

Lealholm Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121295
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	327448
Inspection date	7 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Les Schubeler

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	43
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs J Smith
Headteacher	Mrs J Newton
Date of previous school inspection	12 October 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Lealholm Whitby North Yorkshire YO21 2AQ
Telephone number	01947 897401
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Age group	5–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' achievement; the curriculum; the provision of care, guidance and support and the quality of leadership and management. 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 staff and pupils; and the parents' questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest the school's own assessments, as given in the self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

Lealholm Primary is a very small village school serving an agricultural area on the edge of moorland. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below average. At the time of the inspection there were three mixed-age classes. The school has recently been awarded Healthy Schools status.

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 and very welcoming school that excels in the care it gives to each individual, helping pupils to grow into confident young people. Pupils love coming to school and thoroughly enjoy taking part in all the activities that are offered to them.

Achievement is good across the school. In recent years, children have tended to start school with skills below those typically expected for their age, particularly in language. There are variations in standards from year to year because of small year groups and sometimes because the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in a year group is high. These factors are reflected in the below average standards at the end of Reception and Year 2 in the last two years. Nevertheless, pupils make good progress from their starting points because the quality of teaching is good, assessment procedures are applied rigorously and effective support is provided for individual pupils in need of extra help. At Key Stage 2, standards are consistently above or well above average at the end of Year 6, which represents good achievement for these pupils. The school's emphasis on inclusion means that the achievement of all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is good. Vigorous and effective action by the school has been taken to improve the standard of pupils' writing skills. Provisional results for 2008 indicate that a high proportion of pupils reached the higher levels in the national tests in English and that targets were exceeded in both English and mathematics. As the standards pupils reach in science looks to have fallen from its traditionally high levels to below average, the school is now reviewing its assessment procedures in that subject.

The quality of care, guidance and support is good overall. The excellent pastoral care for pupils is highly valued by parents, who are overwhelmingly supportive of the school in almost all respects. They comment on how staff are 'kind, caring and supportive' and 'show a genuine interest in the welfare of the children'. However, despite the best efforts of the school to deter them from doing so, a small minority of parents now take their children on holiday during term-time. Consequently, the school's rate of attendance, which was well above the national average until 2006, has fallen below the national average during the last two years.

The academic guidance that is offered to all pupils is good. Pupils' progress is monitored regularly and any pupils who are falling behind are quickly identified and given additional, effective support. Those who have learning, behavioural, emotional and social difficulties are identified early and are given excellent support to help them to make good progress, both academically and in their personal development. Pupils are very aware of the challenging targets they are trying to achieve. They say that the targets act as incentives for them to do their best.

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. Relationships are excellent, which creates a climate conducive to learning. Pupils show exceptionally good attitudes to learning and their behaviour is exemplary. They cooperate very well with one another and with all adults in and around the school. They say they enjoy school life immensely because there are 'so many things to do' and 'everyone's your friend'. They are adamant that there is no bullying in the school. They feel safe because they are confident that there is always an adult to turn to if they experience any problems. They have an excellent understanding of how to live healthily. They know the importance of exercise and demonstrate this by their enthusiastic participation in the wide range of sporting activities available both during and after school. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school community. Older pupils help new starters to settle in by

keeping an eye on them in the dining hall and around the school at breaks. They appreciate the opportunities they now have to contribute to decisions about the purchase of play equipment or which charities to support. They plan and run fund-raising activities. The opportunities to develop teamwork skills that such activities provide, added to their growing competence in literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT), help pupils to be prepared well for the next stage in their education.

The school makes good use of its wealth of up-to-date and relevant assessment information to set clear, manageable targets for pupils so that they know how well they are doing and how to improve. Assessment data is also used well to help teachers to provide the appropriate level of support and challenge for all pupils. Lessons are briskly paced and thoroughly planned. Teaching assistants contribute well to the good learning in lessons.

A wide range of extra-curricular activities, including music, cookery and gardening, enlivens the school's good curriculum and makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development and enjoyment of school. Community cohesion is promoted well by means of strong links with the local community in events such as the annual Festival of Arts. An emphasis on music, art and French expands pupils' cultural horizons, as does the link with Unicef, which enables pupils to understand more clearly international issues such as the need for clean water in countries such as Gambia. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to learn about wider cultural influences in British multi-ethnic society. Residential visits to an outdoor activities centre provide older pupils with yet more opportunities to extend their experiences by mixing with pupils from other schools and so enhance their personal development.

Leadership and management are good. Safeguarding and child protection arrangements are in place. The headteacher sets a positive tone and provides clear direction for the school. One of the key features of the school's success is the way that the headteacher and staff work as a cohesive team to make sure that the drive for improvement does not slow. Constructive links with other schools, including a special school, have been forged to ensure that the pupils and staff do not suffer from the limitations of resources and expertise that could afflict a small school. Governors support and challenge the school effectively because they have a detailed understanding of the school's development and its priorities. The school's self-evaluation processes are well established and have enabled the school to identify and then redress weaknesses in the school's performance. Issues from the previous inspection have been successfully tackled: assessment procedures are used effectively to improve pupil outcomes, pupils understand better the process of setting targets because they are more involved in it, and they now know that their views are valued by the school's leaders. Coupled with a successful focus on improving pupils' writing, such actions show that the capacity for further improvement is good and the school can face the future with confidence.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children thrive during their time in Reception and get off to a good start in their full-time education. They make good progress in the development of their personal and social skills and in literacy because teachers' planning is excellent, the quality of teaching is good and the area is well led and managed.

Thorough and regular assessments enable Reception staff to develop a clear idea of children's standards and how well they are learning. Planning focuses very clearly on children's needs and interests, providing interesting and challenging activities and ensuring that support is

available when required. Teaching assistants work closely with the teacher and make a significant contribution to children's good care and achievement. Children benefit from the supportive, cooperative atmosphere in which their welfare is well promoted. The mixed-age class enables children to observe among the Year 1 pupils daily models of expected behaviour and attitudes. As a result, they settle quickly into school routines.

The school has positive relationships with pre-school playgroups, which helps to ensure good induction arrangements for children and their families.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils develop a better understanding of cultural diversity to prepare them for life in multi-cultural Britain.
- Improve rates of attendance.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
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	2

The quality of provision

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

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave to me when I inspected your school recently. I would like to thank you for being so courteous and friendly. I enjoyed talking to you and listening to your views about the school. I spent a lot of time finding out how well you learn in your lessons, looking at your work and talking to your headteacher and school staff. I came to the conclusion that Lealholm is a good school with some excellent features.

I think your teachers and teaching assistants care for you and look after you very well. This helps to keep you safe and healthy. You told me that you thoroughly enjoy school because everyone is so friendly and there are opportunities to take part in a large number of extra activities that your teachers arrange for you.

You also said how much you enjoy so many things that you do at or after school: the sports, the music, visits to Castle Howard, for example, and the sports, gardening and cookery clubs. I was not surprised to hear the older pupils tell me they would be sorry to leave Lealholm. However, I was pleased to see that they are also looking forward to trying out new experiences when they go to secondary school.

It was very pleasing to see that you get on well with one another and all the adults who work with you. I think that you are working well and are making good progress.

One rather disappointing feature of the school is the rate of attendance, which has fallen a lot in the last two years. This is caused mainly by the number of pupils who go away on holiday during term-time. Therefore, I have asked your headteacher and the other staff to do what they can to reduce that number and get back to the high level of attendance that the school had in the past. I think some of you, together with your families, could help to make that happen. To help your school to improve even more, I have also asked your teachers to try to see that you have more opportunities to learn about communities in this country that are very different from your own.

I am sure that you will carry on enjoying school. Most of all, I hope that you will continue to work hard and help all the staff to make Lealholm an even better school in the future.