

Skelton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134095
Local Authority	Redcar and Cleveland
Inspection number	328826
Inspection dates	11–12 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Joy Frost HMI

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	530
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 Jim Hartnett
Headteacher	Mrs Barbara Bell
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Station Lane Skelton Saltburn by the Sea TS12 2LR
Telephone number	01287 650689
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Skelton Primary School is a much larger than average primary school catering for pupils from Skelton in Cleveland and nearby districts. The area has a variety of socio- economic groups with pockets of severe social and economic deprivation. There is a Sure Start children's centre on site which caters for boys and girls from 0-5. The school has an early intervention support base for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The pupil population is mainly White British with very few pupils from minority ethnic groups but this is rising. The proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal has fallen over recent years from above that found nationally to broadly average. The proportion of pupils who have a learning difficulty and/or disability is slightly above average. The school has achieved a range of national awards including; Investors in People, Healthy School, Sports Activemark, Basic Skills and Artsmark Gold and four local leading aspect awards for Modern Foreign Languages, behaviour, writing and their work with parents and the community.

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 some outstanding features. The pastoral care the school offers its pupils is outstanding and elements of pupils' personal development and curriculum provision are exemplary. The school's provision for vulnerable pupils with social and behavioural difficulties from across East Cleveland, in the resource base, is also outstanding. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and its work and are very happy with the care and support the school offers. As one parent commented, 'I could not wish for a better school for my son to be in'. The extensive partnerships the school has forged with the children's centre and many outside agencies has led to outstanding provision for vulnerable pupils within the school who often make more progress than their peers.

Standards are above average and pupils make good progress across the school except in mathematics across Key Stage 2, where it is satisfactory but improving. Over time progress in mathematics has been weaker than other subjects. The school is aware of this and it is a priority in the school improvement plan. However, strategies put in place to accelerate progress in mathematics have not yet impacted fully. Standards in all subjects have been on an upward trend in both key stages since 2006 and are above national averages in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2. This represents good achievement overall.

Teaching and learning are good because solid structures to guide pupils are in place. Teachers give clear instructions, have high expectations and involve pupils in their own learning. Classrooms have a very good climate for learning which contributes to pupils' very good behaviour and enjoyment, enabling them to make good progress in lessons.

The excellent pastoral care they receive underpins pupils' good personal development and well-being. All members of staff set high standards of care and pupils respond by developing excellent relationships with each other and adults. There is much mutual respect and by the end of their time in school pupils are mature young people capable of making sensible decisions and taking on responsibility. They are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Academic guidance, however, is inconsistent across classes and subjects. The best examples were seen in English where pupils are given clear direction and know what they need to do to improve their work. In mathematics and other subjects this guidance is not as robust although good examples were seen.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher sets a clear direction and fully involves staff and governors in the monitoring and evaluation of the school's planned improvements. A new target setting system is enabling more teachers to become involved in tracking pupils' progress and identifying underachievement. However, the school does not yet use the data to check which initiatives are having the most impact on pupils' progress. The governing body gives good support to the leadership team and is increasingly challenging their work. The work the school does to promote equality of opportunity and eradicate discrimination, along with their contribution to community cohesion is exemplary.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Attainment in children's skills on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) varies from broadly average to below average. Skills are generally below average in personal, emotional and social development and in speech and language. Children settle very quickly into school

routines because transition arrangements are good. Children enjoy school, there are strong relationships with parents and every child has an identified key worker who looks after all their needs. By the end of the EYFS children make good progress in mathematics and in all other areas of development their progress is satisfactory and their skills and knowledge are still slightly below what is expected for their age. Good use is made of the indoor and outdoor facilities, and this fosters children's development in all areas of learning. Children are encouraged to become independent and thoroughly enjoy taking a full part in activities. There have recently been major improvements in EYFS provision and this new provision is impacting positively on the progress children make. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and make similar progress to their peers.

Children are well cared for and good welfare systems are in place to ensure they are safe and secure. They understand how to keep themselves safe and are encouraged to adopt healthy eating habits. Children develop a good understanding of the wider world through creative use of play and are actively encouraged to solve problems and use information and communication technology (ICT) well. The EYFS is well led and managed and is characterised by a common approach and a determination to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' progress in mathematics across Key Stage 2 in line with their capabilities and the progress they make in English.
- Ensure that senior managers improve the use of data so that they can focus more closely on which actions have had the most impact on pupils' progress.
- Improve academic guidance throughout the school and across the range of subjects, so that it is used consistently to tell pupils how to make the next steps in their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children enter the nursery with attainment that is below national expectations and make satisfactory progress through the EYFS. Standards for most are still below normal on entry to Year 1 but progress accelerates and by the end of Year 2 standards had improved year-on-year to above national in 2007 in reading and writing; they were well above the national average in mathematics. However, in 2008 pupils' results dipped to below national. The school has now taken steps to support this year group of pupils by increasing staffing levels and providing small group intervention for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

In Key Stage 2 from 2005 to 2007 there was a dramatic improvement in pupils' progress in English and progress in science also improved. This was due to more robust tracking systems which identified underachievement and enabled the school to target individuals and groups for focused intervention. However, during this time progress in mathematics remained satisfactory but improving. The school's own tracking data shows that standards are still improving and the school is also closing the gap in progress between English and mathematics. This was verified by the progress seen in lessons and pupils' books throughout the school. Vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties often make better than expected progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good and pupils' behaviour, their enjoyment of school and the extent to which they adopt safe practices are excellent. Pupils report that teachers are kind and lessons are interesting and, as a result, attendance is good. Pupils' moral, social, spiritual and cultural development is good because of the well established caring ethos which underpins the work of the school. Pupils make a good contribution to the community through many fundraising and enterprise events, such as baking and selling cakes. Pupils' cultural awareness is good because of the very rich curriculum they receive. They are knowledgeable about other cultures, customs and faiths and well prepared to live in a multi-cultural society. Pupils have a strong voice through the Eco Council and the School Parliament and they regularly contribute to decisions, such as deciding which charities the school will support and appointing the new headteacher. They are very aware of how to reduce their carbon footprint and that of others and are actively involved in many initiatives to do so, both within and beyond the school. The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles is good, they enjoy water and fruit in school and take regular exercise leading to the Activemark award for sports. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers' planning is detailed and they clearly outline to pupils what they are going to learn in lessons. Good foundations for learning have been established in all classrooms and consequently pupils know what to expect in lessons and behave appropriately. Teachers use a range of strategies to match learning closely to pupils' abilities. These include setting for English and mathematics and the use of target groups. Good use of interactive whiteboards and good resources make learning interesting and engage pupils in their learning. There are good relationships between pupils and adults, who encourage pupils to work cooperatively in groups and individually to complete the tasks set and to talk together about their learning. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers and work diligently on the tasks set. Pupils who need extra help to accelerate their learning are ably supported by experienced teaching assistants both within and outside of the classroom. Marking is variable in quality and generally better in English than in other subjects.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. It is broad and balanced with an excellent range of enrichment activities which make learning more meaningful. There are an extensive range of visits and visiting professionals to the school, closely linked to topic work, which broaden pupils' experiences of the world and extend their cultural awareness. Personal, social and health education is well embedded and supports pupils' social development. The school's provision for modern foreign languages is outstanding. From Nursery to Year 6 pupils learn to speak French and develop their skills enthusiastically throughout the school, talking confidently with good pronunciation. The school has recently appointed a French Assistant to develop this even further. Pupils' skills and knowledge in ICT, including digital media packages, are very good and are used across the curriculum to extend learning. ICT is used often and pupils use cameras

and video equipment confidently to make their own DVDs. The introduction of links between subject areas is giving pupils more opportunities to practise their literacy skills in other subjects. This has impacted positively on pupils' writing skills across the school. The range of extra-curricular opportunities on offer at lunchtimes and after school is impressive and meets the needs of all pupils. These are carried out by staff and many visiting professionals and are of a high quality. There really is something for everyone. Singing, drama, drumming, football, chess and clay clubs are just a few. There is even a Chill Club for those pupils who just need time out.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Arrangements for child protection, health and safety and risk assessment are secure. Procedures to safeguard pupils meet all statutory requirements. Pupils are made aware of their part in staying safe through the many visiting experts who give them advice. Parents have very high levels of confidence in the school's care and support for their children. Excellent relationships at all levels make children feel safe and secure. Teachers know children well, personally and academically. They are excellent role models in the care they give the children, who in turn adopt this caring approach in their own relationships. There are good examples of academic guidance, and target setting. Where this is used effectively, for example in writing, progress accelerates because pupils know what they have done well and what the next steps in their learning are. However, this is not consistent across the school or subjects. Vulnerable children and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are exceptionally well guided and supported both pastorally and academically.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher sets a clear direction for the school and is ably supported by her leadership team. The school self-evaluation has identified the appropriate areas for improvement but is over generous in its assessment of some aspects of its work. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching are regularly carried out by senior staff. Middle managers have responsibility for tracking pupils' progress across year groups. A wide range of monitoring activities take place throughout the year, for example 'learning walks' to check on provision around the school, and book scrutiny to check on learning outcomes, and these involve many staff. However, data that tracks pupils' standards is not used widely enough at a whole school level to check which initiatives are having the most impact on pupils' progress. The governing body is fully involved in the life of the school and offers good support and challenge. Governors are robust in ensuring good financial management in all areas of the school and in planning strategically for change. Through the recent rise in standards and development of the curriculum the school has shown that it has made good improvement since the last inspection and has good capacity to improve further.

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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?	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?	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?	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	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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?	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	1
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**

13 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Skelton Primary School, Redcar and Cleveland, TS12 2LR

Thank you so much for the very warm welcome you gave the inspection team when we visited your school recently to see how well you are doing. You were exceptionally polite and courteous and we enjoyed talking to you. You told us that you go to a good school and we agree. We also think that some of the work your school does is excellent. Adults take care of you very well and your behaviour and relationships are exemplary. We were very impressed with the opportunities you receive within the curriculum. The number of extra curricular clubs you can attend and the range of visiting professionals who come to work with you are outstanding. We were also impressed with how well you speak French and how much you enjoy doing so. These are the reasons why you enjoy school so much and get along so well together!

We have asked Mrs. Bell and her teachers to make some improvements to make your school even better. These are:

- improve the progress you make in mathematics so that it is as good as your progress in English
- make sure that all the marking of your work is as good as it is for English, so that you always know the next steps you need to take to improve your work
- ensure that there are closer checks on which of the school's planned improvements are having the most impact on your progress.

You can help your teachers by continuing to work as hard as you do. I wish you all continued success.

Yours sincerely

Joy Frost

Her Majesty's Inspector