

Archbishop of Yorks CofE Voluntary Controlled Junior School, Bishopthorpe

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121553
Local Authority	York
Inspection number	327512
Inspection dates	15–16 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Robert Jones

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr C Brown
Headteacher	Mr J Green
Date of previous school inspection	14 March 2006
School address	Copmanthorpe Lane Bishopthorpe York North Yorkshire YO23 2QT
Telephone number	01904 706272
Fax number	01904 701249

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This average size junior school draws pupils from relatively advantaged backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal is well below average. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A below average proportion of pupils has learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has gained Artsmark Gold, Healthy Schools Status, Activemark, Football Association Charter Status and the Basic Skills award.

Since the last inspection, the school population has continued to grow steadily. There have been significant changes in staffing, particularly among the senior leadership team. The headteacher has been in post for one year and a deputy headteacher took up post six months ago.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. Many aspects of its work are good and most parents support the school. They typically comment that, 'The head and his staff are extremely passionate and enthusiastic about the school which rubs off on the children.'

Pupils start school in Year 3 with standards that are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. They make satisfactory progress and leave in Year 6 with above average standards in English, mathematics and science. The school is working hard to raise standards further, but not all pupils are making as much progress as they could, particularly in mathematics and science.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They display outstanding awareness of how to stay healthy. All pupils take part in high-quality physical activities and talk knowledgeably about the need to lead healthy lifestyles. There are ample opportunities for pupils to make positive contributions to school life, such as taking part in the active school council. For example, the guidance written and promoted tirelessly by the school council has helped pupils feel very safe from any threats of bullying. Behaviour in classrooms and around the school is good; a notable feature is the exceptionally good relationships pupils show towards each other and to adults. Good access to information and communication technology (ICT) and above average standards in literacy and numeracy mean that pupils are well prepared for their future life.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, and in some lessons it is good. In these good lessons, pupils make good progress due to a range of challenging and fun tasks. Teachers mark work thoroughly, leaving the pupils in no doubt as to what they need to do to improve. Where teaching is satisfactory, pupils are not sufficiently challenged to improve and teachers' marking does not indicate the next steps in their learning. There is not enough good or better teaching to ensure consistently good achievement for all groups of pupils.

'There is never a dull moment' sums up pupils' real enjoyment of school. The numerous extra-curricular clubs, which enhance the good curriculum, are central to this enjoyment. Nearly all pupils attend one of the many sporting and musical activities on offer, such as choir or wind band. The school strives to ensure equal opportunities for all pupils to access all areas of the curriculum; for example, by promoting girls' football. The school takes good care of its pupils. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive prompt attention to their needs and their progress is monitored carefully. This results in them making good progress.

Leadership and management are satisfactory, but improving rapidly. The dedicated team of senior and middle leaders are relatively new to their posts and are still developing their skills. Systems for tracking pupils' progress and self-evaluation are in the early stages of development. At present, they lack the necessary sharpness and rigour to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently good or to ensure that all groups of pupils make at least good progress. Standards are beginning to rise again, and this early positive picture means that the school demonstrates a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' progress, particularly in mathematics and science.
- Improve the consistency of the quality of teaching and marking so that all groups of pupils are challenged to achieve their full potential.

- Sharpen systems for self-evaluation and tracking of pupils' progress so that any underachievement is quickly identified and appropriate action taken.

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

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The trend over time in standards is downward. In 2008, standards were particularly low in science and mathematics where pupils had not made enough progress. This was largely due to considerable changes in staffing at that time. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are improving, with increased numbers of pupils currently on track to reach the highest level in science. However, pupils are still not making as much progress as they could in science and mathematics.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

A strong Christian tradition is central to the school's mission and ensures that pupils develop well both morally and spiritually. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to develop an awareness of other cultures and the school has plans afoot to build on these. Pupils talk about a school that is 'always on the go'. They know how to stay safe and show care and concern for others. Pupils' enjoyment of school life is reflected in their good attendance and eagerness to make a positive contribution to school. For example, many pupils give up their time at weekends to perform in musical events or to help in a village garden fete. Behaviour is good overall, although in lessons that do not challenge them, pupils' attention wanes and some drift off task. They develop well so that by Year 6, most are mature, articulate, confident young people, able to reflect thoughtfully on their learning and actions. Pupils develop a good awareness of the world of work, for example, by working with a local market garden to develop a plant-growing initiative.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. There are some examples of good teaching. In these lessons, pupils are well motivated to learn. Higher ability pupils are challenged well and are asked questions that require them to answer more fully. This is because teaching is interesting and teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to work together to solve problems. In one good science lesson, for example, pupils moved around the classroom taking on the roles of planets to help them to learn about the solar system. However, too many lessons are satisfactory; in these lessons, pupils are not challenged enough and therefore their rate of progress slows. Pupils are sometimes unsure of what they should do to improve their work or how to recognise their success. In most lessons, there are good opportunities for pupils to make oral contributions, and they do so with self-confidence and maturity. The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent. Where it is good, pupils are helped to improve their work by a combination of praise and focused advice on their next steps in learning. Too often, marking is superficial and not sufficiently focused on improvement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is significantly enhanced by a first class range of very well attended extra-curricular activities and visits. Currently, 33 clubs promote pupils' love of sport, music and drama. Hence, pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school. Theme weeks, such as the recent Henry VIII week, enable pupils to make good links between subjects. Music has a very high profile in the school and is used within literacy and numeracy lessons, for example, in composing raps in a literacy lesson. Throughout the day music can be heard somewhere in the school. The school also uses entry to competitions to add purpose and excitement to learning. For example, pupils learned about the environment by entering and winning a national climate change competition. ICT is used well to extend learning in the classroom. The curriculum does not always provide enough opportunities for higher ability pupils to reach their full potential.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school takes very good care of its pupils. Parents recognise this and say that, 'Staff are caring and dedicated. They know their children well and seek to nurture them.' Statutory requirements for safeguarding are met. External agencies support pupils well, including bereavement counselling and help for pupils nervous about transition to secondary school. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and receive prompt attention to their needs. This results in them achieving well. Effective strategies to raise the awareness of bullying and the peer mediation scheme have helped pupils feel safe and secure. The school has developed academic guidance through the 'going for gold' initiative; however, targets are not as sharp as they might be and have yet to impact significantly on the rate of pupils' progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

This is a school where clearly every child does matter. The headteacher has engendered a very caring ethos where the importance of teamwork and cooperation is promoted by all. Middle leaders are a committed and dedicated team whose skills are developing as they take on increased responsibilities. All are now involved in observing lessons and giving focused feedback to staff. Although this has led to some improvement, notably in science, the systems for self-evaluation are too new to show a consistently positive impact on pupils' overall progress. Some use of data has improved, particularly in identifying pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and ensuring that their needs are met. Governance is satisfactory. With improved information on the progress of pupils, governors are increasingly holding the school to account and are a supportive influence in the school. Community cohesion is satisfactory. While there are strong links with the local community and churches, the school is aware that it now needs to create opportunities to develop pupils' awareness of different ethnic and socio-economic groups. The school has improved since the last inspection and gives sound value for money.

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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?	3
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	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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	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?	3
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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

I very much enjoyed meeting you on our recent inspection. This letter is to tell you what I found out about your school. Two things I will remember especially from my visit are the card tricks you showed me and the scary insect display.

Your school provides you with a satisfactory standard of education, with many things which are good. I was particularly impressed by the range of extra- curricular clubs and visits on offer. Many of you told me how much you enjoyed school and how the staff take very good care of you. You show an outstanding awareness of how to lead healthy lifestyles and the school is helping you become confident, mature young people by the time you reach Year 6. You make satisfactory progress during your time at the school, but those of you who receive additional help with learning make good progress. Teaching is sometimes good, but it does not always challenge some of you as much as it should.

To improve the school, I have asked the headteacher and staff to do the following:

- ensure that you make faster progress, particularly in science and mathematics
- make sure that all your lessons are good so you all reach your full potential
- improve the systems in the school that monitor your progress, so that if any of you don't progress as much as you should, you receive the support you really need.

You can help by being the mature young people you are today and by talking to your teachers if you feel you are capable of achieving even more.