can help your school improve by making sure that you all attend as often as you can and try to be on your best behaviour at all times.

We wish you all the very best for the future