

Masham Church of England VA Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121613
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	327530
Inspection date	18 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Lesley Clark

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 aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	81
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 C Thwaites
Headteacher	Mrs Ruth Vincent
Date of previous school inspection	28 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	1 Millgate Market Place Masham Ripon North Yorkshire

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	18 November 2008
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards; the quality of teaching and learning; the impact the curriculum and care, support and guidance had on pupils' learning and achievement; and the provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation; national published assessment data and the school's own assessment records; observations of the school at work; discussions with pupils and representatives of senior staff and the governing body; a scrutiny of school documents and parents' questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Masham Church of England Primary School is a small school housed in an historic building off the main square of Masham on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales. Pupils come from the full range of social and economic backgrounds. Almost all pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average as is the proportion with a statement of special educational need. The development of a wilderness and recreational area has substantially increased the playground facilities for all pupils.

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 an outstanding curriculum and lively, imaginative teaching. As a result, pupils find learning highly enjoyable and their personal development and well-being are outstanding. Parents and carers agree, commenting on the 'fantastically imaginative teaching', 'the very happy atmosphere' and the way 'children have pride in themselves, the school and their community'. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school, saying, 'it is fun,' and also 'a kind school'. The school is well led and managed and governors give good support and challenge, asking the right sort of questions to help the school to develop further. The school's leadership has immense enthusiasm and drive for success. These qualities have secured good improvement since the last inspection and indicate good capacity to improve further.

From broadly average starting points in Year 1, pupils go on to reach above average standards by the end of Year 6. Results in national tests vary from year to year depending on the mix of pupils in any one group. The trend in the school's results is upwards. Provisional results in the 2008 national tests indicate that the school comfortably exceeded its realistic targets in English and mathematics, especially at the higher Level 5. There has been notable improvement in reading standards after the school updated its books and introduced 'guided reading' across the school whereby children read and discuss books together in depth. A similar focus on raising writing standards is also proving successful, with the impact seen on improved standards in both key stages. Standards in mathematics in Year 6 are close to those in English. Talented mathematicians are very well catered for. However, the progress of younger pupils is held back because they do not always have a secure grasp of basic skills and so the teachers need to cover very basic work in Year 2. This is why standards at the end of Year 2 in mathematics are generally below average. Across the school pupils achieve better in science. Results in national tests are usually well above average at the end of Year 6 with a large proportion of pupils exceeding expected levels. This is because pupils cover an extremely diverse range of practical activities, with scope for independent investigation, that best match the very wide range of needs in each class. This means that all pupils learn at their own level and so they achieve highly.

The quality of teaching is good and is sometimes outstanding. Some of the lessons are particularly imaginative, as when pupils measured cardboard strips to reconstruct the furniture that Goldilocks broke or worked out fair ways to test out 'magic potions' to remove coffee stains from a carpet. Strengths include realistic contexts for pupils to use and apply their literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills. Teaching is sometimes less effective when teachers talk for a bit too long because this limits the time that pupils have to learn independently. Occasionally, teachers do not always set challenging work to match the wide range of ages, needs and abilities of different groups of pupils. This happens most often in mathematics. Currently, the school relies on a system of 'intervention' whereby identified pupils who need extra help in reading, writing and mathematics are taken out of class and taught a separate programme of work. However, the school does not check often enough or carefully enough how well these pupils are doing and so some pupils miss out on some of the best teaching. Individual education plans vary in their usefulness to help pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make the next steps in their learning. The school's systems to track and support the progress of different groups of pupils therefore are not sufficiently finely tuned to ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or those with specific short-term learning needs make measurable step-by-step progress and move on. This is why care, support and guidance are good rather than outstanding as the school believes, and progress

is uneven across the school. Pupils are well cared for. Safeguarding procedures are in place and meet current requirements.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. This results from an outstanding curriculum which is lively, rich and creative. It fully exploits a wealth of local opportunities and international connections to enrich pupils' learning and strengthen their understanding of community cohesion and cultural diversity. A prime example is the recent successful Fair Trade week which pupils on the eco committee helped to organise. Pupils clearly have a say in their school and take on increasing responsibilities as they grow older. They grow in confidence and work extremely well together. Pupils behave well and have a good awareness of safety. Their understanding of why it is important to live healthy lives is outstanding as is the positive contribution they make to the community. Taking all these factors into account, including their above average literacy and numeracy skills by the end of Year 6, pupils are well prepared for their future lives.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

By the end of the Reception year most children meet the levels expected, especially in personal, social and emotional development, language and communication skills, and knowledge and understanding of the world. This is good progress from their various starting points, which vary from below average to average from year to year. Children are well taught and their progress is checked regularly. They have ample opportunities to work and play indoors or outdoors as they choose. Adults provide a suitably wide range of activities to stimulate children's learning through discovery and constantly talk to children to extend their understanding. As a result, children become increasingly confident and are lively chatterers who for example can put on special voices and actions to portray a cat and a policeman in a made-up game. Activities for children to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills are less well developed than those to extend children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Children are well cared for. They turn into happy and independent young pupils who help each other and concentrate well because the provision is well led and managed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers match work closely to pupils' different abilities and give younger pupils a good grounding in mathematical skills in order to accelerate their progress.
- Improve the use of assessment systems to check more carefully and frequently how well pupils are doing so that those who find learning difficult get extra help as and when they need it.

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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?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
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	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	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
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?	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?	1
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**

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. Lots of you smiled and chatted to us and explained what you were learning. We thoroughly enjoyed finding out about the work you do and a special thanks to those who talked to Dr Crichton about the school and their work as school and eco council members and to those who brought their English, mathematics and science books to show her. Your school gives you a good all-round education. It has an outstanding curriculum which gives you lots of different opportunities to learn new things and to have a strong sense of community. Your personal development and well-being are outstanding as a result. You are well taught and your teachers know how to make learning fun and to prepare you well for your future lives. Your school is well led and managed and your teachers and other adults take good care of you. Your parents and carers appreciate the fact that you come to school smiling and leave smiling because you have enjoyed working and playing together. You behave well and your attendance is above average.

There are two things we have asked your school to do to make it even better.

- We noticed that younger pupils find some aspects of mathematics hard to understand so we have asked your teachers to make sure that they help them to learn basic skills properly right from the start. We have also asked that your teachers make sure they match work carefully to each of your needs so you all make the best possible progress.
- We also noticed that lots of you have time out of lessons to do special work. We have asked the school to check more carefully and more often how well you are doing so that those of you who find learning difficult get extra help as and when you need it and do not miss too much of what everyone else is doing.