

Richmond Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 121512 |
| Local Authority | North Yorkshire |
| Inspection number | 314017 |
| Inspection dates | 17–18 March 2008 |
| Reporting inspector | Jim Griffin |

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

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|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 337 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mrs Myckala Smith |
| Headteacher | Mrs Di Robinson |
| Date of previous school inspection | 28 June 2004 |
| School address | Frances Road Richmond North Yorkshire DL10 4NF |
| Telephone number | 01748 822104 |
| Fax number | 01748 825891 |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average. Most pupils live in Richmond or the local villages and are White British. The proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals and pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are below average. A new headteacher was appointed one year ago. The school has the Financial Management Standard in Schools, Healthy Schools Status and the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Richmond Church of England School provides a satisfactory and improving education for its pupils. Pupils' good pastoral care and personal development are strengths. Pupils enjoy the happy atmosphere in the school and share positive, trusting relationships with staff and each other. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils show respect and consideration for others and have a good awareness of different faiths and cultures. Pupils' attendance is above average reflecting their enjoyment of school. Their behaviour is good and this aids their learning. Playtimes are safe and active so that pupils can enjoy their friendships. Pupils are well aware of the importance of keeping fit and maintaining a sensible diet, owing to the way this is prioritised in the curriculum. This reflects the external award the school holds for this area of its work. Pupils have a voice through the school council and regularly take part in sporting competitions and musical events in the local community. Parents are very positive about what the school provides. They speak warmly about the leadership and value the school's very effective contribution to their children's personal development through good pastoral care.

Pupils' satisfactory achievement enables them to attain broadly average standards by the end of Year 6. However, rates of progress are uneven across year groups. Pupils make good progress in Years 5 and 6 in all basic skills. At Key Stage 1 progress in writing and mathematics is weaker than in reading although it is now improving. This uneven picture in pupils' progress largely reflects the variation in the quality of teaching and learning between year groups and subjects. Teaching is good in Years 5 and 6 whereas elsewhere it is satisfactory. In Years 1 to 4 too often lessons lack pace and the work does not always provide a good level of challenge for all learners.

The curriculum is satisfactory with some good features. There is a sound focus on literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) as seen in the school's quality mark for basic skills. This is enhanced through a good range of visits, after-school clubs and opportunities to take part in team sports and in musical performances. The personal, social, health and citizenship education contributes much to pupils' personal development.

Leadership and management, including governance, are satisfactory. A clear school development plan, focused on the key priorities, emerged from the 'Vision Day' attended by governors and staff. The local authority provides important support for senior leaders by helping to clarify roles and expectations. Based on observing lessons, the headteacher has an accurate view on the quality of teaching and learning across the school and this is helping improvement gather momentum. Other monitoring, however, such as book scrutiny and the effective use of information on pupils' progress by all leaders and managers is at an early stage and lacks sufficient rigour and consistency. Pupils' academic support and guidance is satisfactory. The governing body provides good support for the school but there is still work to do to develop an effective way of holding the school to account with regard to pupils' academic outcomes. Progress since the school was last inspected, the capacity to improve and the value for money the school provides are satisfactory.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage is led well by the headteacher in the absence of the head of the Foundation Stage, and provision is good. Children enter the nursery with skills levels that are

mostly below those expected for their age. They achieve well so that, by the end of Reception, most reach the level expected for their age in all areas of learning. Children settle well in this secure environment. Staff understand the needs of young children well and plan lively activities which stimulate their curiosity and desire to learn. Children's development is assessed systematically and thoroughly. This information enables staff to provide the challenge and support children need in order to learn effectively and make good progress. Excellent relationships and constructive guidance provide a solid foundation for children's personal, social and emotional development. Children work and play happily together, follow school routines sensibly and readily participate in activities. Learning opportunities are exciting and well resourced. Teaching is of good quality and well focused on individual needs so children's learning is rapid. Teachers actively promote early reading, writing and number skills and the supportive curriculum provides good opportunities for children to learn through exploration. Improvement to the limited outdoor provision is a key priority in the school development plan.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise pupils' standards, especially in writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 to 4.
- Ensure that all leaders and managers effectively monitor their areas of responsibility and use this information to improve pupils' achievement and standards.

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 by Year 2 have been significantly below average for a number of years. Provision in Key Stage 1 has been adversely affected by staffing instability for some time. The school has rightly identified as a priority the need to improve the standards and progress in writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1. There are early signs of success in these areas. A published strategy has been introduced to help improve standards in writing. In mathematics, there is a clearer emphasis on developing mental mathematics and methods of calculation. Consequently, progress is improving and is now satisfactory in Key Stage 1. Standards at the end of Year 6 are broadly average, reflecting satisfactory progress for all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils' achievement, including that of the pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is satisfactory overall rather than good because it is inconsistent across the school. Strengths are in the good progress pupils make in Years 5 and 6 which go hand in hand with very effective teaching and help to raise standards.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are proud of their school. A group of Year 6 pupils cited 'helpful and understanding teachers', sporting achievements and the wide range of clubs as the main reasons for this sense of pride. In lessons, pupils have good attitudes to work. They work at a good pace, show determination to complete set tasks and clearly enjoy being at school. Their behaviour is good, not only in lessons but at playtimes and in the dining hall, where a calm, social atmosphere prevails. Pupils' good personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development adds much to their learning. Pupils quickly grow in confidence and are polite and

courteous to adults; they work very well in pairs and small groups and express their views in a thoughtful and articulate way. Pupils' preparation for life in a multicultural world benefits from the links with schools in other countries and the visitors to school. For example, pupils spoke enthusiastically about the history they learned as part of visits by Ghurkha soldiers stationed nearby.

Through sport and music pupils gain a good appreciation of the wider, local community but the responsibilities given to pupils in school are at a relatively early stage. Pupils understand well how to keep safe and healthy. They are adequately prepared for the next stage in their education and later life, given their good personal qualities and broadly average basic skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and good in Years 5 and 6. Good relationships and high expectations of behaviour are consistent strengths that mean pupils are keen to succeed and behave well. Learning objectives are generally shared with pupils, helping them to focus on what they are expected to learn. Teachers generally give good explanations and are beginning to make use of the interactive whiteboard to clarify learning and to generate interest. In the better lessons, pupils readily ask questions and put forward their own ideas. However, in other lessons pupils do as they are asked but do not have enough opportunity to develop the skills they need to become independent learners or to assess their work for themselves. In much of the teaching and learning, the pace of learning is slow and the teachers' expectations of what their pupils can achieve are not high enough. As a result, the work does not always provide enough challenge for all learners, in particular the more able. Teaching assistants work well alongside class teachers, thereby ensuring that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve as well as others.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with some good features. The social and emotional aspects of learning are threaded throughout lessons and make a good contribution to pupils' personal development. Physical education and music are real strengths in the school. In these subjects, there are well planned opportunities for pupils to engage in a wide range of learning skills, performances and competitions to extend and share their expertise. The study of French in Key Stage 2 also contributes to pupils' understanding of another European culture. These, along with the many school clubs and the residential activities, serve to broaden pupils' learning and improve pupils' self-esteem, confidence and teamwork. Some teachers have begun to use a thematic approach to learning so that subjects are better linked to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. However, this is inconsistent across the school. Consequently, the satisfactory focus on basic skills is not fully extended to other subjects. For example, there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their skills at writing in other subjects. Resources for ICT have improved since the school was last inspected but these are not yet used enough to support learning in most other subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Pastoral care is good. The school is a warm and welcoming place where pupils feel safe and well cared for. Overwhelmingly, parents share these views and cite many instances where their children receive, for example, particularly good support in settling in. The work of the parents' support adviser provides valued, additional support with parenting skills for some families. Arrangements for health and safety including child protection meet requirements. Academic guidance is satisfactory overall but lacks consistency. Although pupils have targets to support their academic progress, these are often not specific enough to enable fast gains in learning. Marking is supportive, but does not consistently give pupils enough guidance on how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership adopts a calm, sensible approach to change and effectively encourages and challenges staff to take part in the journey of improvement. There are early signs of success in pupils' progress in writing and the way pupils are given greater opportunities to discuss their learning in lessons. The school has a broadly accurate view of its performance and demonstrates this in the well chosen priorities for development which now require implementation. Appropriately challenging targets, in English and mathematics, are met at the end of Key Stage 2. Much of the monitoring, such as book scrutiny and use of the system to track pupils, is at an early stage and not yet having a significant impact on improving pupils' progress. As a result senior leaders are not yet ensuring that there is a consistent approach to matters that impact on pupils' progress, such as marking and pupils' academic targets. Subject leadership is developing but has yet to thoroughly monitor the standards and progress in each subject. The governing body makes a satisfactory contribution to school improvement. Governors are well informed of the school's strengths but the focus on improving pupils' progress is less sharp. Finances are well managed; based on pupils' satisfactory achievement the school provides satisfactory value for money.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

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| 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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 3 |

Achievement and standards

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|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| How well do learners achieve? | 3 |
| The standards ¹ 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 | 3 |

Personal development and well-being

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| 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 | 2 |
| 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? | 3 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 3 |

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**

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| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 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 | 3 |
| 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 Richmond Church of England Primary School, Richmond, DL10 4NF

I'm sure you remember that three inspectors visited your school recently to find out how well you are learning. I speak for us all when I say a big 'thank you' for the kind and friendly welcome you gave us. We enjoyed our visit and want to share with you what we found out. We found that your school is giving you a satisfactory education; that means there are good things but also some important things to be improved.

Your parents are pleased you come to this school which is good at helping you to develop into calm, self-confident young people. It was good to see that you are so friendly, kind and polite towards each other and the teachers and other adults who work with you. We liked the caring atmosphere and the way all adults who work in school take good care of you so that you feel safe and happy. You attend school regularly and arrive on time which helps you build on what you learn each day. You know about the importance of having a healthy lifestyle and taking regular exercise. You are proud of the school's successes in sport and the musical opportunities provided. You get off to a good start in Nursery and Reception and also make good gains in your learning in Years 5 and 6.

We have asked the headteacher and other staff to help you to increase the rate at which you are learning, so that you reach higher standards by the end of Year 6; and to improve standards in mathematics and writing by the end of Year 2. In Years 1 to 4, in order to improve your learning, we have asked the school to make sure that you are regularly set work that is just right - not too easy and not too hard. Finally, we have asked staff to check how well you are doing in the things they are responsible for and to use this information to help raise standards.

Of course, you can play your part too by always trying your best in lessons and continuing to behave as well as you do.