

Norton Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121456
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	327492
Inspection dates	24–25 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Mr Les Schubeler

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	440
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Linda McCarthy
Headteacher	Mrs L Parker
Date of previous school inspection	March 2006
School address	Grove Street Norton Malton YO17 9BG
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons and held meetings with the headteacher, other staff, the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, and a group of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including policies and the school records on pupils' progress and attainment. The inspectors also analysed 84 questionnaires returned by parents.

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

- the effectiveness of the actions of the school's leaders in making improvements in the school's performance
- the tracking of pupils' progress, particularly in science and mathematics
- the extent to which teaching challenges all pupils appropriately
- the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average primary school and is set in a rural town. The proportion of pupils eligible for a free schools meal is below average, as is the proportion of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A very large majority of the pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of minority ethnic groups and of pupils who speak English as an additional language is slowly increasing. There was an acting headteacher in the school from January 2009 until the current headteacher took up her post at the beginning of the summer term. The school has received the Activemark and has been awarded Healthy School's status.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

3

Capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school, providing satisfactory value for money. It has some good features, such as pupils' personal development, the quality of care, guidance and support and the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils are happy, friendly and welcoming. They behave well and have good attitudes to learning. They talk knowledgeably about how to keep healthy and safe. They are especially keen to contribute positively towards their school community and are developing social skills that pave the way for them to become responsible, confident and mature young adults of tomorrow. Parents are pleased with the school's work. They appreciate the quality of care, particularly for those pupils who find learning difficult.

By Year 6, pupils reach average standards overall. This reflects satisfactory progress from their average starting points at the beginning of Year 1. Standards in mathematics closely match the national average, but they lag behind those in English. In science, standards are now improving but are still below average. Although pupils achieve well in English, they achieve satisfactorily in mathematics and their progress in science is slow, but recently improving.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. As yet, however, teachers do not always plan and provide work that matches pupils' varying capabilities, particularly to challenge the more-able pupils in mathematics and science.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Although some aspects of the school's work are good and improvements have been made in the provision and use of information and communication technology (ICT), pupils' academic progress and the quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. Sustained good practice leading to improvement in key areas is not yet in evidence. A contributory factor to this is that the skills of middle leaders in reviewing school and pupils' performance and in assessing the quality of teaching are still developing. This is why some aspects of their self-evaluation are overgenerous and why the capacity for improvement is satisfactory rather than good.

What does the school need to do to improve further

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching by making more effective use of assessment information to set tasks that challenge all groups of pupils, particularly the more-able.

- Develop the skills of middle leaders so that they are able to assess accurately the quality of teaching and learning and make effective use of data about standards and achievement.
- Raise standards in science and mathematics throughout the school.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged as satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils' positive attitudes in lessons are reflected in the way in which they work hard and complete their tasks willingly, even on those occasions when the activities are uninspiring. Work seen in lessons and in pupils' books, coupled with the school's own data, confirms that pupils are continuing to progress well in English. Standards in writing are above average. Pupils write for a variety of different purposes and they use their skills effectively in other subjects in the curriculum. More-able pupils are insufficiently challenged in mathematics and science and, as a result, not enough of them reach the higher levels at either Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2. The rate of progress in science is improving steadily because pupils' enjoyment of the subject has been greatly enhanced by improvements to the curriculum and a stronger focus throughout the school on practical activities. There was a small improvement in standards in 2008.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress overall. In some cases, pupils needing additional support make good progress because the good care and personal support they receive have a positive impact upon their confidence and self-esteem.

Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong and get on well with one another and with the adults in the school. Fundraising for charities chosen by the school council and participation in concerts in the locality reflect pupils' positive contribution to communities outside school. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. Assemblies led by members of different churches help pupils to recognise and accept those of contrasting faiths. Pupils openly welcome into the school community the small number of minority ethnic pupils and those whose first language is not English and so ensure they are fully integrated.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	3
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	3
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	2
How well do pupils behave?	2

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

To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	2
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	2
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	2

How effective is the provision?

Inconsistencies in practice mean that the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, rather than good. Warm relationships, a lively pace that keeps pupils on their toes, appropriate levels of challenge for all pupils and the encouragement of independent work characterise the more effective lessons. Pupils' work is assessed accurately, but teaching does not make use often enough of the assessment information to plan work that matches the wide range of learning needs in each class. Pupils, especially the more-able, say that, although over the last year science lessons have become more enjoyable, they do not always find that the work challenges them as much as it could.

The curriculum promotes pupils' personal development and enjoyment successfully by providing opportunities to participate in a wide range of sports, make residential visits to an outdoor activities centre, and organise enterprise events such as a cake sale to raise money to sponsor a guide dog. It provides adequate preparation for the next stage of pupils' education, enabling them to achieve satisfactorily. The science curriculum is developing, encouraging more investigative work. The school leaders acknowledge the need to develop the whole curriculum further by taking greater account of pupils' needs and interests and by establishing stronger links between subjects.

Staff know pupils particularly well and this enables them to provide good quality care and sensitive pastoral support at the right time. There are good and trusting relationships with parents. Well-established and productive links with a wide range of external agencies and professional services give valuable, additional help.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The recently appointed headteacher has identified in a short time, the school's main strengths and weaknesses. She is aware of precisely what is needed to bring about improvement. For example, improving the quality of teaching and learning, extending the skills of other leaders and managers and accelerating pupils' progress. Modifications to the school's tracking system are helping staff to get a secure

understanding of the rates of progress of individual pupils, but as yet not enough use is made of this information in the planning of lessons. Monitoring procedures and practices are becoming more rigorous, but not enough time has yet elapsed to see any measurable impact.

The school places a strong emphasis on inclusion and care for all pupils, thus enabling new pupils and those needing additional support to settle quickly into the school community. Safeguarding procedures are good, contributing to the confidence that pupils and parents have in the quality of the school's care. Many partnerships are forged beyond school, such as with other nearby schools, the church, local professionals and businesses. These help to promote pupils' good personal development and enjoyment of school. Partnerships with parents are good. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion. Stronger links are forged within the locality than further afield. The quality of governance is satisfactory. Some governors have a very sensible and realistic view of the school's effectiveness. However, not enough of them are proactive in helping to improve the school by challenging the headteacher on key proposals.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in communicating ambition and driving improvement	3
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	3
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

When children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage, their skills and abilities are below the expectations for children of their age. As a result of good quality teaching and a good curriculum, children make good progress. By the time they enter Year 1 most are working at broadly expected levels.

Teaching makes use of wide-ranging and stimulating resources and activities both indoors and outdoors. These, successfully, promote imaginative and creative play and independent learning. Adults use questions well to prompt children's thinking and develop their use of language. They also ensure a good balance of learning led by adults and opportunities for children to make choices and pursue their interests. Staff do not currently track children's progress from the start of Nursery to the end of Reception and make comparisons with national figures. In other respects, however, assessment procedures and systems are well organised. The information collected is used effectively to support and extend children's learning. Good leadership and management ensure that data are used well to identify areas where

individual children can improve their learning. For example, actions taken as a result of careful analysis of data have led to improvements in children's ability to link sounds and letters.

Children's welfare is given high priority. Sensitive arrangements are in place to help those children and families needing extra support. Strong, established relationships with parents, carers and pre-school settings help to ensure that children settle quickly and happily on arrival.

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

The vast majority of parents who returned questionnaires were highly positive in their views of the school's work and overall very satisfied with their children's experience. They recognise the strong support given to individual children. They feel that their children are kept safe and that the school helps their children to maintain a healthy lifestyle. A very small minority feel the school deals effectively with incidents of unacceptable behaviour only occasionally. However, the inspection finds that pupils behave well in and around the school, partly because staff manage misbehaviour well.

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Norton 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 inspection team received 84 completed questionnaires. In total, there are 337 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	58	24	2	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.



26 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Norton Community Primary School, Malton, YO17 9BG

I am writing on behalf of the inspection team to thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited you recently. We would like to thank you for being so courteous and friendly. We enjoyed talking to you and listening to your views about the school. We 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. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education.

We think your teachers and teaching assistants care for you and look after you well. This helps to keep you safe and healthy. We know, too, that you enjoy school, especially the many sporting activities, and that the older pupils are enthusiastic about the residential visit to East Barnby.

We were pleased to see that you get on so well with one another and all the adults who work with you. You are working well and making good progress in English, but you could reach higher standards in mathematics and science, so we have asked your teachers to help you to do better in those subjects.

We have also asked your headteacher and the other staff to look carefully at the assessments they do of your work so that they can plan their lessons better for all of you and make sure that your work is always just at the right level for you, never too easy or too hard. Then you can show what you are capable of, especially those of you who can reach the higher levels in mathematics and science. You can help, too, by paying careful attention to the advice that your teachers give you.

We are sure that you will carry on enjoying school and improving your work. Most of all, we hope that you will continue to try really hard and help all the staff to make Norton a really good school in the future.

Best wishes

Les Schubeler
Lead inspector

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