

Lindhead School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121362
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	313962
Inspection dates	28–29 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Roger Gill

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	212
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr M Pitts
Headteacher	Mrs Jill Tiffany
Date of previous school inspection	31 March 2003
School address	Limestone Road Burniston Scarborough North Yorkshire YO13 0DG
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a slightly smaller than average sized school. The numbers of pupils in each year can vary greatly, which affects the school's budget adversely in some years. Most pupils come from a broadly typical socio-economic area around the school; about one third is from further afield. The vast majority of pupils are from a White British background. None of the remaining pupils, from minority ethnic heritages, is learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The school admits a significant minority of pupils part-way through their education. The school possesses a number of awards, the most recent being: Basic Skills Quality Mark; Inclusion Quality Mark; Healthy School Award; and the local authority's Highly Effective Schools Award. The school operated without a deputy headteacher in 2006/07 but an assistant headteacher was appointed from September 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Lindhead is a good school. Pupils greet visitors eagerly because they look forward to sharing their passion for school life. Working on the school's allotment, willow weaving, and their attempts at thatching are just a few of the activities that fill them with pride and which enrich the good curriculum. The effect of the school's high quality care on pupils' personal development is first-rate. 'This is a fantastic place in which to learn and play,' and 'the school cares deeply about pupils' happiness and well-being,' are typical of the positive comments made by parents. Pupils speak authoritatively about healthy lifestyles, keeping safe, their contribution to school life and supporting those less fortunate than themselves around the world. They develop into well-rounded young people by the time they leave in Year 6, capable of striving hard for themselves and valuing the efforts of others. As one younger pupil put it when summing up the school's qualities, 'the people, the work and the food are good here'.

Huge variations in class size have challenged the leadership team, but have been managed well to minimise any negative impact on learning. A sizeable minority of parents expressed concern about large classes but inspectors found that the quality of teaching across the school is good with, occasionally, some outstanding lessons.

In 2007, standards were well above average, which signalled a return to the school's previous levels of success in 2004. In 2005 and 2006, standards were broadly average. Current standards are above average in Year 6, which represents good achievement, except in writing where standards are average. Moreover, pupils' achievement is good in Years 1 and 2 after a period of satisfactory progress. The school generates a great deal of information about pupils' progress in the form of assessments and test results. The use of this information is satisfactory, but evaluation is not yet searching enough, for example in analysing the varying standards in writing, to allow leaders at all levels to see where achievement could be better and to enable them to set challenging targets for all pupils.

The school's relative shortcomings, in writing and assessment, are being tackled effectively by senior leaders. The headteacher is supported well by the assistant headteacher and other staff, but it is too soon to see higher standards in writing, and assessment being used to set challenging targets throughout the school. Teamwork is encouraged by the capable governing body which, along with its other responsibilities, keeps a strict eye on the budget to see how effectively it is being spent. Consequently, value for money is good.

The curriculum contains some top quality aspects, which is due to the headteacher's strong belief in the importance of providing pupils with a breadth of experiences. Moreover, the way the school liaises with the local community and organisations who can help is superb. The two residential experiences in Years 5 and 6, help to produce confident pupils who have, for example, a very good understanding of Islam and the Muslim way of life through their stay in Bradford. The school's international links with France, Norway and India and a wide array of extra-curricular activities broaden pupils' horizons even further. The curriculum is good rather than outstanding because of the work still to be done in developing the quality of pupils' writing and using it more extensively in all subjects.

Notwithstanding the high quality care and support, academic guidance is satisfactory. For example, teachers' marking of writing is occasionally extremely helpful in the way it advises pupils about how to improve their work, but in general the comments are not specific enough.

The school knows that this is an area for improvement and is already working on ways to improve it.

Leadership and management have a good influence in maintaining the positive ethos of the school, pupils' personal development and good teaching. The school's various awards indicate how well leaders have done in the past few years. Progress has been good since the last inspection and the school clearly has the capacity to push ahead.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Reception class. As a result, many reach the nationally expected levels for their age by the end of the year and some exceed them. The attainment of children when they start school is generally in line with what is typically expected for their age, although there are some weaknesses in writing and readiness for mathematical calculations. Teaching is particularly good at helping children to gain confidence, enjoy their learning and mix socially. While children do not have immediate and continuous access to an outdoor play area, this is a relative weakness in an otherwise stimulating and beneficial curriculum and the school makes up for it by setting up an area on the main playground. The partnership between the teaching assistant and the teacher is strong, which enables them to assess children's development well. Links with parents are purposeful and productive; several remark on how well their children are welcomed and introduced to school life. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed in a way that recognises what is successful, but also what needs to be improved.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Evaluate the information from assessments to provide a clear analysis for teaching, about the progress of individuals, groups and classes, and to set challenging targets.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Above average standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 represent good achievement, but too few pupils reach higher levels in writing. The trend is that most children attain well by the end of Year 6, but there are some variations in the rate of progress. Sometimes children race ahead in reading and slow down in writing. By contrast, pupils in Year 6 are currently accelerating in writing. For example, poems written, in one lesson, about the cruelty of bear baiting were very poignant owing to the skilful choice of vocabulary. It is progress in this skill with words linked to sentence construction and punctuation which varies throughout the school. Various groups of children, such as pupils with learning difficulties or higher attainers, often achieve well, although sometimes they progress satisfactorily because targets for them are not demanding enough.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school has a very positive atmosphere because the vast majority of pupils display excellent behaviour and attitudes. Enthusiasm bubbles up when pupils talk about the interesting lessons, healthy meals and making compost, for example. Pupils take so much pleasure in recycling because 'we care.' Business acumen among pupils prospers through the sale of produce from

the school's allotment. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding partly because pupils have many opportunities to find out about the lives of other people. There are very well developed links within the local community, for example with museums. These result in articulate pupils who can talk knowledgeably about local crafts and traditions. Pupils' pride in the school's orchestra, choir and sporting activities shines through. The maturity shown by older pupils when helping Reception children and the joy derived from opportunities in dance and drama help produce well-balanced young people by the end of Year 6.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The buoyant relationships between teachers and pupils help to fuel positive attitudes towards learning. Teachers are clear about the purpose of lessons, but the degree to which higher attainers are challenged differs between classes. Classes are well managed in ways which ensure that lessons possess a personal touch. Learning in a mathematics lesson in Year 4, for example, was successful because small groups of pupils took turns to learn skills in information and communication technology in the school's well-equipped learning resource centre. Teaching assistants are a valuable asset, particularly in the way they help pupils who find learning difficult. The progress of all children is assessed well and a wealth of information is collected. Teachers often make good day-to-day decisions from following the progress of individual pupils. However, the lack of comprehensive analysis of assessment information limits the way that they set challenging targets designed to improve achievement for the whole class.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum has a huge impact on personal development and a generally good influence on pupils' academic skills. Central to the school's provision is the way that the regular timetable is interspersed with special weeks, residentials, visitors and projects designed to make pupils aware of topics such as sustainability. For example, Year 6 pupils are linked to the National Trust Guardianship Scheme. They learn about conservation from working with the local rangers. The school is justifiably proud of what it does to create socially aware, healthy and safety conscious pupils. Moreover, it recognises that the enrichment activities are not yet used well enough to provide a purpose for pupils' writing. Links with the local playgroups and secondary schools ensure that pupils are admitted and prepared for transfer smoothly.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school has a friendly and kind character, so pupils feel happy and safe. The acid test, referred to by pupils when reflecting on the school's strengths, is the way in which newcomers are welcomed. Pupils settle in very quickly because adults and pupils alike are so considerate. Rigorous systems to analyse and minimise risk lie behind this supportive atmosphere. Child protection arrangements are in place and working. The good example provided by adults around school is influential in promoting excellent behaviour. Parents believe that the wide range of extra activities offered by the school has a strongly supportive effect on their children; inspectors agree. Moreover, the induction into Reception and the lively learning there are very positive

in their effect. It is the improvements needed in helping children become more aware of their next steps in learning which make this aspect of the school good rather than outstanding.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The influence of leadership and management is good, as was reported at the time of the previous inspection. The headteacher and the governors have worked well together in raising standards back to previous above average levels while maintaining pupils' strong personal development. The school's good capacity to improve is demonstrated by the way that members of the leadership team discuss the way forward. The school knows itself well in terms of strengths and areas to develop although it slightly over-estimates the quality of its curriculum and academic guidance. Nevertheless, the need to provide a deeper analysis of pupils' progress and the scope for higher standards in writing are highlighted in the school's current plans for development. Leaders know that a more rigorous use of the information from assessment could be a lever to improve achievement across the school.

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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 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	2
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?	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
How well 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	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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for your help when my colleague and I inspected your school. We thoroughly enjoyed our two days with you. The welcome that you gave us was wonderful. Thank you to the children who came up and offered to sit with us and tell us about the school in such a polite and friendly way.

You go to a good school. We know that you enjoy yourselves greatly. Many of you told us so in our conversations with you and we saw it in lessons. For example, telling us about the fun which children have in Reception, finding things out through well organised play activities. Also, children in Year 6 were very keen to tell us how much they enjoy learning.

We know how hard all the adults work to make life interesting for you. You are lucky to go to a school where the residential trips, for example, are so challenging and interesting. Your headteacher, teachers and all the other adults who work with you set a fine example for you to follow. You repay them by behaving very well and throwing yourself into all that you do in lessons or outside in activities such as growing vegetables on the school's allotment.

We know everyone wants to improve even in a good school such as yours. So, we have suggested two things that will help. We have asked your teachers to improve your writing by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This will help you to: use even more exciting vocabulary; improve your punctuation; and begin pieces with powerful openings. Also, the school is going to make sure that everyone, including governors, know how well you are doing and what needs to be improved by looking more closely at the information from the assessment of your work. Then they can all see whether individuals and classes have done as well as possible by the end of each year.

You can all help by trying very hard with your writing and listening well to any advice about how to improve your work in a step-by-step way.