

# Appleton Wiske Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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Unique Reference Number	121371
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	327471
Inspection dates	10–11 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Christine Inkster HMI

The inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	64
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Ken Blackwood
Headteacher	Mrs Lindsay Evans
Date of previous school inspection	March 2006
School address	Front Street Appleton Wiske Northallerton DL6 2AA
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## Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The inspector visited six lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, a representative from the local authority and groups of pupils and parents. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including the school development plan, the tracking of pupils' progress, minutes of governors meetings, the school's own monitoring records, safeguarding documentation and 27 parental questionnaires.

The inspection reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- Pupils' attainment and progress, particularly in mathematics and writing; and the attainment and progress of different groups of pupils including boys, girls, those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are more able.
- The quality of teaching and learning and the use of assessment to support pupils' learning.
- The extent to which the school promotes community cohesion and equality of opportunity for all pupils.
- The progress made by children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in respect of their achievement, particularly in their communication, literacy and language skills and their personal development.

## Information about the school

Appleton Wiske is a much smaller than average sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than that found nationally. Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision is within a mixed Reception and Year 1 class. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools Award, Activemark and an Inclusion Award.

## Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

## Main findings

This is a good and rapidly improving school. There are some outstanding features and outcomes, including pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning and the positive contribution they make to the school and wider community. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are extremely polite, well mannered and show great consideration towards one another in lessons and around the school. Pupils have exceptionally mature and sensible attitudes. Older pupils take care of younger pupils and take their roles and responsibilities, for example, as peer mentors, librarians and school councillors extremely seriously. They contribute very well to the local community through their involvement in events in the village such as the local pantomime, musical events and May Day celebrations. The care, guidance and support for pupils are excellent, ensuring that all pupils, particularly those who are most vulnerable, receive the nurture and support they need. Arrangements for welcoming pupils new to the school are excellent, including providing a booklet made by pupils themselves for any new pupils who join the school.

Children join the school with skills and knowledge which are broadly typical of four-year-olds. They make good progress, particularly in Key Stage 2, to reach levels at the end of Year 6 that are above the national average. This represents good achievement from their starting points. Standards have risen markedly at the end of Key Stage 2 since the last inspection. There is little difference between the achievements of different groups of pupils. However, occasionally, results fluctuate as there are very few pupils in each year group and, therefore, one pupil can represent a high proportion of the results. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are more able make good progress overall, although the progress of individual pupils can vary.

A significant factor contributing to rising standards is the increasing progress made in lessons because of improvements in teaching and learning. Teaching and learning are good and some are outstanding. A key feature here is that lessons are well planned and delivered to meet the full range of abilities and interests of pupils, particularly within mixed-age classes. Assessment is used well to identify the next steps in learning for pupils. Teachers' marking is helpful to pupils and identifies what they have done well. However, some comments are not precise enough to ensure that pupils fully understand how to improve their next piece of work. Consequently, errors are sometimes repeated in subsequent pieces of work and as a result, marking is not always having sufficient impact. Pupils say they do not always have an opportunity to respond to the marking in the next lesson. Most pupils are aware of their targets to help them improve, but these are often not precise enough and are

changed on a termly or half-termly basis, rather than when each individual child achieves their target. As a result, the impact of these targets on improving pupils' learning is reduced.

The curriculum is good and meets pupils' needs and interests well. Information and communication technology (ICT) is a particular strength and is used very effectively across the curriculum to support learning in a wide range of subjects. There are good opportunities for pupils to practise their skills in literacy and numeracy across the curriculum.

Leaders and managers have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in the school. The headteacher is committed to raising standards and driving improvement within the school and this is recognised by the whole-school community. This commitment along with a strong partnership with all staff has been particularly successful in providing a very caring and supportive ethos for all pupils. Governors also have good understanding of what the school needs to do to improve. They provide good support and challenge and are now monitoring and evaluating the work of the school more effectively through meetings, visits and helping in classrooms so enabling them to gain first-hand evidence of the work of the school. The above average standards by the time pupils leave the school, along with improvements in many aspects of the school's work reflects the good capacity of the school to improve further. The school provides good value for money.

## What does the school need to do to improve further

- Improve the use of pupils' individual targets by ensuring that:
  - targets are specific, precise and realistic enough to enable pupils to reach them within an appropriate timescale
  - targets are reviewed on an individual basis when achieved, rather than on a termly or half-termly basis.
  
- Improve the quality of marking and feedback by ensuring that:
  - teachers' marking identifies precisely what pupils need to do to improve their work
  - pupils have the opportunity to respond to marking in the next lesson
  - teachers check to ensure that the same errors are not repeated in subsequent pieces of work.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2
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Standards by the end of Year 6 are above average and represent good achievement from pupils' broadly average starting points. Standards have risen markedly since the previous inspection and in 2008 were well above average. Teacher's assessments, work seen in pupils' books and in lessons confirm that current Year 6 pupils are on track to reach standards which are above average. Most pupils are making good progress because their achievements are being tracked carefully and any pupils who

are underachieving are promptly identified. Appropriate action is taken to address any areas of weakness, including providing specific individual support from teachers and teaching assistants and this enables pupils to make better progress. However, results can fluctuate significantly as cohorts of pupils are very small and each child represents a high percentage of the results. This is particularly the case in Key Stage 1 where there have been a higher percentage of pupils with lower starting points. Nevertheless, the vast majority of pupils make good progress, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Pupils really enjoy their learning and say lessons are fun. This is shown by their excellent behaviour, their extremely positive attitudes to learning and the way in which they concentrate and work hard to succeed. Attendance is above average. Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle and how to keep safe. Pupils are keen to engage in a wide range of sporting activities. They know there is always someone they can turn to if they have a worry or concern, including peer mentors. There is a strong school community spirit and pupils make an excellent contribution to this as shown by the exceptional care for one another. The school has very close links with the local church and they work together, using school facilities for the benefit of the whole community. The school has good links with schools in Cambodia and engage in a variety of fundraising events to benefit pupils in these schools. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They show reverence in assembly and through times for reflection and have a good understanding of right and wrong. They relish opportunities to engage in activities with pupils from other local schools. They are developing their understanding of different faiths and cultures. Pupils enjoy participating in 'Young Enterprise' projects led by the chair of governors. By the end of Year 6, pupils are mature and confident young people. This, along with their above average academic standards prepares them well for the next steps in their education.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	2
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	2
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	2
How well do pupils behave?	1
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	2
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	1
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	2

## How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching and learning is good with some that is outstanding. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in speaking and listening through

<sup>1</sup>The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

drama, role-play, debates and through discussions with 'talking partners'. Work is planned effectively to meet the needs of all groups of pupils enabling them to make good progress. Teachers have good subject knowledge and lessons are taught with enthusiasm and good humour. As a result, pupils are engaged and motivated to learn. There are good relationships between staff and pupils and those pupils who need extra help receive good support from teaching assistants. Assessment is used well to identify the next steps in learning for pupils and in each lesson, pupils have a good understanding of what they are to learn and what they have to do to achieve. Most pupils know and understand their learning targets and some pupils have a good understanding of their level of attainment. However, pupils say targets are changed at the beginning of each term or half-term, rather than when they have actually achieved them and as a result, this reduces the impact of these targets on pupils' learning. Some targets are not specific enough to help pupils improve. Teachers' marking is appreciated by pupils who understand the system. However, although teachers mark work diligently and identify what pupils have done well, some comments to improve their work are not precise enough. Pupils say they do not often have opportunities to correct their work in the next lesson and, consequently, errors are sometimes repeated in subsequent pieces of work.

The school provides a good curriculum, which is well planned to cover all the basic skills. ICT is used very well to support learning in many other subjects and is reflected in the pupils' good achievement in this subject. The curriculum is enriched by a variety of visits and visitors and through a wide range of extra-curricular activities which are well attended. Older pupils particularly enjoy residential visits alongside pupils from other local schools. This enables them to develop firm friendships before they transfer to secondary school. Music is a strength of the school and pupils engage in musical festivals and a range of performances both within school and the local community. They also benefit from opportunities to learn about music from other cultures, for example, by joining African drumming sessions and Indian dancing.

The support, guidance and care for pupils are excellent. The school has worked very effectively with other agencies and families of pupils who are vulnerable, including those with low attendance and who experience challenging circumstances. Staff know pupils extremely well and they provide caring and sensitive support when needed. There are excellent arrangements for pupils entering the school, partly because of highly effective links with pre-school provision and pupils have produced an induction booklet for new pupils who join the school during the year. This enables pupils to settle in very quickly. Highly effective links with other primary schools and the local secondary school also enable pupils to transfer smoothly to the next phase of their education.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

The quality of teaching	2
The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

## How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders and staff work very well as a team and are well motivated to do their best for the pupils in their care. The headteacher provides a clear vision and sense of direction for the school which is communicated clearly to governors, staff, parents and pupils. They comment favourably upon the leadership of the headteacher which they indicate has had a significant influence on the culture of the school over the last two years. Subject leaders are conscientious in carrying out their role in monitoring and evaluating the work in their subjects and are able to clearly identify which areas need to improve. Leaders carefully track pupils' progress and set challenging targets to identify and tackle underachievement. This information is used effectively to identify where improvement is needed and this is fully reflected in the school improvement plan.

There is no notable difference in achievement between groups of pupils and leaders are very aware of any individual pupils who may need extra support. The school promotes equality of opportunity well. The leadership of the school is very aware of its virtually mono-cultural population and takes positive steps to extend partnerships with other schools and members of the local and wider community to promote community cohesion. There is a strong commitment based on inclusion, valuing the contribution of all in the school community and respecting differences. The school works effectively with parents, carers and other agencies to promote the learning and well-being of pupils. Parents have good opportunities to support their child's learning through regular meetings, workshops, newsletters and information on the school website. The school has developed effective partnerships with other agencies to ensure that all pupils, including those who are most vulnerable, are supported well. Safeguarding procedures are good and regularly reviewed.

Governors work effectively to support and challenge the work of the school. They make regular visits to gain first-hand information about the work of the school and some help in classrooms. Consequently, their role in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school has improved well since the last inspection and they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Performance management is rigorous and school targets are clearly linked to staff targets and assure their accountability for individual and school performance.

### *These are the grades for leadership and management*

The effectiveness of leadership and management in communicating ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2



## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start the Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception) with a wide range of skills and abilities, but broadly those typical for their age. They settle quickly into school routines because there are good induction procedures in place, particularly for those who transfer from the local pre-school setting. Children make good progress as a result of the stimulating curriculum and good teaching they receive and they reach and often exceed the national expectations for their age by the time they enter Year 1. Activities are well planned to take into account the needs and interests of the children and there are extensive opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills through drama and role-play, singing and joining in discussions. The children thoroughly enjoyed participating in acting out the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. The outdoor provision is attractive and provides a good range of activities which mirror those indoors. Children are able to work independently and there is a good balance of child-led and adult-led activities both indoors and outdoors. Teachers keep detailed records of children's achievements and use these to identify next steps in learning.

The welfare arrangements for children are good. Parents say they appreciate the information they are provided with and say that staff are approachable. Good support and care are given to pupils who are vulnerable to ensure their well-being. As a result, children are happy, settled and flourish in the warm, caring environment. They are confident and able to articulate their ideas clearly. They demonstrate care for one another and are able to take turns and share equipment. Their behaviour is exemplary and they have positive attitudes to learning. Consequently, their personal development and well-being is good. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed and staff work effectively as a team.

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

Parents who responded to the questionnaire are very positive about the way the school cares for and educates their children. Approximately half of these contained additional comments. Parents commented favourably that staff are friendly, hardworking and approachable, that children love school and parents are happy with their child's achievements. Several parents commented on the significant differences within the school since the appointment of the headteacher in September 2007, including more parents' evenings, regular newsletters, an extensive range of extra-curricular activities and improvements in pupils' progress. Very few concerns were raised, but the few that were centred mainly on homework. Pupils informed the inspector that their homework was handed in and regularly marked. Parents may wish to know that there were no significant trends in the small number of criticisms offered in the questionnaires, but that the inspector did consider these as part of the process of evaluating the school. Five parents spoke to the inspector and echoed the

positive views expressed in the questionnaires. They praised the way in which the school promotes excellent behaviour and good manners and cares so well for all pupils. They stated that their children were treated with great respect. They also appreciate the help they are given to support their child's learning through, for example, workshops, regular newsletters and information on the website.

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Appleton Wiske Community Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. If a parent has more than one child at the school, we ask them to record an answer against all the questions, for each of their children.

The inspector received 27 completed questionnaires, representing 29 pupils. In total, there are 48 parents and carers registered at the school.

	Always	Most of the time	Occasionally	Never
Overall I am happy with my child's experience at this school	19	10	0	0

## What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2007-8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2007-8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, training or development. This may refer to the acquisition of skills, knowledge, understanding or desired attributes. Attributes include qualities or personal competencies which are important to the development of the pupil; for example personal, social, cultural, emotional or health.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.



12 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Appleton Wiske Community Primary School, Northallerton,  
DL6 2AA

You may remember that I visited your school recently to carry out an inspection. Thank you for talking to me and sharing your views about your school.

I think your school is a good school that is improving rapidly. There are some things that are outstanding. Your behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. You are extremely polite and welcoming to visitors. You show that you care for one another very much, for example, older pupils help younger pupils in the playground. You take your responsibilities very seriously, particularly those who are librarians, school councillors and peer mentors. You are very active in raising money for the people in your village as well as for children in Cambodia. All of the staff take excellent care of you and you know you can talk to them if you have a problem and they will always listen and help.

You make good progress in your work. Your test results are above average; better than in many other schools. This is because teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. I was particularly impressed with the way in which you use computers to help you learn in other subjects. You have interesting lessons and you told me how much you enjoy the extra-curricular activities including sport and music. You told me that your lessons were fun and that you enjoyed learning. Children in the Reception class make good progress because they have lots of interesting things to learn both indoors and outdoors. All the staff and governors are determined that you will get the very best education possible. You and your parents told me how well the headteacher runs the school and about all the improvements that are taking place. I have agreed some things with the headteacher which can make things even better for you. You told me that your targets are only changed once every term or half-term. I have asked the staff to change them more regularly, when you have actually achieved them so that you always know exactly what you have to do to improve. I have also asked them to give you better advice on how to improve your work in your books and give you more opportunities to correct your work. You can help by following their advice and trying hard to reach your targets, which I know you can do. You have my very good wishes for the future. You should be very proud of yourselves and your school.

Yours sincerely  
Christine Inkster  
(Her Majesty's Inspector)

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