

Selby Abbey Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121586
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	331555
Inspection dates	7–8 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Brian Blake HMI

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	298
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jane Harland
Headteacher	Mrs J Jennings
Date of previous school inspection	6 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 17 lessons, and held meetings with two governors, the headteacher, teachers and other staff who work in the school. The inspectors also spoke with the pupils in lessons and around the school, in addition to holding a more formal meeting with a group representing most age groups. The inspectors observed the vast majority of the school's work, and looked at 83 parents' questionnaires, 32 staff and 96 pupils' questionnaires also. A range of school documentation was read, including details relating to safeguarding procedures in place at the school.

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

- attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage and at the start of Key Stage 1
- attainment at Key Stage 2 and pupils' overall progress while at the school
- the impact of teaching and learning on raising standards for all pupils
- the capacity of leadership and management, at all levels, to address identified weaknesses and ensure continued improvement.

Information about the school

Selby Abbey is a larger than the average size primary school. The percentage of pupils entitled to take free school meals is broadly average. There are fewer than average numbers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational need, than seen nationally. Around three-quarters of the pupils are of White British heritage. There is a higher than average percentage of Polish pupils, many of whom are at a very early stage of learning English as an additional language. At the time of the last inspection the school received a notice to improve pupils' achievement and standards throughout the school, and the quality of teaching and learning.

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**3****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****3**

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. Since the previous inspection, standards have risen and pupils' progress has improved. Although the vast majority of pupils start their statutory schooling with below average standards, more rapid progress than previously seen is being made by all age groups. Although standards are still too low at Key Stage 1 and in writing across the school, overall standards are average by the time pupils reach the end of Year 6. Most other outcomes for pupils are also improving, particularly their attendance and behaviour. However, this latter area is still a problem when teaching fails to engage the pupils fully in productive and interesting learning. In almost all lessons seen, teaching is at least satisfactory, and often good. There is also some inadequate teaching. The school has a good system for recording ongoing pupils' progress in the core subjects, but not all teachers share this information with the pupils as an aid to them knowing how well they are doing against end-of-year targets. Furthermore, there is an absence of robust monitoring and recording of pupils' achievement in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

The school is aware of the need to improve its curriculum to help raise standards and improve the range of learning opportunities available to the pupils. Some good work has been completed on consolidating the curricular provision in English and mathematics. However, in other subjects taught, the curricular provision lacks coherence and a guarantee of continuity and progression, in line with the needs and capabilities of all pupils. The school knows its pupils well, and ensures that they are safeguarded and well cared for throughout their time at the school.

Leadership and management are developing well, with the headteacher, senior leadership team and governors sharing a clear vision for future improvements. Senior leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and have targeted suitable priorities for action. Strategies for overseeing the work of the school are securely in place, together with the identification of any actions needed to support individual teachers or pupils. Overall, the capacity of the school to make future improvements is satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics at Key Stage 1 to levels at least in line with the national averages.
- Raise standards in writing across the school by targeting those pupils

underachieving relative to their capabilities, and by adopting a whole-school approach in which writing is a targeted priority across the curriculum.

- Develop further the assessment processes in school by:
 - ensuring that all pupils have a clearer idea of their personal end-of-year targets and what they need to do to achieve these.
 - ensuring that all teachers use assessment information more regularly and effectively to aid future planning and provision.
- Develop more robust curricular provision for subjects other than English, mathematics and science by ensuring a whole-school approach to planning and provision.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Attainment at both key stages has generally been below national averages in recent years; significantly so at the end of Key Stage 1. However, the unvalidated data for 2009 show that improvements have been achieved throughout the school, so that standards, overall, are now broadly average when the pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6. The vast majority of pupils are now achieving the levels expected for their age in reading, mathematics and science. However, some pupils are still failing to make the necessary progress in writing, despite standards improving marginally since the previous inspection. The pupils' attainment when they start Year 1 is generally below the levels expected for their age but, as elsewhere across the school, improvements are being made. Although standards at Key Stage 1 are still too low and are below average, the gap between the school and national averages narrowed in 2009 for the first time in four years.

Overall, pupils' progress is good. The majority of pupils show interest in their learning, and feel that the school supports them well in their work. Most pupils concentrate well. These characteristics are seen most in lessons where there is a good balance between teacher-led tasks and opportunities for the pupils to work independently. Levels of concentration and attention to written and oral tasks are satisfactory in the majority of lessons. Those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress.

Across the age groups, pupils are clear that they feel safe and secure in school. Movement around the school is always sensible and safe. Pupils show that they can use a range of resources appropriately in lessons and on the hard court play area. Playground leaders, who set out equipment and engage younger pupils in different games, are also contributing to the good levels of enjoyment seen in school. The school is aware of the need to promote the all-round well-being of the pupils, including eating healthily and engaging in regular exercise. The pupils enjoy the additional activities on offer, although not all year groups are as involved as they could be. Attendance is

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broadly average, with a decreasing number of pupils who need targeted intervention to help them improve their regular attendance at school. All of these aspects contribute to the good quality spiritual, moral, social and cultural development seen in school. Pupils have a good understanding of the beliefs and values of others, particularly those within the school community. All appear to understand clearly the difference between right and wrong, and there is obvious awareness of the rewards and sanctions that are used in school. The vast majority of pupils understand how to cooperate in lessons, and why the social skills necessary for group and class discussions are important to their own and others' learning. While pupils understand that different faiths and cultures exist, they have less understanding of how their own particular culture influences how they behave, and the individual decisions that they take. For example, some have too limited ambition or drive to improve.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. There is some good quality teaching in most year groups; for example, in the Early Years Foundation Stage and, more

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

generally, in the teaching of English and mathematics. Where such practice exists, the pace of learning is good, with teachers showing good subject knowledge and understanding about the learning needs of different abilities. There is some inadequate teaching, which arises because of the failure to effectively manage the learning tasks and pupils' behaviour. Where this occurs, the behaviour of a significant minority of pupils is inadequate, which leads to off-task talk and poor progress in learning. Throughout the school, good use is made of support assistants in lessons, particularly in targeting those pupils with identified special educational needs and/or disabilities, or those at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. Planning is thorough in English, mathematics and science but, in other subjects, it is less detailed and too often comprises a list of teaching activities to be covered, with too little attention to the expected learning that the pupils will achieve. The quality of assessment is satisfactory. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is helpful in identifying how well a pupil has done, although there is variation in the range of additional comments that will help the pupil to know how to improve upon their work. The tracking of pupils' progress is good in the core subjects, but underdeveloped across the rest of the curriculum. Too few teachers openly share end-of-year targets with the pupils, which mean that the pupils do not share in the vision of what they should achieve by the end of the year. Most teachers interact well with the pupils in lessons, to check on what they are doing and how well they are progressing in their learning. However, some do not, particularly where there is group work with a teacher or support assistant. On these occasions, there is insufficient checking to ensure that the non-focus groups understand their learning, and are making the progress expected.

The curriculum satisfactorily provides the pupils with a range of suitable activities to help them improve their basic skills in numeracy and literacy, and also to develop many of the other skills, knowledge and understanding needed for the next stage of their education. The focused work in English and mathematics has been successful in raising standards and improving pupils' progress. However, the curricular provision for other subjects is underdeveloped and currently not sufficiently clear in terms of a coherent and progressive programme of work across the whole school.

The quality of care, guidance and support is good overall, but better in care and support. Safeguarding procedures are good throughout the school, and underpin the level of care provided across all age groups. The pupils feel welcomed into school, particularly those who arrive from other countries and who are at a very early stage of learning English as an additional language. The pupils also feel that, if needed, there is always an adult to whom they talk if they have any problems.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3

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

The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2
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How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership and management are satisfactorily driving improvements across the school. There is a clear and shared vision for improvement across the school, with the headteacher and governors instigating a number of changes since the previous inspection, which are helping to raise standards, improve pupils' rate of progress, and address identified weaknesses in provision. The newly formed senior leadership team is helping to support school-based initiatives that are effectively targeting improvements in both teaching and pupils' learning, especially in relation to raising standards in English and mathematics. This work has been very effective in these areas, but the leadership and management of other subjects taught is currently underdeveloped.

The governing body is able to deploy their broad range of personal skills and expertise well to ensure that improvements are made in key areas of the school's work, including all safeguarding aspects relating to both teachers and pupils. The identification of individual governors against identified priorities for action has worked well, with regular progress reports being produced to inform the full governing body of the success of the school's actions. Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school, recognising that although much has been achieved since the previous inspection, there is still more that needs to be done. Links with parents, carers and other stakeholders are good, and are helping to ensure a unified and well informed approach to future improvements.

A number of individual staff, especially those linking with the parents of children who speak English as an additional language, are helping to forge productive links between the home and school. The broader external links with communities outside the school are satisfactory overall, and good in relation to those contacts made with other schools in the area. While the immediate links with local families, and others, is developing well, the school has yet to develop further national and international links. The school readily embraces equality of opportunity, and gives good attention to fostering positive links with all parents and children; in particular, those newly arrived in this country. As a result, the support provided for children with English as an additional subject is good.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	3

The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	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

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. When the children start in Reception, their skills, attributes and personal qualities are below those expected for their age; occasionally, some year groups have started at the school with standards well below. The school recognised this issue and has responded positively to improve provision and outcomes for all children and there are clear signs of steady improvement in almost all areas of learning. Overall progress is good, although weaknesses remain in writing and calculation. The children enjoy their learning, showing keen interest and high levels of motivation to do the best they can. They mix well with each other, and with the adults with whom they work. Behaviour is almost always exemplary. The staff have good knowledge and understanding of the needs of the children. Activities are satisfactorily planned to cover all areas of learning, but these tend to link more to the final Foundation Stage outcomes, rather than the more obvious next stages of learning. There are very effective partnerships with parents, particularly those from minority ethnic groups where the children need more detailed and focused support. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. Clear priorities for improvement have been established and all staff share a common sense of purpose in trying to achieve these; this results in strong and effective team work throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage. All statutory welfare regulations are met.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
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 of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

A very large majority of parents are positive about the school's educational provision for their children. Only in two of the 13 questions did the percentage response reach 10%

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or more for disagreement with the statement; these being information about pupils' progress at school, and the other in dealing with unacceptable behaviour. While a number of parents wrote comments on the inspection questionnaire, there was no significant pattern to these and most were keen to praise the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Selby Abbey Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 83 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 298 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	148	55	114	42	5	2	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	130	48	134	50	1	0	3	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	100	37	149	55	19	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	92	34	160	59	12	4	4	1
The teaching is good at this school	114	43	141	53	11	4	2	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	111	41	144	54	14	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	95	35	158	59	13	5	2	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	102	39	137	52	17	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	89	33	168	63	7	3	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	88	33	155	58	17	6	5	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	94	35	153	58	13	5	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	95	36	161	61	7	3	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	121	45	134	50	8	3	2	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
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.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



I am writing on behalf of the inspectors who recently visited your school. Thank you for making our visit so enjoyable. Would you pass on our thanks to your parents, who kindly took the time to return the inspection questionnaire. We were particularly pleased to receive a number that had some very helpful comments, all of which were read very carefully by the inspectors.

Overall, Selby Abbey provides you with a satisfactory and improving standard of education, so I should like to highlight some of the important things that we found out about the school. These include the following:

- standards are improving, although they are still too low at Key Stage 1 and in writing across the school. The school needs to improve standards in writing and, more generally, in all core subjects at Key Stage 1
- attendance is improving and is now broadly average. However, there is still a small number whose attendance and punctuality is not good enough
- all those who spoke with inspectors said they feel safe and secure in school, and that you enjoy the range of different activities provided for you in and out of lessons
- teaching is mostly satisfactory, and sometimes good. Occasionally, teaching does not reach the standard we would expect due, primarily, to the poor behaviour of a small minority of pupils. However, the behaviour of the vast majority of you is good
- the school regularly records how well you are doing in English and mathematics, but this does not yet happen in the other subjects taught. We are, therefore, asking the school to improve in this area
- although you all have end-of-year targets in English and mathematics, too few teachers share this information with you. We are asking all teachers to use this information and share it with you and your parents, as an aid to you knowing how well you are doing, and what else you need to do to improve further
- the school has, understandably, focused the curriculum on developing basic skills in numeracy and literacy. However, in the other subjects taught, there is insufficient planning to ensure that all lessons best meet your needs as you progress through the school. We are asking the school to tackle this area before it is next inspected
- all staff care for you well, which helps you to enjoy attending school. Your governors, headteacher and other adults who work in the school know what they have to do to make the school better.

7–8 October 2009

Because of the improvements that have been made since the school was previously inspected in June 2008, we are removing the notice to improve. We are confident that with your continued hard work, good attendance and good behaviour, the school will make the further improvements needed.

We wish you all the very best in the future.

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