

Ripon, Greystone Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121442
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	313991
Inspection date	7 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Clive Petts

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	189
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	Mrs Audrey Blackburn
Headteacher	Mrs Jean Denney
Date of previous school inspection	23 May 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Quarry Moor Lane Ripon North Yorkshire HG4 1RW
Telephone number	01765 603481

Age group	3–11
Inspection date	7 October 2008
Inspection number	313991

Fax number

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Age group 3–11

Inspection date 7 October 2008

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' achievement and the standards they reach particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Years 1 and 2; the quality of teaching and learning; the effectiveness of leadership and management especially in relation to their impact on pupils' achievement and the effectiveness of EYFS provision. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation, nationally published assessment data, the school's records of pupils' progress, observations of lessons, the scrutiny of pupils' work, break and lunchtime and the school's priorities for further improvement. Discussions with pupils, staff and governors were held and questionnaires returned by parents were taken into account. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own judgements, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified. These have been included in the report where appropriate.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized school. The community the school serves contains pockets of disadvantage. Nearly all the pupils are from a White British heritage. A very small number of pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is broadly average. Although the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need is well below average. The school is part of the National Pilot for Personal Finance Education Group, a government initiative, and has been accredited with the 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: 2

Greystone is a good school with a number of outstanding features. Pupils achieve well because of good teaching and the school provides good value for money. The headteacher's excellent vision, energy and drive results in a very positive ethos and has made certain that very good progress has been made since the last inspection. The high quality of care and outstanding personal development reflect the extent to which pupils are valued as individuals. This lies at the heart of all that the school does. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive and really appreciate the high quality of care for children. The comment, 'As a parent you have a safe feeling leaving your child in their care; all children matter,' typifies parents' views. Parents appreciate the warm, friendly way in which the school welcomes all pupils and families no matter what the background, culture, beliefs or learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Children start school with a varied range of skills often significantly below that typical for their ages. Communication skills, particularly among the boys, are poor. However, by the end of Year 6 standards are often above average particularly in English and science and this represents good achievement. Pupils make good progress in the EYFS. Essential literacy skills are strengthened in Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 2 standards are just below average reflecting the good progress. In Years 3 to 6 the school works diligently to make sure the momentum is maintained. Provisional 2008 national test results at the end of Year 6 demonstrate that the improving trend, revealed in the 2007 test results, has been sustained. Pupils work hard and achieve well, including those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language. The school's challenging targets have been exceeded. Yet, while the more able pupils achieved well in English and science they did less well in mathematics. Boys' writing, though improving, remains a weakness especially for older boys. The sustained improvements are a result of good and sometimes outstanding teaching which uses effective strategies to accelerate progress. Every classroom has high quality displays which present a range of prompts and ideas to boost literacy and numeracy skills. Tasks are skilfully planned, well timed and approaches are lively and varied. Pupils are enthused to write imaginatively and encouraged to think for themselves as well as sharing ideas. Nevertheless, boys' standards in writing are occasionally held back because opportunities are missed for them to practise their skills. Pupils' achievement is carefully checked and interventions to boost progress are prompt when pupils are at risk of falling behind. Excellent relationships in the classroom add to the positive climate for learning.

The good and steadily improving curriculum makes an important contribution to pupils' personal development. Theme days make learning 'fun' and the local community is fully utilised to give pupils valuable first-hand experiences, for example, at a museum acting out scenes from life in the local workhouse. Art is an important part of pupils' school life and the skills are used across all subjects, for example sketching Henry the Eighth in the style of Holbein. Strong links with the local secondary school give pupils the chance to experiment in a science laboratory. Good attendance reflects pupils' high levels of enjoyment and their commitment to school. Behaviour is exemplary and pupils demonstrate thoughtful and tolerant attitudes towards each other. The vibrant, stimulating school atmosphere allows pupils to thrive. They are helpful, considerate and friendly to visitors and take pleasure showing them their work. Pupils speak with confidence about the responsibilities they take on to assist in the smooth running of the school, for example hosting lunches for older people. They are fully aware of the value and benefits of adopting a healthy lifestyle and know how to keep safe. Pupils demonstrate a well

developed grasp of other beliefs and cultures, for example through celebrating Thanksgiving with pupils from the nearby United States Airforce base school. They learn how to manage money through the personal finance initiative. This all prepares them really well for later life and to value diversity.

The school excels in the quality of care provided for each pupil regardless of abilities and background. This is evident in the high quality of home-school and agency support. The staff do their utmost to ensure that those identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, those identified as vulnerable or those learning English as an additional language are suitably challenged. Safeguarding and child protection procedures are in place and staff are trained in welfare and safeguarding practice. Pupils appreciate that staff are always available when needed to share a concern or worry. They receive very good guidance because marking is thorough and explanations and written comments make it plain how to improve. Pupils are developing the skills to assess their own and each other's performance as they take more responsibility for their learning.

Leadership and management are good. The senior leaders, ably supported by staff and governors, provide the drive for continued improvement. Staff's skills and talents are successfully nurtured by the headteacher and this has helped strengthen subject leadership. School self-evaluation is accurate and well focused on raising achievement. The continuous improvement in literacy skills is the result of adopting effective strategies which are regularly checked for their impact. Senior leaders are now working on approaches to provide extra challenge to the more able pupils so that they apply their mathematical skills more successfully to solve problems. Governors are actively involved in checking school performance. They have a high regard for the happy family atmosphere and the commitment and skill of staff. The steady improvements in achievement and standards, the outstanding personal development, the high quality of care and strengthening subject leadership all demonstrate that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The EYFS is good and improving rapidly because it is especially well led and managed. Children start the Nursery with skills significantly lower than are typical for their age and some have limited communication and language skills. Children can be reluctant to speak, hesitant and shy. Warm and caring relationships in bright, attractive, extremely well resourced and safe learning environments ensure that children settle quickly, feel safe and develop a desire to learn. They settle into school routines confidently. Staff carefully observe and accurately assess needs and regularly check how well progress is being made. The information gathered is effectively used to plan children's learning and development, both indoors and outdoors. Their progress in communication, language and personal development is especially good as staff provide excellent opportunities for children to work together, share responsibility and develop their independence. Successful reorganisation of Nursery and Reception provision is making a growing impact in the push to raise achievement and standards. The EYFS leader has brought together a committed and enthusiastic team of staff. They are developing fresh approaches to boost learning, for example the skills of speaking and listening are given a high priority in all learning in order to speed up the onset of writing. By the time children leave Reception they have made good progress and most are working towards their learning targets.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities, especially for older boys, to practise writing skills so that their progress accelerates.
- Improve achievement in mathematics for the more able pupils.

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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

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	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 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?	1

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 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	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of Greystone Community Primary School, Ripon, HG4 1RW

I thoroughly enjoyed my inspection of your school and appreciated your warm, friendly and polite welcome. I was very impressed by the happy family atmosphere and your eagerness to learn. I really liked talking to the members of the school council and seeing you enjoy your playtime with your friends. You go to a good school, which has a number of outstanding strengths. These are some of the things the school does really well.

- You achieve well and reach standards that are above those reached by other children.
- Teaching is good. Teachers make learning fun and give you lots of help and support when you need it.
- Your behaviour is perfect and your excellent relationships with each other and staff help you with your learning.
- Your school's leaders are determined to continue to improve your school and make sure that you all continue to enjoy your work and make good progress.
- Your teachers make certain great care is taken of you.

I have asked your school to improve your education by making sure boys improve their writing and the more able pupils do better in mathematics.

You all have an important part to play improving your school. You can help by continuing to listen very carefully to the advice of your staff, responding to your teachers' questions and by working as hard as you possibly can. This will help you produce work of an even higher standard.

Thank you for helping me with this inspection.