

Kirkby Fleetham Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121505
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	314014
Inspection date	4 December 2007
Reporting inspector	Ralph Higgs

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	53
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Caroline Byrne
Headteacher	Mrs Beverley Price
Date of previous school inspection	6 May 2003
School address	Kirkby Fleetham Northallerton North Yorkshire DL7 0SA
Telephone number	01609 748431
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: standards and achievement, personal development and well-being, teaching and learning, and care guidance and support. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation, national published assessment data and the school's own assessment records, policies and minutes, observation of the school at work, interviews with senior members of staff and pupils, and the parents' questionnaires. Meetings were held with members of the governing body and parents. 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 assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This small village primary school draws its pupils from a wide rural area. The number on roll has risen rapidly in recent years. This is partly because parents from further afield are seeking places for their children due to the school's very good reputation. Pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. There is a higher than average degree of mobility as a significant number of pupils join or leave the school during each key stage. Some of these pupils enter without having previously studied the National Curriculum. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is rising and is broadly average. No pupil currently has a statement of special educational needs. A new headteacher took up post in April 2005 and was joined by a new Key Stage 2 teacher in September 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. Excellent leadership and teaching, coupled with a vibrant, outward looking curriculum and very high standards of care, underpin the school's success. As a result, pupils have excellent attitudes to learning and strive very hard to succeed. They reach exceptionally high standards in their work and achievement is first-rate. Parents fully recognise these qualities, are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and praise the school for, in their words, 'putting children first', and for the responsiveness and dedication of staff.

The school provides pupils with a very clear picture of what they are expected to learn in lessons and involves them very well in understanding the progress that they make. Teaching is sharply focused, taking full account of the varying needs of pupils in the two mixed-age classes. Lessons are interesting, enjoyable and productive. Good use is made of computers to advance learning. Excellent teamwork with teaching assistants ensures that pupils receive high levels of individual attention. As a result, pupils with learning difficulties are able to participate fully in all activities and achieve as well as their classmates. The needs of the most able pupils are equally well provided for. They are stretched by work which is drawn from that planned for the age group above. When a class is split into smaller groups, teaching assistants lead learning effectively, complementing the work of the teacher very well. Pupils are keen to 'trade their targets'. This means that when they have achieved a particular challenge they receive a fresh one from their teacher.

Pupils' progress is assessed frequently and teachers adapt their planning accordingly to provide the right amount of challenge or extra help. The needs of pupils new to the school are thoroughly analysed to ensure that they adapt successfully to new circumstances. Sophisticated analysis of internal and national tests is used to identify the elements of subjects which need strengthening. The recent introduction of progress and target-setting days involving all staff has sharpened this process. It enables the school to set challenging targets which pupils typically reach.

This consistently strong teaching brings about outstanding progress across the school. It occurs from pupils' broadly average skills on entry to the Reception class or from when they enter during a key stage. Consequently, standards are exceptionally high by the end of Key Stage 2 and have risen year on year as shown by national test results. Teacher assessment results at the end of Year 2 have been more variable, reflecting an increasing number of pupils entering with learning difficulties or late in the key stage. Current standards are above average. The school shows no complacency despite this impressive record. It has embarked on new strategies for teaching writing in order to close the gap further on the extremely high standards in speaking, listening and reading.

The very high quality of care and support that pupils receive helps bring about their excellent personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Hence, older pupils approach their learning and responsibilities in an assured, mature manner. They are exceptionally well prepared to take their place as future citizens. School councillors meet weekly and are very proud of the successful influence they have on school improvements. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to develop leadership qualities. For example, older pupils are involved in the planning for school visits. Large numbers of pupils take part in the excellent range of after-school activities offered and say they enjoy school a great deal. Pupils are keen to come to school and their attendance is consistently good.

Pupils know how to lead healthy lifestyles and how to stay fit as the curriculum provides very good opportunities to develop these qualities. The personal, social and emotional development programme encourages pupils to talk about their relationships and how to resolve disputes. A high priority is placed on pupils' welfare and safety and the school has ensured that all the required safeguarding procedures are in place. Consequently, pupils feel secure and understand the potential hazards which exist on the school site and in the locality. They report that there is no bullying and that they soon become friends again if they fall out with anyone. Recently, Year 5 and 6 pupils interviewed parent volunteers to find out more about future career opportunities. This kind of experience, coupled with the excellent progress made in basic skills, prepares pupils extremely well for the next stage of their education.

Excellent governance has enabled rapid improvements to be made to the quality of provision based on the very clear direction given by the headteacher. A tight budget is used wisely to allocate resources where they are needed. The construction of the school improvement plan involves staff and governors and has contributed very well to the strong sense of common purpose. Well-organised performance management and the promotion of professional training for all staff have increased the school's capacity to realise improvements. The school checks its performance systematically. A particularly strong feature is the way the headteacher consults with parents and pupils in order to understand what is working well or not so well. The school has been modest in some of its judgements about the effectiveness of its provision. However, self-evaluation accurately identifies areas for improvement and these are implemented effectively. Taking account of the sustained improvement since the last inspection, the school has an outstanding capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children make an excellent start to school because of the high quality provision they receive. They join a class which also contains Key Stage 1 pupils and benefit greatly from the breadth of opportunities that this provides. Children quickly find their feet, working and playing happily together. Teaching and learning are outstanding. The staff team understands the needs of young children and plans well-tailored and lively activities for them which stimulate their desire to learn. Children's progress is frequently checked to enable the right degree of challenge and support to be given. As a result, children make excellent progress from entry. Consequently, almost all children reach, and many exceed, the learning goals expected by the time they start Year 1. Recent improvements to the outdoor play area have extended opportunities for learning. However, the school recognises that these are limited in scope, partly because of the restrictions imposed by the nature of the school site. The Foundation Stage is led and managed very well and there is smooth transition into Key Stage 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the opportunities for outdoor play and learning in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.

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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

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 disabilities make progress	1

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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the 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

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?	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 tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	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**

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave to me when I visited your school recently. I really enjoyed having discussions with you and visiting your classrooms.

These are the outstanding things I found out about your school, which provides you with an excellent education.

- I agree with you that school is really enjoyable, friendly and caring
- The youngest children make an excellent start in Reception
- Your teachers provide you with excellent, interesting lessons
- You make excellent progress in your work
- You are learning really well about the wider world and are keen to extend your talents because the school encourages these things very well indeed
- I am impressed by your maturity and confidence and by how strongly you contribute to the success of the school community
- Your behaviour is excellent in lessons and around the school
- You get on really well with each other and are quick to help when needed
- You clearly know how to lead healthy lives and how to keep safe
- The headteacher, staff and governors are working very successfully to improve your education.

I have asked your school to:

- make further improvements to the outdoor play area so that the younger children can learn as well there as they do in the classroom. I know that the school council will be able to come up with some great ideas to help with future plans.

Once again, thank you for being so helpful on my visit. I know that you will do your best to help the school continue to improve.