

Slingsby Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121322
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	327454
Inspection date	25 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Clive Petts

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	39
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 Pat Thompson
Headteacher	Mrs Gill Hardacre
Date of previous school inspection	5 December 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	The Green Slingsby York North Yorkshire YO62 4AA

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	25 November 2008
Inspection number	327454

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Age group 4-11

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' achievement and the standards they reach; the quality of teaching and learning with a focus on initiatives to improve writing; the effectiveness of leadership and management, especially in relation to their impact on pupils' achievement and the capacity to improve the effectiveness of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision. Evidence was gathered from: the school's self-evaluation; nationally published assessment data; the school's records of pupils' progress; observations of lessons; the scrutiny of pupils' work; break and lunchtime; and the school's priorities for further improvement. Discussions with pupils, staff and governors were held and questionnaires returned by parents were taken into account.

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 judgements, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified. These have been included in the report where appropriate.

Description of the school

This is a very small school serving the village of Slingsby and surrounding villages. Pupils come from a mixture of socio-economic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is very low. All pupils are of White British heritage. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average.

There has been an extended period of staff disruption and currently there is a part-time acting headteacher and a full-time supply teacher in post.

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 that provides good value for money. Pupils achieve well because of their positive attitudes to learning, the good teaching and effective support in the classroom. All parents believe their children are well cared for, enjoy coming to school and make good progress. Following a period of disruption to staffing, the governors have been working exceptionally well with the local authority and taking effective action when appropriate. The acting headteacher has taken positive action to ensure that the school maintains its reputation for good achievement and standards, and continues to improve. This is greatly appreciated by parents. 'Leaders have managed to not only maintain but enhance standards and their achievements have been noticed and appreciated by many parents', is a comment that sums up the attitude of most parents.

The provisional 2008 national test results show that by the time pupils completed Year 6, standards were above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils reached the levels in these subjects expected of them with particular improvements in the standard of their writing. The school's checks on pupils' progress confirm that current Year 6 pupils are on course to reach their challenging targets. Writing continues to improve and now matches standards in reading. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because of the good support and encouragement they receive. Although overall progress as they move through school is good, the rate of progress is more consistent in Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and 2. The school has identified that younger pupils could do even better, especially in developing their early writing skills at a faster pace. Together, staff have taken positive action to make improvements and there are strong indications of the success of this work.

Teaching and learning are good overall. In the best teaching, high expectations, coupled with challenge across the age and ability range, ensure good progress. Consequently, lesson pace is brisk, questions are probing and, as a result, pupils become confident, successful and independent learners. Support staff are used successfully to ensure pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities take a full part in lessons, for example, acting as a talking partner. The quality of marking and guidance is generally good with older pupils displaying confidence when applying success criteria to their own or their partner's work. They are clear about how to improve their work and the purpose of their targets. The introduction of curriculum themes and first-hand experiences, for example, learning about life in Victorian times, through visits to the nearby Ryedale Folk Museum, gives opportunities for all pupils to boost their writing skills. Pupils use information and communication technology well to enhance the quality of their work. The curriculum is good overall, enriched by a range of music activities and visits which add to pupils' self-reliance and enjoyment.

Personal development is good. Pupils have positive, thoughtful attitudes to their learning. This is reflected in their good and sometimes excellent attendance. They say they feel safe and are confident that staff will promptly resolve any worries or concerns. One pupil's unprompted remark sums up their feelings, 'We have no bullying here!' The benefits of adopting a healthy lifestyle are well understood. Pupils recall the fun participating in the annual May Pole dancing on the village green in front of the school. Behaviour is good with older children showing exemplary attitudes towards younger pupils. Pupils are proud of their role in the recently formed school council and are keen to develop their decision-making skills. They display high commitment to village life and its annual events, for example, the Duck Race in which most of the village participates. The school makes good use of local partnerships to enhance pupils'

learning, for example, using the science facilities in the local secondary school and the residential centre at nearby Robin Hood's Bay. Their experience of different cultures and beliefs is limited and inhibits pupils' preparation for later life in a diverse world.

The school takes good care of its pupils and provides them with good guidance and support. Procedures for safeguarding pupils' safety, and health and welfare are in place. This all contributes to the happy, family atmosphere in which all can thrive. Assessment and guidance are increasingly focused on helping pupils think about what they need to do to extend their knowledge and understanding. Older pupils, especially, prosper on this responsibility.

Leadership and management are good. The acting headteacher has had a positive impact sustaining and improving the quality of education. The school's evaluation of strengths and weaknesses is accurate. The school has a clear view of how it can improve provision. Rigorous checking of pupils' progress shows that the rate of improvement is speeding up as the impact of new developments is felt. Governance is good. Governors work hard to ensure that the school is held to account for the quality of education it provides. They have a clear vision for the future of the school, play a central role in making key decisions and they enjoy the overwhelming support of parents and the full support of the staff. As a consequence, the school demonstrates a good capacity to continue to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Provision in the EYFS is satisfactory. Children start, in the combined Reception and Years 1 and 2 class, with skills broadly typical for their age, although some have weak speaking skills. All children make satisfactory progress and most achieve the goals expected of them by the time they reach Year 1. Although confidence and independence develop well, some children continue to be slow when explaining what they are doing. Teaching is satisfactory. Staff interact well with the children and demonstrate good levels of care and support. Children's welfare is promoted well. The good relationships encourage positive attitudes to learning. Most children behave well. Children normally settle quickly into classroom routines and play happily together. They gain benefit from playing and learning alongside older children. The indoor environment provides a stimulating range of learning activities and promotes spontaneous learning. While children enjoy outdoor activities that support their physical development, the outdoor environment does not provide learning opportunities in all key areas. Appropriate emphasis is placed on developing speaking and listening, although there is not always sufficient rigour in the phonics sessions, especially in the morning. Leadership and management of the EYFS are satisfactory. Staff are keen to take advantage of the increased opportunities provided by the headteacher to lift expectations and take a full part in the self-evaluation of provision.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of EYFS provision, especially outdoor learning.
- Increase the pupils' understanding of minority ethnic and global communities to help them value diversity even more.

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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?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	3
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which 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 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**

We thoroughly enjoyed our inspection of your school and appreciated your warm and friendly welcome. The happy family atmosphere and your eagerness to learn were impressive. We really enjoyed talking to the members of the school council and seeing you enjoy your playtime and lunchtime with your friends. You go to a good school. These are some of the things the school does well.

- You achieve well and reach standards that are above those reached by other children.
- Teaching is good. Teachers make learning enjoyable and help and support you when you need it.
- Your behaviour is good. You get on well with each other and we were particularly impressed with the way older pupils looked after younger pupils.
- Your school's leaders are determined to continue to improve your school and make sure that you all enjoy your work and do as well as you possibly can.
- Your headteacher and staff make certain good care is taken of you.

We have asked your school to improve your education by making sure you acquire more experiences of the other cultures and beliefs in the world and that the outdoor learning area for Reception children is improved.

You all have an important part to play in improving your school. You can help by continuing to listen very carefully to the advice of your staff and by working as hard as you possibly can. This will help you produce work at a faster rate and reach even higher standards.

Thank you for helping us with this inspection. We hope the school will keep building on its strengths.