

Yelvertoft Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121877
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	314127
Inspection dates	27–28 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Usha Devi HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	115
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Susan Nicholas
Headteacher	Colin Gynn
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2004
School address	School Lane Yelvertoft Northampton NN6 6LH
Telephone number	01788 822498
Fax number	01788 822498

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	27–28 September 2007
Inspection number	314127

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school, which serves the village of Yelvertoft and other villages in the area, is smaller than many other primary schools. Nearly all pupils are of White British origin. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average. The school has received the following awards in recognition of its work: the Active Mark Gold Award and the Basic Skills Quality Mark. It is working towards the Healthy School Award. Since September 2007, there have been significant staffing changes: the school's senior teacher is currently the acting headteacher; the subject leader for information and communication technology is the acting senior teacher; and 50% of the staff are new to the school. The permanent headteacher, who is supporting another local school, continues to keep in close contact with the acting headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with outstanding features in the pupils' personal development and the curriculum. Parents overwhelmingly support the work of the school. One captured the views of many by writing, 'Yelvertoft is a happy, dynamic school which has strengths in all areas.' The headteacher and acting headteacher know their school well. They have taken effective action to sustain good progress since the previous inspection. For example, pupils have continued to achieve well by the end of Year 6 and an outstanding range of enrichment activities has further enhanced the good curriculum. Children enter the school with levels of social and academic skills that are above those expected for their age. From this starting point, standards rise to well above average by the end of Year 6, which represents good progress. This rate of progress starts in Reception and is maintained in Years 1 and 2. However, the school's assessment information shows that in Years 3 and 4 pupils make relatively slower progress. As a result, standards in writing and mathematics in these year groups in relation to their age are not as high as in the rest of the school. However, progress accelerates in Years 5 and 6 and standards rise to well above the national average. Good teaching has led to the good rates of progress and well above national standards by the end of Year 6. In lessons where learning is good, teachers ensure that pupils have the knowledge and skills they require to complete a task independently, in pairs or small groups. In addition, effective questioning challenges pupils to think carefully about their work and explain their answers. Where these aspects are not so well developed, the pace of learning is relatively slower. Since September 2007, the teaching has remained good overall but changeover in staff has increased the proportion of satisfactory teaching, as newcomers find their feet. The acting headteacher is taking appropriate action and has firm plans in place to strengthen the quality of teaching and ensure it is consistently good or better. She has, for example provided staff with opportunities to share good practice. While these recent actions have maintained the overall rate of progress, the acting headteacher is aware that further improvements are required. These recent actions, together with the school's record of improvement since the previous inspection, indicate that the school has good capacity to improve further. The good quality of care, guidance and support that pupils receive underpins their good personal development and well-being. Parents are proud of the school and are delighted with the contribution it makes to their children's learning and development. As one parent commented, 'We feel so lucky to have a school like this in the village. It has given my children a privileged start to their education.' Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent because it is given a high priority by the school. Effective links with overseas families and events such as Food Around the World week encourage pupils to learn about other religions through practical activities. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong. Close links with local church groups give them opportunities to develop spiritually and to reflect on their beliefs. While pupils make a good contribution to the local and wider community, the opportunities they have to play a more active role in the life of the school are limited. There is an enthusiastic school council whose members represent the views of other pupils well. However, they are ready to take on even more responsibility. They told the inspector that they would like to undertake and organise activities for pupils within the school. The excellent range of enrichment activities includes school visits, residential opportunities, visitors to the school, clubs and input from music specialists, and are just some of the ways in which the school enhances provision. One particularly good example is the annual arts week. This is a celebration of pupils' achievements in drama, music and dance. These activities have a positive impact on pupils' academic and personal development and add to their enjoyment of school.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in the Foundation stage make good progress in all areas of learning and reach above the expected levels for their age by the end of their year in Reception. The good partnership with parents begins with home visits and an informative welcome pack given to parents and their children on starting school. Staff have a detailed knowledge of the children in Reception. As a result, they plan creative small group activities that provide appropriate challenge for individuals. Adult-led activities effectively engage children by questioning and promoting discussion. On occasions, some groups are left for too long without adult input and therefore not encouraged to move on to the next step in their learning. The outdoor learning environment is well organised to develop children's counting, language and independent skills. The acting senior teacher is working effectively with the reception teacher to provide good leadership and management.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure a consistent rate of progress in reading, writing and mathematics throughout the school.
- Strengthen and improve the quality of teaching throughout the school to ensure it is consistently good or better.
- Provide increased opportunities for pupils to play a more active role in the life of the school

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in Reception and exceed expected standards in all areas of learning. The 2007 Year 2 teacher assessments show that standards remain above the national average. The overall trend at the end of Year 2 is generally upwards in reading and writing and stable in mathematics. Standards at the end of Year 6 are well above average. They have been on a rising trend since 2004, and this has continued in the most recent test results. In 2007, all pupils reached a Level 4 in English and science and virtually all pupils reached a Level 4 in mathematics. In all subjects, a greater proportion reached the higher Level 5 than the previous year. Some of the more able pupils make excellent progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make at least good progress because of the targeted support that they receive, and some make outstanding progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils behave well and treat each other with care and respect. They very much enjoy school and in lessons they display positive attitudes towards their work. Staff and visitors to school help pupils develop a good sense of personal safety inside and outside school. All Year 6 pupils, for example, have the opportunity to take part in a cycle training course. Pupils and parents appreciate the outstanding range of clubs and activities that are available during lunchtime and after school. Pupils understand well the importance of eating healthily and taking exercise regularly. One pupil said enthusiastically, 'Eating well helps you to concentrate!' Attendance is good. Through their involvement in village activities and charity events, pupils contribute well to the local and wider community. In contrast, the contribution that pupils make in school

is less well developed. Pupils are well prepared for the future because of the high standards they achieve and the good social skills they develop.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The overall quality of teaching is good and leading to good progress and high standards by the end of Year 6. Teachers and support staff work together well to support pupils' learning and behaviour during lessons. An example of good practice is in Year 5, where pupils have the opportunity to talk to a partner about their work. This has a positive impact on learning because pupils are encouraged to think through and improve their ideas before working independently. Progress accelerates and pupils produce good quality work when staff take account of pupils' different abilities, the pace of the lesson is brisk and pupils do not have to listen too long during whole class introductions. Pupils particularly enjoy the lessons in which they are actively involved in learning through practical activities that capture their interest. However, this good practice is not yet consistent. Consequently the rate of progress slows in some year groups. Teachers' marking is improving. An increasing number of comments show pupils how to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school places a strong emphasis upon enrichment of the curriculum, which captures the imagination of pupils. Pupils enjoy taking part in real life experiences that staff plan for them. For instance, pupils in Years 5 and 6 recently used information and communication technology (ICT) well to produce a short film for the Film Festival. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. There is good provision for literacy, numeracy and ICT. The curriculum for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very carefully structured to support their individual needs. Links between subjects and opportunities for pupils to apply their basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics within a relevant context are in the early stages of development. The school is planning to increase the opportunities pupils have to apply their basic skills in different contexts by introducing science, mathematics and investigation days.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

'I love this school because everyone cares,' remarked one pupil. This is a view shared by most parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire. Parents agree that their children are well looked after and the school provides a safe environment. Child protection and risk assessment procedures are well established and carefully followed. Safeguarding arrangements are securely in place. The headteacher has devised a very good system to regularly check the progress of pupils and identify who needs additional support. As a result of this targeted support, pupils make good progress by the time they leave school. The school is aware that the quality of academic guidance pupils receive on a daily basis is inconsistent, and is keen to involve pupils more fully in reviewing and setting their own improvement goals. The school works well with a range of other agencies to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This helps them to achieve well and meet their challenging targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and the acting headteacher provide a clear direction to the work of the school. With the full support of staff and governors, they are constantly striving to do their best for all pupils. This determination to do better has enabled the school to sustain improvement since the previous inspection. Parents' positive views of the school are reflected in comments such as, 'The staff work fantastically as a team and are very committed.' Self-evaluation is good and informed by discussions with pupils, monitoring of pupils' work and observations of teaching. However, the outcomes of the monitoring of teaching do not always make clear the link between the features of teaching that will lead to effective learning. The acting headteacher is effectively developing the role of subject leaders through training, and giving them opportunities to share good practice with new staff. Governors take a keen interest in the school. They are actively involved in checking its work. As a result, they have a good knowledge and understanding of the school.

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

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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	1
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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

- 1 October 2007 Dear Pupils Inspection of Yelvertoft Primary School, Northampton, NN6 6LH
Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me. I enjoyed talking with you about your work and hearing how much you like coming to school. Those of you I talked to and many of your parents think Yelvertoft is a good school – I agree! These are the most important things that are going well:
- By the time you leave the school, you make good progress with your work and achieve better standards than in many schools.
- You behave well in lessons and around school. You are polite and kind towards each other and the adults you work with.
- Your headteacher, acting headteacher, teachers and all the other adults in the school work hard to make sure that you have the chance to take part in interesting activities and visit places that will help you learn.
- The school takes good care of you, helps you to learn about different religions and gives you the chance to help people in the local and wider community.
- You know how important it is to eat healthily and do lots of exercise.
- Your headteacher, acting headteacher, teachers, all the other adults that work with you and the governors want your school to become even better. I have asked your acting headteacher, the staff and governing body to continue with all the good things that are happening in your school. I have also asked them to make sure that you all learn at a fast rate in reading, writing and mathematics, and especially in Years 3 and 4. I have asked the teachers to share all the good ways that they can help you to do much better in your lessons and your learning. I would also like your school to give you greater responsibility for organising activities around school. Thank you for two such lovely days! I will take away many good memories about your school. Yours sincerely Usha Devi Her Majesty's Inspector

1 October 2007

Dear Pupils



**Inspection of Yelvertoft Primary School,
Northampton, NN6 6LH**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me. I enjoyed talking with you about your work and hearing how much you like coming to school. Those of you I talked to and many of your parents think Yelvertoft is a good school – I agree!

These are the most important things that are going well:

- By the time you leave the school, you make good progress with your work and achieve better standards than in many schools.
- You behave well in lessons and around school. You are polite and kind towards each other and the adults you work with.
- Your headteacher, acting headteacher, teachers and all the other adults in the school work hard to make sure that you have the chance to take part in interesting activities and visit places that will help you learn.
- The school takes good care of you, helps you to learn about different religions and gives you the chance to help people in the local and wider community.
- You know how important it is to eat healthily and do lots of exercise.
- Your headteacher, acting headteacher, teachers, all the other adults that work with you and the governors want your school to become even better.

I have asked your acting headteacher, the staff and governing body to continue with all the good things that are happening in your school. I have also asked them to make sure that you all learn at a fast rate in reading, writing and mathematics, and especially in Years 3 and 4. I have asked the teachers to share all the good ways that they can help you to do much better in your lessons and your learning. I would also like your school to give you greater responsibility for organising activities around school.

Thank you for two such lovely days! I will take away many good memories about your school.

Yours sincerely

Usha Devi
Her Majesty's Inspector