

Wedderburn Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121424
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	327485
Inspection dates	9–10 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Sarah Hicks

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	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	226
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	Mr Paul Fogarty
Headteacher	Mrs Helen Davey
Date of previous school inspection	10 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Wetherby Road Harrogate North Yorkshire HG2 7SG

Age group	3–7
Inspection dates	9–10 February 2009
Inspection number	327485

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Wedderburn is an average-sized school with Early Years Foundation Stage provision. It serves a socially and economically very mixed area. The percentage of pupils eligible for a free school meal is around the national average. Fewer pupils are identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities than nationally. Pupils are mainly White British. A small number of pupils are from minority ethnic groups. A small number also speak English as an additional language.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Wedderburn Infant and Nursery is a good school. Under the dynamic leadership of the new headteacher it is now, and parents agree, moving from, 'strength to strength'. Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory and rapidly improving as a result of a new energetic team, who are working together to improve provision. There are considerable strengths in pupils' personal development and well-being as a result of the good care, guidance and support they receive. Parents confirm that their children love school, because it 'makes learning fun for them'. This is due to significant improvements in teaching and learning since the last inspection. A strong emphasis on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills within a good curriculum is further enhancing provision. This contributes to pupils' enjoyment and their good progress in this 'happy, nurturing school'.

The headteacher's vision and drive for school improvement is shared by her leadership team. Strategies put in place to increase the rate of progress are proving highly successful as standards and achievement rise rapidly, particularly in reading. From levels below those usually expected of their age, pupils make good progress and are currently reaching broadly average standards. However, it is recognized by the leadership that standards could be even higher, especially for the most able. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning to speak English as an additional language, also make good progress, because they are given good levels of support and the work is individually matched to their needs.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and keep healthy. They behave well and support each other inside and outside the classroom. As a result school is a harmonious happy place to develop and learn together. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They understand a range of different cultural traditions and religious beliefs, and a focus of developing personal and social skills ensures they gradually grow in confidence and maturity. Pupils enjoy the many opportunities to help the school run smoothly, such as being a member of a 'play squad' or the school council. This, together with a sharp focus by leadership and management on raising attainment ensures that by the time they leave Year 2, they are well prepared for their next steps.

A successful drive to improve teaching and learning since the last inspection has ensured that this is now good overall, although occasionally the challenge to pupils is not sufficient, especially for the most able. High quality systems to support pupils' next steps are in place and there is an energy and drive to share best practice. The curriculum is enhanced by a range of activities and visits, which connect and enliven pupils' learning. There is a wealth of opportunities to learn through discussion and develop good basic skills. Adults promote pupils' mathematical and language skills particularly well through a range of well-planned, 'hands on' activities, though opportunities are sometimes lost to support younger pupils' language skills effectively. Adults are now planning closely together to ensure a more creative approach to engage all pupils in their own learning.

Although the school has faced many challenges, inspectors agree with parents that the 'inspirational' leadership of the headteacher together with her strong leadership team give the vision and energy to drive school improvement. This, together with the success of strategies to raise achievement and standards, shows that the school has good capacity to improve further. The school knows itself well, although it is modest in some aspects of its self-evaluation. The leadership team, along with core subject teams, work closely together to set the right priorities.

Great emphasis is placed on including all, ensuring pupils are treated equally, and that diversity is celebrated in this very inclusive, happy school.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory and rapidly improving as a result of good leadership and management and a new collaborative approach to sharing best practice. Inconsistencies in assessment procedures in the past have now been addressed and the headteacher is leading the Early Years Foundation Stage staff energetically, resulting in rapid improvements in provision. Assessment is now thorough and a good range of activities supports all areas of learning well. Good features include the high level of care and the strong emphasis on supporting children's personal, social and emotional development. Links with the Children's Centre are developing well and, as a result, parents are becoming increasingly involved in their children's learning. Strong partnerships with the local playgroup help children to settle quickly and enjoy their first taste of school.

Although there is a wide spread of attainment on entry, most children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with ability levels below those expected for their age, with particularly poor social and communication skills. A good mix of child initiated activities and focused teaching, often in small groups, enables children to make satisfactory progress. Progress is more rapid in Reception, although children remain below expected levels on entry to Year 1, especially in communication, language and literacy. This more rapid progress is as a result of activities that engage and excite children's learning. One child in Reception, for example, proudly said, 'She can fly!' after rolling her dice, counting out her owls feathers and sticking them onto each wing. Too often in Nursery opportunities are missed to develop children's language skills though leaders are working hard to develop all adults' skills and knowledge in the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure all children make good progress. Outdoor learning ensures that there are opportunities to cover all areas of learning. Children, for example, enjoyed making igloos in the snow during inspection. However, the headteacher fully recognises the need to improve this provision further and has clear priorities and strategies for this.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure all adults are consistently effective in promoting children's language skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Increase the level of challenge, particularly for the more able.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. Pupils make good progress relative to their starting points in Year 1, which are below expected levels. By the time they leave school standards are broadly average. Provisional test results for 2008 reflect the impact of strategies to improve mathematical understanding, in particular with more pupils reaching the higher levels. Results in reading were weakest, but the strong emphasis on improving reading since September has resulted in rapid gains and most pupils are currently reaching broadly average standards. Parents' comments reflect this and praise the school for the, 'fantastic' improvement in reading. Strategies to raise standards in all areas however have been highly successful and inspection evidence shows pupils in Year 1 and 2 are making rapid gains in all areas of learning. Pupils currently in Year 2 are on track to reach their challenging targets. This improved achievement is largely a result

of the sharper focus on raising attainment, significant improvements in teaching and learning and the high quality care, guidance and support pupils receive. However, there is more to do to ensure that the more able pupils reach their full potential. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of effective support and the strong partnership with a wide range of outside agencies.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school. They describe a happy atmosphere and say Wedderburn, 'is the best school in the world'. Relationships are good and expectations high. As a result pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to their learning. Opportunities to take responsibility as 'play squad' members or helpers are grasped eagerly and pupils have opportunities to learn from older Junior school pupils, who regularly visit to help younger pupils as reading partners or playground friends. This supports the development of good personal and social skills. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Assemblies offer time for reflection and pupils show a good understanding of others' beliefs and cultures. Attendance is satisfactory and school is working hard to improve this. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles and possess a good understanding of the importance of how to keep safe, eat healthily and take regular exercise. Swimming is a particular favourite. They make a good contribution to the wider community by raising funds for well known charities and, although the school council is at a relatively early stage of development, pupils talk enthusiastically about giving their views, for example, on their sun and cloud displays to help positive behaviours. Good progress in basic skills prepares pupils well for their next steps.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Effective teaching, underpinned by high quality relationships, ensures pupils are fully involved in their learning and thoroughly enjoy their lessons. Teachers' expectations are high and activities are planned carefully to ensure the focus is always on learning. As a result pupils are very clear about what they are learning and what to do to improve their work. In the best lessons no time is lost for learning, expectations are high and teachers engage pupils in a range of stimulating activities, which capture their interest and fully involve them in their learning. This has resulted in rapid gains in the rate of learning for most pupils. Where progress is slower, lessons lack pace and learners, particularly the most able, are not fully challenged. Display is used very effectively to support learning and classrooms are a hive of activity, because pupils have many opportunities to explore ideas together and discuss their work. All pupils, and particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, benefit from good support provided by teaching assistants.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum promotes good progress for pupils and makes a valuable contribution to their good personal development. Pupils benefit from weekly swimming classes in the on-site pool and have a good range of clubs and after school activities. This provision is enhanced by the successful Sports and Extended Schools partnerships, which provide specialist teachers and

support. Strong emphasis is placed on involving pupils in their own learning and activities are carefully planned to encourage discussion. In one lesson pupils talked excitedly about their plans to fly to the moon together and described vividly what they would find there. Subject teams plan together and are energetically developing a more creative approach to connecting pupils' learning. Information and communication technology is used well to promote learning across different subject areas and pupils say they love using the computer to learn 'new things'.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. This is firmly reflected in school's caring and inclusive ethos. Pupils say they feel happy and safe and parents value the support and guidance their children receive saying they are pleased their children go to such a 'happy, nurturing' school. Adults know their pupils very well and are dedicated to supporting and caring for their individual needs. Child protection procedures are secure and meet current government requirements, and health and safety requirements are also fully met. The school works well in partnership with others and the pastoral care worker and inclusion manager work closely together to provide high quality care and support for the more vulnerable pupils. Effective assessment and support are also helping pupils at an early stage of learning English to make good progress. Clear systems to assess and monitor pupils' attainment have now been developed and strong leadership is ensuring effective practice. Although there are still some inconsistencies, marking generally supports pupils' next steps well and exemplary practice was seen in Year 2.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Led by an, 'inspirational' new headteacher, who has energised her team, the school now has a clear focus on raising achievement and standards. The new leadership team, together with subject teams, have a fresh drive to improve pupils' learning experiences and life chances. Care and pupils' personal development and well-being are promoted equally well. Leaders have been made accountable and they have relished the extra responsibility and challenge. Strategies to raise achievement have been successful, as reflected in the faster rate of progress for pupils in Years 1 and 2 since September and the rapidly improving Early Years Foundation Stage provision. Effective systems of coaching are in place, best practice shared effectively and teachers are now benefiting from an improved understanding of standards and pupils' progress. This is as a result of a rigorous focus on compiling and using data effectively to support pupils' learning. Expectations are high and challenging targets are now being set. This reflects a good capacity to improve. Governance is satisfactory and a new committee structure supports the development of governors' roles. Leaders understand their school's strengths and areas for development well and rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's work are in place. Community cohesion is promoted well, fully embracing differing cultures and religions in the local community and beyond. A high priority placed on inclusion reflects leaders' deep commitment to ensuring all pupils in the school are treated equally and any form of discrimination is tackled in this caring and very inclusive school.

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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?	2
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?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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	3
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	3
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 friendly way you welcomed us during your school's recent inspection. We really enjoyed meeting you in lessons and listening to your interesting discussions. We were impressed at how much you are learning. It was lovely to hear you talking about your targets together and hear how they are helping you learn. I am writing on behalf of my team to let you know the judgments we reached about your school during our time with you all.

Firstly, and most importantly, we would like you to know that you go to a good school. Your impressive new headteacher has improved your school a lot since she arrived and everyone is working very closely together with her. All this hard work is helping you learn more and more everyday. We are so pleased you are enjoying school so much. We have asked your headteacher and the staff to work especially hard at helping younger children develop their language skills. This will help them as they grow older and learn more. We also want all the work you do to be interesting, not too easy and not too hard. You can help by talking to each other and to your teachers about your learning.

Thank you all once again for being so kind and helpful and for working so hard in lessons. I am sure you will continue to enjoy your learning in your good school.