

Oatlands Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121397
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	313975
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Rosemary Rodger

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	5–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	225
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 Steve Scarre
Headteacher	Mrs J Davis
Date of previous school inspection	16 May 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Hookstone Road Harrogate North Yorkshire HG2 8BT
Telephone number	01423 871036
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Age group	5–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized infant school close to the centre of Harrogate. It serves an area of high social and economic advantage. More than half the pupils attend the school from further afield. Very few pupils are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is low. Most pupils are of White British heritage. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) into two single-age Reception classes or a mixed-age Reception and Year 1 class. On site, there is before- and after-school care for pupils during term time and the holidays. This is run by a private provider and did not form part of this inspection. The school has achieved several awards including Healthy Schools and an 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: 1

Oatlands Infant School is outstanding in its effectiveness and admirably lives up to its aims that, 'This school will lay the foundations for life by providing a positive, rich experience for all pupils. It will be characterised by high standards in literacy and numeracy and a rich, broad and balanced curriculum. This will be carried out in a happy, safe and supportive atmosphere.' Parents too praise the school's work, as is captured very well in the following comments, 'this is a caring and warm environment where teaching is wonderful and support staff genuinely care for our children,' and, 'It is a privilege for our child to be at the school.' Based on their above average starting points into Key Stage 1, pupils make outstanding rates of progress. As a result, by the end of Year 2, they achieve well above average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science in the yearly national assessments. All pupils, including the more able and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make the same excellent rate of progress. This is due to the great care and attention given to the needs of each individual pupil and the exemplary support provided for all by support staff and teachers under the excellent leadership of the headteacher. Everyone shares and understands the vision of excellence that sets the expectation of high standards and maximum enjoyment for all pupils.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils greatly enjoy school and this is exemplified in their excellent attendance and in the happiness that pervades all aspects of their school life. This was well illustrated in the gentle singing accompanying lunchtime. Pupils understand the importance of healthy eating and all say they feel very safe in school. The excellent standards pupils achieve in basic skills, including information and communication technology (ICT), prepares them very well for the next stage of their education. Pupils are confident and are proud of the range of responsibilities they have as members of the school council or through tasks carried out in their classrooms. Teaching is excellent and is particularly successful in promoting high levels of independence that encourage perseverance and concentration. For example, Year 2 pupils very clearly understood how to end a story and how to correct a weak example of a story ending provided by the teacher. Pupils' excellent attitudes and behaviour contribute exceptionally well to their very effective learning. Parents are well informed and many are regularly involved as helpers in school. They particularly appreciate the recent introduction of a home-school diary. Assessment arrangements are exemplary. Pupils understand their targets for improvement and are helped to improve their work, particularly writing, because marking is so informative and helps pupils know their next steps. The excellent curriculum and the impact of the school's extended provision ensure that pupils are fully involved in a range of community events, such as grandparents' mornings and parents' afternoons. The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are excellent.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher's excellent management is supported by the very effective work of the knowledgeable governing body. Leaders have succeeded in both maintaining and building on the considerable strengths identified at the time of the previous inspection. Excellent systems are in place to check the quality of the school's work and to involve senior staff. The school's self-evaluation is modest in some respects but, overall, accurately captures the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The school provides excellent value for money and has made consistently outstanding progress since the last inspection. As a result, it has an outstanding capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in the EYFS make good progress in their learning. When they start in the Reception class they are mostly working at above age-related expectations in all areas of learning. Outdoor learning is a high priority with children able to access a range of outdoor activities to promote learning and development throughout the day. For example, children braved the ice and snow to draw numbers on the snowy ground with great glee and satisfaction at their efforts. Children become very confident learners because they are given considerable responsibility and are capable of working independently. Generally, all staff are well deployed to support and extend learning, but at times they miss opportunities to extend skills such as writing. Boys in particular are less confident writers. Good use is made of parent helpers to work with small groups. Assessment arrangements are good. Individual children's portfolios record their progress in each area of learning. Creative use is made of other accommodation in school to ensure that children in the EYFS have scope to develop their creative and physical skills because of the limitations of space in the classrooms. The personal, social and emotional development of children is outstanding. Arrangements to ensure that children are safe and well-cared for are robust and in line with the high quality found in the rest of the school. Leadership is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide children in the EYFS, especially boys, with more challenge in writing.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Standards are consistently significantly above average by the end of Year 2. Achievement is outstanding. All groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and more able pupils, achieve equally well. The provisional national assessment data confirms these judgements, both for progress and standards reached. Pupils' excellent personal development and well-being contributes considerably to the excellent outcomes. Pupils love school and fully engage in all the school provides for them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Everyone has a strong sense of belonging and pupils celebrate and begin to understand the diversity of cultures and other faiths through daily assemblies. Pupils understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle as a result of their frequent physical education lessons, 'huff and puff' activities and the actions taken to achieve the Healthy Schools Award. Pupils' enjoyment is very well reflected in their excellent attendance. They also understand the importance of arriving at school on time to ensure that they do not miss anything. Parents' comments support their children's views about how eager they are to attend. Pupils say they feel safe in school because their teachers care for them so well and look after them at playtimes. Behaviour is generally outstanding in and around the school. Lunchtimes are exceptionally positive social occasions, with exemplary behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to understand their rights and responsibilities, for example through the school council and their involvement in the community. Senior citizens join the children for Christmas celebrations.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Key features of outstanding learning in all classes are the excellent attitudes of pupils and their confident, oral contributions. For example, Year 2 pupils worked cooperatively to plan a route and discussed how to plot the coordinates on their floor plans. The use of questions is excellent and links very well to what pupils are expected to learn. Objectives for learning in lessons are prominently displayed on whiteboards. Relationships are excellent. Pupils trust their teachers and show great respect for them and for their classmates. A skilled team of teaching assistants make an excellent contribution to pupils' learning. They support and extend the learning of the more and less able pupils. They also use their creative talents to work with small groups in and out of classrooms, for example to design and make many artefacts linked to the topics taught in each class. Assessment procedures are excellent. Pupils are encouraged to assess what they have learned at the end of lessons and they know how to improve their work because teachers mark their work so well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding because it offers learners a very wide range of opportunities and experiences. It meets statutory requirements. For example, all pupils learn French. Spanish is also offered to Year 2 pupils through the Spanish club. There is excellent enrichment of the curriculum through many clubs run during the day and after school, for example art, running, computers and a choir. The recent introduction of a more creative curriculum brings together different subjects. For example, pupils learned how to make a hinge for an advent calendar in design and technology. They also learned about the history of the calendars and where in the world they were first made. The curriculum is further enriched by visits to local villages to compare town and country lifestyles. There are very effective links with the local and wider community through the creative curriculum, visits and visitors. For example, talks by local paramedics help younger pupils to understand paramedics' role in the community. Events such as 'World food day' and sponsorship of a school in a global community foster understanding of other cultures very well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are a key strength recognised by pupils and parents alike. Pupils say they feel very safe. School council members gave feeling safe in school 'ten out of ten!' This is because of the caring and trusting relationships between all adults and pupils. These result in all pupils feeling valued and knowing that they have someone to turn to if they have a problem. Safeguarding procedures are rigorously implemented, meet requirements and include child protection training for all staff. In this very inclusive school, vulnerable pupils are identified by staff and senior leaders to ensure that they are well supported. Strong links with outside agencies ensure that these pupils make excellent progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are excellent. The clear vision and drive of the headteacher successfully encourages senior staff to work tirelessly to ensure that pupils achieve as well as they can. An excellent example of this was the training and support provided to staff to improve the achievement of girls in mathematics last year. Teamwork is very effective and all staff build and maintain very effective relationships with parents and the community. The excellent partnership with parents is an outstanding feature that contributes considerably to the strong community ethos. There is a common sense of purpose between all those involved with the school. Self-evaluation is rigorous, although modest in some respects. Checks on the school's performance, completed by senior staff and the headteacher, are first-rate. Governors are highly efficient. The fact that the school was the first primary school in the local authority to be awarded the national financial management standard is testament to its excellent effectiveness.

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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?	1
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?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
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?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

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

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	1
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?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
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?	1
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**

It gives me great pleasure to be writing to you to let you know that the other inspector and I enjoyed our recent inspection of your school. Please thank your parents for all their comments about your school. Thank you too for all your help and kindness during the inspection. We were sorry to be missing all the Christmas performances. It was lovely to hear you singing when we were in school. We have judged your school to be outstanding. The reasons for this are listed below.

- You all work very hard and achieve really well in all your work.
- You enjoy school very much and do not want to miss anything, so your attendance is excellent.
- Teaching is excellent and helps you to learn very well.
- The work you do is very exciting and helps you to make excellent progress in all your subjects.
- There are outstanding links with the community and many events for your parents and other people to attend.
- All the adults who run your school do an extremely good job so you are all very well cared for and very happy.

There is one thing for your school to do to make it even better. That is to make sure that the youngest children are encouraged to start writing more often, especially the boys.

Best wishes for the future.