

Holy Trinity CofE Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121598
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	327525
Inspection dates	9–10 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Derek Pattinson

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	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	244
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 K Davill
Headteacher	Mrs J Denley
Date of previous school inspection	30 January 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Trinity Lane Ripon North Yorkshire HG4 2AL
Telephone number	01765 603911
Fax number	01765 601406

Age group	3–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an infant school of average size. Most children are White British and live in the immediate area. However, because some are from military backgrounds high numbers of children join and leave the school other than at the usual times. The proportions of children from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as a second language are low. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very low. The proportion eligible for free school meals is well below what is typical. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a Nursery and three Reception classes. The school has achieved an Active School Award and a Healthy School Award.

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 with particular strengths in the exceptional quality of its care, guidance and support, its impressive curriculum and pupils' outstanding personal development. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of this successful school. 'Everyone is welcomed with open arms' and 'I would thoroughly recommend this school to anyone' are apt parental comments. The headteacher's dynamic leadership and the significant emphasis on effective teamwork are other positive features. As a result, children's needs are well met and they achieve well. There are excellent partnerships with others to promote children's well-being. The many positive developments since the last inspection show that the school has good capacity for improvement. It provides good value for money because pupils achieve well and financial planning and management are of a high standard.

Children enter Nursery with levels of knowledge, skills and understanding that are broadly typical. All children make good progress towards their early learning goals, including those who find learning difficult and those who join and leave the school other than at the usual times. This is because of good teaching, effective assessment arrangements and excellent support. In Key Stage 1 they build on the good start that they have made in the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result, by the time they leave Year 2, their standards are well above average in mathematics and reading and above average in writing.

Leadership and management are good. The school has the full confidence of parents and many pay glowing tributes to the headteacher. All staff feel valued and share the aim of the leadership to continue to improve the school. Morale is high. The leadership monitors the school's performance and checks up on the provision it makes. Evaluation of pupils' progress has led the school to set correct improvement priorities such as raising standards in writing. However, while teaching is regularly monitored, this process has not yet led to a clear analysis of what works best in helping children make as much progress as possible. Governance is good. The governing body is well led, well informed and works in close partnership with the school. As a result, it plays an increasing part in holding the school to account for what it achieves.

As a result of excellent pastoral and academic guidance, children's personal development is outstanding. Children are confident, happy, have mature attitudes and are very keen to learn. While attendance is no better than satisfactory, largely because of the number of holidays taken in term time, children thoroughly enjoy school and know what they need to do to improve. They rapidly become independent and have a keen sense of responsibility. Good planning has helped the school become a cohesive community and it reaches out beyond its own locality. Children are aware of the diverse nature of society. They know about and respect different faiths, traditions and cultures. The school is very successful in promoting the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and children feel very safe in school. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The outstanding curriculum, in which important skills including information and communication technology (ICT) are given strong emphasis, brings learning to life. Secure relationships and effective classroom management underpin good teaching and learning. However, some inconsistencies in teaching sometimes hold children back, preventing them from making the best possible progress.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage is good with exemplary elements.

Leadership and management are good. The skilled, enthusiastic leader and her strong team know the children's needs well. This ensures that children get a confident and secure start to their school life. Parents value highly the school's willingness to involve them fully in their children's learning. They say their children thoroughly enjoy their first taste of school and are never bored. Children enter Nursery with skills and knowledge that are broadly in line with expected levels. By the time they leave Reception they have made good progress overall towards their early learning goals. Their personal, social and emotional development is exemplary. In particular, their attitudes to learning and ability to work well with others are exceptionally positive. Adults plan carefully together to provide activities that interest children and spark their natural curiosity. Children love creative and communicative activities such as building their friend's home and school in 'Brunei' during outdoor learning, or saying good morning enthusiastically in Nepali. Children work and play happily together. Teachers assess children thoroughly and check on how they are doing regularly to ensure they make good progress. The outstanding level of care and good teaching are significant factors in ensuring the children's welfare and the good progress children make. They are well prepared for their next steps in learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate progress and raise standards in writing.
- Ensure that all teaching and learning matches that of the best.
- Work with parents to help improve attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement for all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is good. Challenging targets are set for pupils and these are rigorously pursued. Progress towards their achievement is regularly evaluated. Reliable and accurate assessments show that all pupils, including those who join and leave the school other than at the usual times, make good progress as they move through the school. In the 2008 national assessments, children's attainment was above average in writing, well above average in reading and particularly strong in mathematics, with many more pupils than nationally reaching the higher level. Standards have been significantly above what is typical since 2005 with the gap between school and national data slowly widening, especially in mathematics. Although tracking information reveals that current Year 2 pupils have made good progress from their starting points, attainment is likely to be lower than in 2008, especially in writing, because of the group's different abilities.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children's personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. They get off to a flying start and quickly develop the personal and social skills needed to become confident, friendly, polite and caring members of the school community. As a result, they develop a real sense of belonging and a genuine desire to help others, illustrated by typical comments from children such as, 'You feel better if you help somebody' and 'If

someone's feeling sad, you make them feel happy and then you feel happy'. Children thoroughly enjoy their learning as shown by their positive attitudes and enthusiasm for school life. As a result, their behaviour is good. However, the many holidays taken in term time adversely affect attendance, despite the school's best efforts to promote it. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle and how to stay safe, and say that any problems are dealt with quickly and firmly. They take part in a wide range of games and sports. As one pupil appropriately commented, 'We go for a jog to get our legs and brain going'. Members of the school council believe they are listened to and say their views are important. They speak enthusiastically about their ideas for holding their talent show to raise money and enjoy using their 'porches' in the playground. Good basic skills and excellent transition arrangements prepare children well for their next steps.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Trusting and respectful relationships, the effective management of pupils and the regular use of praise and encouragement are good features of all lessons. 'All staff are friendly and professional and help children come on in leaps and bounds' is a typical parental comment. In the best lessons, there is often a lively buzz of excitement because teachers fire children's imaginations and stimulate thinking, which promotes high levels of interest and involvement. Questions are usually used well to develop and check pupils' understanding and provoke thought. All pupils, particularly those who find learning difficult, receive high quality support from teaching assistants, enabling them to make good progress. Teachers and pupils confidently use ICT to help support learning. In most lessons teachers make clear to pupils how well they are doing and what they should do to improve. Occasionally progress slows because teachers talk for too long, activities are not carefully enough matched to children's precise needs and the final part of the lesson is not used well enough to check on what children have learnt.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school has a curriculum of exceptional quality because it places significant emphasis on learning through fun activities. All that should be included is taught in a creative and imaginative way, which meets the needs of children particularly well. In addition, the curriculum is enriched by a wealth of extra experiences. There is a strong focus on listening and speaking skills, increasing self-esteem and ensuring children feel safe and secure. As the children say themselves, 'Our school is a happy place to learn'. Parents appreciate the 'brilliant learning experiences their children have'. This results in confident children, who enjoy and are excited by their learning. They talk enthusiastically about trips and visits which bring their learning alive. After a recent trip to Runswick Bay, they spoke together about the anemones they saw, the crabs they caught and described sand eels to each other. Classrooms, in which ICT and art feature strongly, are attractive places which stimulate a desire to learn. Parents and children value the good range of after-school clubs, which help develop important skills further.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school has an inclusive and caring ethos that is shown in the outstanding care, guidance and support it provides. Children and adults have a strong sense of belonging to a happy, learning community where everyone is valued and supported. Child protection procedures are secure and regularly reviewed. Arrangements to ensure health and safety are robust and sufficient attention is paid to risk assessments. Safeguarding procedures meet current government requirements. Parents overwhelmingly agree that pupils are well cared for and safe in this 'fantastic school', where 'self-esteem and confidence is constantly nurtured'. They value all staff highly, but highlight the headteacher in particular for creating such 'a wonderful place to learn'. The support for vulnerable children is of high quality. It helps to ensure that their diverse needs are well met. Excellent partnerships with the local community and close working relationships with a range of agencies contribute to the very high standard of care. This is a significant factor in pupils' enjoyment of school, their sense of well-being and the good progress they make. Goal cards are given to children and these include targets to help them reach the next steps in their learning. Children are often encouraged to evaluate their own work in different ways, such as by using a 'thumbs up' to show their good levels of understanding.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, supported well by her senior leaders, provides inspirational leadership, which is reflected in good strategic planning and organisation.

She is totally focused on raising standards further and improving the achievement of children through the rigorous pursuit of challenging targets. Her impressive knowledge of the school is reflected in the school's self-evaluation, which is accurate and takes account of the views of staff, parents, governors and children. Shared responsibility and accountability are given strong emphasis, which helps ensure all staff feel valued. As a result, morale in the school is high and teamwork is strong. The rigorous tracking system and information gained from data analysis enables the school to check carefully on the progress pupils are making. Senior and subject leaders increasingly know what works well and what needs doing. Community cohesion is promoted well. The school is dedicated to helping its children think of others besides themselves and to appreciate the customs and beliefs of others. The school places very strong emphasis on ensuring that all children have equal opportunities and do not suffer discrimination. It takes effective steps to make sure that all are included in the full range of activities and learning opportunities it offers.

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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?	1
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?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
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	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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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	1
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**

Here is a great story to enjoy and it is all true.

Once upon a time, Thursday and Friday to be exact and before you broke up for your summer holidays, we inspected your school. We judge that you go to a good school, with some very good things going on. Your mums, dads and carers sent messages to tell me that you go to a good school and they are right! I am using 'stars' and 'wishes' about your school because I know some of you know that your teachers use these words when marking your work.

'Stars'

- You reach high standards in reading and mathematics by the time you leave.
- You are friendly and all adults take very good care of you so that you are happy.
- You all work hard, have good attitudes to school and behave very well.
- You know very well how important it is to stay healthy and keep safe.
- Your learning is often exciting, which helps you learn even better.
- All adults make sure that you are treated the same to help you do your best.
- Many of you told me that you think the best thing about your school is your headteacher. We found her to be an excellent headteacher who knows just what to do to make things better for you.

'Wishes'

I have asked the school to:

- make sure that you make the same good progress with your writing as you do with your reading and mathematics
- make all lessons as good as the best in your school so that you always make good progress
- work with your parents to make sure you always come to school so that you have the best chance to learn well. You can help by always coming so that you can join in the fun of learning!