

# Saltergate Community Junior School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121463
<b>Local Authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	313997
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 June 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Les Schubeler

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	170
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Karen Weaver
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr C Taylor
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 March 2005
<b>School address</b>	Newby Crescent Harrogate North Yorkshire HG3 2TT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01423 506866
<b>Fax number</b>	0

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Saltergate Community Junior is a small school serving an area of local authority and private housing to the north west of Harrogate. The number of pupils in the school has been declining in recent years, but it is set to rise again. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average, as is the proportion of those entitled to free school meals. Most pupils are of White British heritage. During the past year the school has suffered from a significant level of disruption in staffing. The school has received the Healthy Schools award, the Activemark and the Financial Management Standards in Schools award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with significant strengths. Pupils are provided with high levels of care and their personal development and well-being are good. They get on well with one another and value the good relationships they have with their teachers.

Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils have tended to enter the school with levels of attainment that are broadly average, though in the last two years those levels have fallen to below average. Results in national tests at the end of Year 6 are broadly average. For the increasing number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and the more vulnerable children, achievement is good because of the carefully targeted support they receive. The pupils' achievement reflects the satisfactory quality of teaching and learning. There are examples of good practice, but these are not consistent enough across the school. Teachers do not always plan lessons that are well matched to the needs of different groups of pupils. As a result, not all pupils make the progress they could during these lessons.

Attendance rates are above the national average, reflecting pupils' enjoyment of the school, particularly of the wide range of learning and leisure activities out of school hours. Pupils say they feel safe. They are comfortable about approaching staff if they have a problem and are confident that disputes will be resolved swiftly. They make a positive contribution to the community through the school council. The pastoral care for pupils is excellent and all staff work well together to support vulnerable pupils in difficulty or need. The school's work with individuals to raise self-esteem and overcome obstacles to their learning is having a positive impact upon their achievement and upon their attitudes towards learning. Strategies for using assessment information to track the progress of individual pupils are not applied with enough consistency or regularity to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school provides its pupils with a good curriculum that is enhanced by a varied range of additional activities such as visits, interesting visitors and popular lunchtime and after-school clubs. The majority of parents are supportive of the work of the school. They are particularly appreciative of the high standards of care shown to the school's disadvantaged pupils and the provision of opportunities for pupils to develop and extend their interests outside the classroom. Some express concern about acts of bullying, but inspectors agree with pupils that these are rare and are resolved effectively.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Despite the staffing difficulties in the last year, the school has maintained its commitment to inclusion, high levels of care and the promotion of pupils' personal development. The school's leaders carry out a detailed analysis of pupils' standards at the end of each year. For example, last year careful evaluation of pupils' standards led to a focus on writing skills and, as a result, some improvements are now being seen. However, the targets set by the school in English and mathematics are not based on the prior attainment of individual year groups. This means they are not challenging enough year on year and so the drive for improvement is diluted. Evaluation of the social, emotional and academic needs of vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties is rigorous and successful action is taken to ensure their good progress in all respects. Issues for improvement raised at the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. The absence of key personnel in the management team has hindered some of its work recently. Currently, the school's capacity for improvement is satisfactory. However, plans to restructure the leadership and management team are well designed to enhance the school's development and its monitoring of performance.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Set consistently challenging targets based on pupils' prior attainment in order to raise standards and achievement.
- Make more effective use of assessment information to promote good progress for all pupils.
- Ensure that teachers consistently match lesson activities to the learning needs of all pupils.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Standards in the last three years have been broadly average overall, representing satisfactory achievement. At no time have standards fallen to below average, and at different times, pupils have performed at a slightly higher level in English and science. Although the 2006 results in mathematics were above average, in 2007 they were again broadly average along with those in English and science. The school identified weaknesses in pupils' writing skills and action taken to improve them is showing some signs of success in pupils' current work throughout the school, but it is too early to see a sustained improvement. The success of this action follows on from the improvements that have taken place in mathematics since the last inspection.

The school's own analysis of pupils' performance across the school in recent years and provisional assessments by teachers of pupils' work this year indicate a pattern of satisfactory progress. As pupils are becoming more aware of how to improve their work and as they become familiar with the requirements of national tests, some individuals accelerate their rate of progress in Years 5 and 6. However, this is not, as yet, a consistent feature in all year groups.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

The quality of pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good overall. Their behaviour is generally satisfactory and well ordered, although low-level misbehaviour in some lessons impairs the pace of learning. As befits a school that has received the Healthy Schools Award, its pupils understand the importance of healthy lifestyles and enthusiastically take part in regular physical activities. The school takes the pupils' views seriously. This has led, for example, to pupils devising a fair system for pupils to access the tranquility of a quiet room at playtimes. Pupils' good personal, social, and information and communication technology (ICT) skills, coupled with their sound progress in other basic skills, prepare them satisfactorily for the next stage of their education.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Positive relationships in the classroom are a strength of the teaching. The school has been through a difficult time over the past year and learning in some classes has been affected. In the more effective lessons, a brisk pace and a clear focus ensure that pupils sustain their concentration. Pupils' learning is well promoted through the use of open questions and the encouragement of discussion. However, in other lessons, teachers' questions fail to provide

such opportunities and pupils' answers are shorter and less considered. Throughout the school, when pupils are appropriately challenged, learning is good. At other times, work is not matched closely enough to what different groups of pupils need to learn next. Some pupils are beginning to develop a clear awareness of how to improve their work. In one effective lesson, with guidance provided by the teacher the pupils identified areas for improvement in an example of a news script. They, then, successfully applied what they had learnt as they assessed the work of other pupils. Teaching assistants are suitably briefed and they support learning effectively, especially for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school has a curriculum which affords pupils a rich and broad range of learning experiences. Recent developments in linking subjects with one another are proving beneficial, by enabling pupils to practise skills in different contexts. The wide range of visits and visitors to the school enhances the pupils' learning, enabling them to gain first-hand experiences of different people and places. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to experience the multicultural world that lies beyond their immediate surroundings. ICT skills are promoted well and pupils are adept in using their skills to develop their learning in a range of subjects. Pupils extend their learning experiences through activities in physical education, drama and art that bring them into contact with other schools. Year 6 pupils enjoy a valuable residential visit that helps to develop their personal and social skills in a new and challenging environment.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Health and safety arrangements and safeguarding procedures are in place. Continued, astute investment by the school's leaders in the use of a highly effective home/school support worker has helped to ensure closer, productive links with families. It has also ensured that, by building their confidence and self-esteem, the school teaches vulnerable pupils to deal with their emotions and to continue to access school and further their learning. The school works effectively with outside agencies to remove barriers to learning for all of its pupils and to ensure children are safe. Good support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, both in the classroom and in smaller groups, enables them to make good progress. Assessment information is used well to identify these pupils. Academic guidance is satisfactory overall. The systems that enable teachers to track pupils' progress more closely in English, mathematics and science are beginning to be used effectively to help pupils become more aware of their progress and of how to improve their work. However, more still needs to be done to ensure consistency of practice across the school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

During the school's significant level of disruption to staffing in the last year, its leaders have used resources well to cope with the difficulties. One of the school's main strengths is its commitment to inclusion and this has been maintained, as have the promotion of pupils' good personal development and the high levels of care. The planned development of a new management structure has been hindered. As a result, the monitoring of some features of the school's performance, such as the quality of teaching and learning across the school, and the

setting of accurate and challenging whole-school targets, have been less rigorous than they might have been. Governors are actively involved in the development of the school. They manage finances well. They are well informed through frequent contact with the headteacher and by their links with staff and year groups in the school. They are committed, supportive and challenging.

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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?	3
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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	2
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?	3
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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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	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

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of Saltergate Community Junior School, Harrogate, HG3 2TT

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave to the two inspectors who inspected your school recently. We would like to thank you for being so courteous and friendly. We enjoyed talking to you and listening to your views about the school. We spent a lot of time finding out how well you learn in your lessons, looking at your work and talking to your headteacher and other staff. Saltergate is a satisfactory school with a number of good features.

We think your teachers and teaching assistants care for you extremely well. You told us you feel safe because there is always someone to turn to if you need help. It was very pleasing to see that you get on well with one another and all the adults who work with you. You also said that you enjoy school (apart from all the practice for the national tests!) and all of the interesting visits to places such as Eden Camp and the Water Park. It was clear to us that you are enthusiastic about the activities and clubs that are arranged for you at lunchtimes and after school. We found that many of you are working well and it was pleasing to see that you are really improving your writing skills.

However, we think that some of you could be doing better and we have asked your headteacher and the other staff to make sure that the work in lessons is at the right level for all pupils in the class. We also want them to keep a close eye on how well you are all learning and to help you understand what you need to do next to improve your work. We would like the school to set challenging targets for you to achieve.

We are sure that you will carry on enjoying school. Most of all, we hope that you will continue to work hard and help all the staff to make Saltergate an even better school in the future.