

St Hedda's Roman Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121651
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	314070
Inspection date	25 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Rosemary Rodger

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	23
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	V McLaughlin
Headteacher	Mrs Palmer
Date of previous school inspection	21 June 2004
School address	Egton Bridge Whitby North Yorkshire YO21 1UX
Telephone number	01947 895361
Fax number	01947 895361

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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: the impact of the headteacher on school improvement; how well pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are taught; the contribution of the curriculum to pupils' enjoyment and application of literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation; discussions with pupils in Year 6, the headteacher, the chair of governors; observations of parts of lessons; an analysis of school documentation; samples of pupils' work; the parental questionnaire returns. 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 the report.

Description of the school

This very small primary school serves a wide area. Pupils attend the school from several outlying villages. Very few pupils are eligible for a free school meal and all pupils are White British. A below average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils are taught in two mixed age classes. The headteacher has been in post since January 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St Hedda's is a good school. It has the full support of parents who praise the good relationships, strong family atmosphere and approachability of all staff. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They say they love their school and Year 6 pupils expressed sadness at the prospect of leaving. The pupils' excellent attendance rate is a strong reflection of their enjoyment. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils understand the importance of eating healthily and taking regular exercise to help keep fit. A daily active physical education session to music for all pupils and a range of after-school physical education clubs enhance this particularly well. Older pupils have key responsibilities including a rotating arrangement of head boy and head girl. This is equipping them well for later life because of the improvements to their confidence and self-esteem. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and effectively developed. A daily gathering of all pupils contributes successfully to a climate in school that encourages all pupils to flourish, to respect others and be respected.

Pupils' achievement is good taking into account their individual starting points and capabilities. Standards can vary considerably year-on-year because of the very small number of pupils in each year group but pupils typically reach above average standards by the end of Year 6; in some cases as in the 2007 tests, standards were particularly high. Achievement in Key Stage 1 is now good. The headteacher has quickly tackled some underachievement in Key Stage 1 by helping to enhance the quality of teaching and providing additional support for individuals. This has successfully accelerated their progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress as a result of the good support provided by skilled teaching assistants.

The quality of teaching is good overall with some outstanding teaching in Key Stage 2. There is an effective partnership between the skilled teaching assistants and teachers which leads to a good match of work for the range of pupils' abilities in the mixed age classes. Pupils learn well because of the clear instructions and the encouragement teachers give to them to take part in lessons. Whiteboard technology is used well to enthuse and inspire pupils to, for example, write lively newspaper reports describing the joy of the winner of the golden ticket to visit Willy Wonka's chocolate factory. Classes are small and much learning is personalised to meet the needs of pupils. A strong feature in Key Stage 2 is the way in which pupils are encouraged to identify what they think they need to learn and to review what they have learned in lessons. They are, however, given less guidance through teachers' marking on how to improve their written work and expectations regarding presentation of work are not explicit enough. The good curriculum ensures pupils enjoy learning and develop their basic skills well. A recent increase in after-school clubs is enriching learning. Parents are fulsome in their praise of this improvement. Visits to local areas of interest provide younger pupils with worthwhile practical activities, for example, Year 2 pupils wrote confidently about their trip to a local railway station. This compensates to some extent for the lack of good quality outdoor learning facilities in school. The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are good. Pupils say they feel safe in school. There is rigorous monitoring of pupils' progress and effective actions are taken to provide good support for those pupils in need of this.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has already made a marked impact on improving progress in Key Stage 1 by improving the quality of teaching and has enriched the curriculum throughout the school. The school is well aware of its overarching strengths and

weaknesses. There is a systematic approach to implementing longer term goals with good support from the governing body who has worked diligently to improve its role since the previous inspection. A good example of this is the rigour with which governors carry out health and safety checks and the visits they make into school to check the progress the school is making in meeting its priorities. They are equally supportive and act as a valuable 'critical friend' to the headteacher. The resourcefulness and vision of the headteacher is successful in securing additional funding for improvements to the accommodation inside and outside. Teamwork is developing well and the arrangements to induct newly qualified teachers are particularly noteworthy. Improvements since the last inspection are good and the school has a good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children join the mixed age Key Stage 1 class when they start school. They settle quickly and soon learn to work alongside their older peers. There are no Year 1 pupils in the current class and Reception aged children are frequently working with Year 2 pupils. This is well managed. Work is generally well planned to meet the individual needs of children but the lack of appropriate practical equipment to help the younger children understand the value of numbers is a weakness. Although there are plans to improve outdoor provision, access to free choice activities and the opportunities to work independently inside and outside are restricted by the lack of resources. Children's personal, social and emotional development is well developed. They forge good relationships with each other and their teachers. As a result, pupils develop good levels of confidence and enjoy learning. Children make good progress in communication, language and literacy; for example, children spoke articulately about the Rainbow fish. By the time they leave the Reception year standards in all areas of learning are above the national expectations. Children make good progress. Parents praised the link between their children's learning and visits made to, for example, the nearby seaside.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of marking so that pupils know what to do to improve their work.
- Provide more opportunities for practical learning in the Foundation Stage and make better use of the outdoors to help children become independent.

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

Achievement and standards

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the 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?	2

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?	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 tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
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**

I am writing to thank you all for the warm welcome I received when visiting your school recently. I enjoyed my day with you tremendously. Please extend my thanks to your parents for the comments they sent me about your school.

You attend a good school. You all work hard and are keen to learn. As a result of this and the good teaching you receive, you make good progress. By the time you leave school you reach standards that are above those reached by most other children. You develop into confident young people and have good basic skills that will equip you well to make the most of your later lives. Your behaviour is good. Those pupils I talked to enjoy all the sporting activities you have in school and the friendliness of everyone. Your teachers and teaching assistants work very hard to make learning enjoyable, especially when the interactive whiteboard is used. Didn't you enjoy the clips from 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'? I have asked the school to improve the marking of your work so you know what to do to improve. You can help by reading and responding to the comments your teachers make.

The care, guidance and support you receive are good. There are plenty of staff to support those of you who need help with your work. The Reception children settle well into the Key Stage 1 class. I have asked that there is more practical equipment for the youngest children inside and outside. Your headteacher has plans to provide more equipment for keeping fit outside.

I send you my best wishes for the future.