

Oakridge Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121300
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	317659
Inspection dates	7–8 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Honoree Gordon HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	54
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Diana Jeuda
Headteacher	Mrs Christina Zinelli
Date of previous school inspection	21 November 2005
School address	Coronation Avenue Hinderwell Saltburn-by-the-Sea North Yorkshire TS13 5HA
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Oakridge Community Primary School is a small village primary school situated in a coastal area north of Whitby. It draws on a rural area with considerable social deprivation. There are three classes, one for the Foundation Stage, from Nursery through to Year 2, and two for older pupils. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is below that usually found.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Oakridge Community Primary School provides satisfactory education. In accordance with legislation, her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

The school has improved considerably since its previous inspection in November 2005. Standards are now at national average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal development and well-being and provides good care, guidance and support. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall. Moreover, the school's records show that a good number of individuals are now making good progress. The Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Solid foundations are laid in the core skills of literacy and numeracy. A strong focus on further developing these skills in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 has enabled those pupils, who had previously had a more shaky start, to catch up to where they should be.

The school has benefited from the expertise of an experienced, interim headteacher over the last year and has received excellent support from the local authority by way of advice, consultancy and extra resources. As a result, there is a happy, purposeful working atmosphere in the school, which promotes learning. Pupils behave well and they enjoy school. Pupils and parents are very clear that the school has improved significantly and is now a good place to be, with interesting things to do and to learn.

The school is more integrated into its community than it used to be, with close liaison between school and home and good links with partner schools. However, local seasonal employment patterns adversely affect attendance. Attendance is inadequate, because a significant minority of families take their holidays in term-time and so their children miss school. In a few cases this holds back their progress.

Since September 2007, there has been considerable changeover of staff. A permanent headteacher has taken up post, two of the three classrooms teachers are new to the school and there are two new teaching assistants. Despite this, teaching overall has remained satisfactory and inspectors saw some good lessons. The curriculum is satisfactory and the school has enhanced creative aspects and sports. The redistribution of management roles between the new staff for the different subjects and key stages is not fully effective yet. However, there are good systems for the new staff to implement.

The new headteacher has had a swift impact, invigorating the school and further enhancing the work of her predecessors. The 2007 statutory test results in both key stages show significant improvement on 2006. Though numbers in the school are very small, and so these statistics vary year on year, this nevertheless provides a clear indication that the school has good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children enter the Nursery and Foundation Stage with skills below the level normally found at this age. Children make satisfactory progress and, in 2007, around one third had reached the expected outcomes for their personal development by the time they entered Year 1. There is a cheerful and stimulating environment for learning, with plenty of space, good resources and outside play areas. The presence of some Year 2 pupils raises the level of expectations in the lessons, though the current age-spread is a considerable challenge for the teaching staff.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve attendance.
- Raise standards and achievement further.
- Clarify middle management roles and responsibilities and monitor the impact of these on the organisation and delivery of the curriculum.

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

Achievement is satisfactory overall and it is good in Key Stage 1. The school has focused on improving the quality of lessons over the last two years and has developed good systems to check on the progress individual pupils make. Challenging targets are set. As a result pupils are reaching higher standards. Results from the national tests in 2007 show that standards are now average and have improved since the time of the last inspection. Speaking and listening skills develop well. The school has rightly identified writing as a continuing priority, as this remains weaker than mathematics and science.

Pupils' results in the statutory assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 rose significantly in 2007. Attainment is above the national average in mathematics and in reading, reflecting the emphasis that the school has placed on these subjects. Pupils' writing is satisfactory: it has improved, but not by as much as the other subjects.

At the end of Key Stage 2, standards in English, mathematics and science have risen and are now broadly average. For several pupils this represents good progress as they have successfully made up lost ground.

Pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make satisfactory progress overall. In the lessons inspectors observed, the rate of progress was closely linked to the quality of teaching: where all pupils were suitably challenged, progress was good.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The good personal development and well-being of all pupils are strong features of the school. Pupils are confident, show good attitudes to learning and thoroughly enjoy taking part in all that the school offers. They are articulate and they develop good social skills, treating each other with consideration and courtesy. They feel valued because of the warm relationships between staff and pupils. This helps the pupils make better progress in their learning.

Behaviour is good. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and are confident that any concerns that they have are taken seriously and acted on promptly. They know how to stay healthy and keep fit and there are plenty of good opportunities for sport and physical education, both during and after school.

Pupils make a positive contribution to the local and school community through their willingness to take on responsibilities. For example, Year 6 pupils help the younger ones to settle in and assist them during meal times. Pupils value that their voice is heard and are proud of the work of their elected school council. The council members are keen to help make the school better

and were involved in the interview process to appoint the new headteacher. Pupils are increasingly involved in local community activities.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school attaches great importance both to the teaching of basic skills and to the development of pupils' spiritual, moral and social awareness. This prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education. However, the school recognises the need to develop further pupils' understanding of other cultures.

Despite the schools' efforts, attendance remains inadequate. This does not mean that pupils do not enjoy school, but a significant minority of families take their holidays during term time.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and include some good features.

New staff have settled quickly into the school and pupils speak well of their good relationships with teachers and classroom assistants. They appreciate especially the improved learning resources, for example, for science and for art, and the better layout and decoration of the classrooms. Consequently, pupils are now much more engaged in their lessons.

Planning for progression in literacy, numeracy and science has been improved through good collaborative work within school and through external support. This has resulted in much better structured learning.

Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to stimulate pupils' interest in learning. The most successful lessons are well planned, with a clear focus on meeting the learning needs of individuals. In these lessons, teachers develop opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively to secure and extend their learning. Consequently, in these lessons, pupils enjoy learning and make good progress.

However, this is not the case in all lessons. In some classes, the pace and challenge of learning are not always fast enough and pupils' responsibility for their learning is not fully developed. This is especially so for the more able, when teachers talk for too long and when teaching assistants are not sufficiently proactive.

Systems for assessing and analysing pupils' progress and abilities in literacy and numeracy are good and are much improved. The school is aware that, in the past, some assessments have provided inaccurate starting points for measuring progress and has acted to make the data more secure. This means that the school is much better at identifying and meeting pupils' needs. The pupils themselves are beginning to assess how well they are doing in literacy and numeracy and they are clear about their targets. However, this is not the case in other subjects and so the school is now focusing on extending this good practice across the curriculum.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum meets requirements and has an appropriate emphasis on the development of the core skills in reading, writing and mathematics. The curriculum has been enhanced recently by the appointment of a specialist sports coach for physical education and by additional provision for creative subjects, such as music and art.

The curriculum is organised following a cycle, to avoid repetition. Pupils are placed in groups within the classes by age or stage of development. This allows teachers to pitch the work at the right levels and the teaching assistants help towards this. However, there is a wide spread of ages in the classes, so keeping the pace up for all throughout the lessons is demanding. As a result, for a small number of pupils, progress is, at times, too slow.

For a small school, there is a good range of extra-curricular clubs, such as football, and pupils appreciate these. Recently, the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning programme for emotional development has been introduced to improve the structure for personal, social and health education. The programme for religious education is under review in order to achieve a better balance between learning about Christianity and about other religions.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school accords a high priority to pupils' academic progress and to their welfare. Pupils feel valued and feel part of 'one large family'. This contributes significantly to the good personal development and well-being of all pupils, including the most vulnerable. Pupils feel safe and are clear about how they should treat others. As school council members put it, 'Our school does not have bullying.' The school has developed thoughtful arrangements to help ensure that pupils are properly prepared for the next stage of their education.

Partnership with parents and other agencies has improved significantly since the time of the previous inspection. In discussions with inspectors and through questionnaires, parents say that they are happy with the education and care that their children receive. Strong links with home, other schools and outside agencies contribute to good quality support for the pupils. Arrangements for the protection and safeguarding of children meet requirements, although some risk assessments need updating.

The marking of pupils' work is helpful, confirming what pupils have achieved and what they need to do next. The school has good systems for tracking progress in literacy and numeracy, and in these areas pupils know how they can improve. As a result of this close monitoring, individual pupils are well supported to achieve their potential. However, guidance and support in other subjects are not as well developed.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school has worked very effectively over the last two years with the local authority and with partner schools to develop teaching methods. This has contributed directly to pupils' enjoyment of school. The improved systems for assessment allow the school to set appropriately challenging targets for the pupils and to monitor how well they are progressing, pinpointing where individuals may be falling behind and then intervening effectively to help them catch up.

The leadership of the new headteacher is good, decisive and energetic. She has quickly gained the confidence of the parents and has further improved the learning environment. However, the staff team are largely new and have just taken over the management of subjects and key stages from their predecessors. As yet, there is no overview on how best to manage the mixed-age classes and the delivery of the curriculum in order to maximise the progress of

each individual. However, work has begun on this. The quality of teaching remains inconsistent, though satisfactory overall.

The school provides satisfactory value for money. Governance is good. Governors have defined their roles and responsibilities clearly. They devote considerable time and effort to checking what the school provides and to working closely with the headteacher on the next steps for improvement. The school knows itself well and has good systems for monitoring the curriculum and the quality of teaching and learning. Inspectors judge, therefore, that the school shows good capacity to improve further.

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

Achievement and standards

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

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	4
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?	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?	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	2
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of Oakridge Community Primary School, Hinderwell, TS13 5HA

Thank for your help when I came with Mr Wilson to inspect your school. This is what we found.

When inspectors came, two years ago, they were very concerned and they decided your school needed some extra help to make things better. I have been to see you a few times since then and I can see that you are happy and you are proud to be at Oakridge. You told us it was like being, 'part of a big family'. You said that it is much better now and we agree with you. So do your parents.

Your school is providing satisfactory education now. Your test results are better and you have a super new headteacher! She has some good ideas. We think, as you do, that the school will, 'keep on getting better and better'. So, we have decided that your school does not need 'special measures' any more.

Your teachers have worked really hard and so have you! We like the way the teachers and assistants look after you and how well you look after each other. We think your behaviour is good. We like the way you try hard in lessons and you listen carefully to the teachers.

Well done, all of you, but please keep trying hard so that your work continues to improve. We can see your reading is much better and your mathematics, but you still need to work at your writing. It is important, too, to make sure you come to school every day so that you do not miss lessons.