

Sledmere Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118028
Local Authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	339125
Inspection dates	30 November –1 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Kathleen Yates

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	51
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Diann Atkin
Headteacher	Mrs Sue Thackray
Date of previous school inspection	3 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited seven lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and two acts of collective worship, and looked at a range of school documentation including policies and procedures, the school's improvement plan, pupils' current work and assessment data. 18 parental questionnaires were returned and analysed.

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

- the effectiveness of the school's skills-based curriculum in motivating the pupils to apply their skills across the curriculum
- the effectiveness of partnerships with parents, carers and a cluster of other small schools.

Information about the school

This popular village primary school is much smaller than average. All pupils are from White British families. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. The headteacher was appointed in September 2008. The school's Foundation Unit provides full-time education for Reception-aged children. It also offers 15 hours flexible nursery provision for pupils from the age of three. The school has been accredited with the Healthy Schools Award for its work in encouraging pupils to adopt a healthy lifestyle and the Activemark for promoting pupils' fitness.

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**2****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****2**

Main findings

This is a good school which is at the heart of the community. It is truly the case that within the strong Christian ethos at Sledmere Primary School that, 'everybody matters, everybody cares'. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Relationships are superb and pupils feel greatly valued. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the community and have an excellent understanding of safe practices and of what constitutes an unsafe environment. The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers and of the partnerships forged with outside agencies in promoting learning and well-being is outstanding. Safeguarding procedures are of the highest quality.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with ability levels typical of those expected for their age. Standards reached by the end of Year 6 in the 2009 national tests were above average overall; in English they were well above average while in mathematics they were broadly average. Standards in mathematics have consistently been lower than those in English and science. The progress most pupils make is good, including that for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Nevertheless, the school acknowledges that pupils with higher abilities could do better. Teaching and assessment procedures are good. However, on occasions, the more able learners are not always provided with sufficiently challenging work to help them to reach the standards of which they are capable.

Good leadership and the outstanding care pupils receive are at the core of the school's success. The track record of improving results, strong strategic direction from the senior leaders, along with accurate self-evaluation and the constant drive to ensure all areas continue to get better, demonstrate the school's good capacity to improve further. Value for money is good. There has been a strong commitment to developing staff and governors through focused training and this is ongoing. Governors discharge their statutory duties diligently to ensure that pupils and staff are safe. They have yet to become fully and systematically involved in evaluating the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Place a higher emphasis on mental mathematics so that pupils develop the confidence to use and apply these skills methodically in problem solving to accelerate their progress and raise standards in mathematics.
- Ensure that the higher attaining pupils consistently make good progress and reach the standards of which they are capable of by providing them with sufficiently challenging tasks in all lessons.

- Ensure that the governing body applies the skills gained from recent training so that they become more efficient in their role of monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy school a great deal, which is reflected in their above average attendance. They behave well, show good attitudes to learning and reap the benefit of the very small class sizes. These factors contribute significantly to pupils' successful learning. Pupils relish the opportunity to take responsibility and do so with pride. They have been highly involved in decision making and are very aware of the importance of looking after the environment.

The standards that pupils attain vary considerably from year-to-year and this is common when cohorts are so small. Pupils in Year 2, in the most recent cohort, reached standards that overall were above average. This is a marked improvement on the previous two years, especially in reading. By Year 6 pupils reach standards that are above average. Most pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve well. Teachers have been concentrating hard on raising standards in literacy, which is where the most progress has been made. Standards in mathematics remain broadly average and lag behind with weaknesses in calculation. The school has recognised this deficiency and is working hard to address this issue. Current work seen in the school indicates that pupils are maintaining similar standards; there are encouraging signs that attainment in mathematics is improving.

The school council is actively involved in health and safety audits and together with the headteacher they drew up an action plan regarding areas that they were concerned about. Pupils identified issues with traffic outside the school as part of the School Travel Plan; as a result, the county council are to erect flashing signs in the village.

Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. They frequently take part in enterprise activities where they display high levels of team work and raise money to fund their ventures. Above average attainment by the end of Year 6 ensures they are well prepared for their future lives.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is effective because it is focused on pupils' learning. All staff are skilled in sharing learning objectives with pupils so that lessons get off to a good start. Individual targets ensure pupils know exactly what they need to do to reach the next level. In the best lessons, the pace of learning is brisk, good use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) both by staff and pupils, and this is an improvement on the previous inspection. In lessons where teaching is satisfactory and the level of challenge drops, pupils of higher ability do not make the progress of which they are capable.

The curriculum is carefully planned so that pupils acquire life skills through exciting themes that are relevant and interesting to them. Excellent partnerships established with local cluster schools, 'the Waggoners', enable pupils to join together for visits and sporting events and to benefit from the expertise of visiting professionals. New topics are introduced by visits, workshops and demonstrations which make learning come alive. Pupils use their literacy and ICT skills successfully across the curriculum. For example, they produce power point presentations of Anderson shelters, in connection with their Second World War project. These are shared with parents in celebration assemblies. Daily acts of collective worship, some of which are taken by visiting clergy, ensure pupils have a very good understanding of their own faith and that of others. There is a good range and take up of enrichment activities which are greatly enjoyed. Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Pupils are extremely well prepared for induction into the school, across key stages and for their transition into the next phase of their education. Support for vulnerable pupils is clearly targeted. Teaching assistants

make a valuable contribution to supporting learners who have additional needs. They quickly and unobtrusively move around the classroom to give further explanations or suggest an alternative approach when pupils are stuck. Parents and pupils are very appreciative of the daily intervention strategies, including booster lessons and one-to-one sessions, which are helping to close the gaps in pupils' learning. The school's excellent links with the local secondary school ensure gifted and talented pupils receive extended challenge in mathematics and ICT.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is rightly held in the highest of regard by pupils, parents, staff, the governing body and the wider community. She gives clear direction to staff and governors and is tireless in her drive and ambition to bring about further improvements through regular monitoring of teaching and learning. She is well supported by senior leaders and the governing body. Together, they have been successful in bringing about good improvement since the last inspection. Examples of this are to be found in the good use of a detailed tracking system which carefully measures pupils' progress and the greatly improved resources for reading which have resulted in much higher attainment, especially for boys. The school development plan is a model of best practice; the areas for development are well chosen, clearly stated, and closely linked to the promotion of pupils' academic and personal development. Governance is satisfactory. Governors have recently received additional training for their roles, but have yet to contribute more fully to evaluating the effectiveness of the school. The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality and tackles discrimination is good.

In addition to the many links with the Waggoners, and an inner city Roman Catholic school in Hull, the school is developing its international links with China and Africa to promote community cohesion globally. As a result pupils have a good awareness of different lifestyles. Regular training for all staff and the governing body and high quality practice ensures that safeguarding procedures are exemplary. The school runs very smoothly on a daily basis because administrative and caretaking staff carry out their duties most efficiently.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Foundation Unit with skills that are typical of their age range, except in speech and language, where they are often lower. They settle very quickly to school routines because of the carefully organised induction arrangements both for themselves and their parents. The quality of the provision is good. Children demonstrate high levels of enjoyment and commitment to their work because adults are sensitive to children's needs and plan activities which take account of their interests. The Unit is attractive and well resourced and very good use is made of the outdoor activity area where children explore all areas of learning. They make good progress. By the beginning of Year 1, most children attain average levels except in communication, language and literacy, where they are below average. Nevertheless, they have made good progress from their starting points. The most recent cohort has attained higher than average levels in their personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and in their mathematical development. The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage has an excellent understanding of how young children learn and uses her expertise to ensure frequent and thorough assessments of what children can do to inform their next steps in learning very effectively.

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	1

Views of parents and carers

Parents who returned the questionnaire or who spoke to the inspection team are very happy with the school. They agree that the school keeps their children safe in a very warm and friendly atmosphere where everyone is very approachable. They feel that the school is well led and managed and that their children make good progress. Recent surveys carried out by the school confirm that parents have very positive views of the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sledmere 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 inspector received 18 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 51 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	9	50	9	50	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	10	56	8	44	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	10	56	7	39	1	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	9	50	8	44	1	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	9	50	6	33	2	11	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	8	44	8	44	2	11	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	10	56	8	44	0	0	0	0
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)	6	33	10	56	1	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	8	44	9	50	1	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	7	39	9	50	1	6	1	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	8	44	8	44	2	11	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	10	56	7	39	1	6	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	9	50	7	39	2	11	0	0

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.



2 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sledmere Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Driffield YO25 3XP

Thank you for welcoming my colleague and myself to your school and for taking the time to talk to us. We really enjoyed meeting you and watching you at work and play and sharing in your acts of collective worship. We came to find out as much as we could about your school. Now we are going to share our findings with you.

- Sledmere School is a good school where you are all very happy. This is because Mrs Thackray and all the staff look after you extremely well.
- Your school has excellent relationships with your parents and with all the agencies that help your school to run so well.
- The safeguarding requirements are outstanding and you have a superb understanding of how to keep yourselves and others safe from harm.
- You take very active roles in making improvements to your school and surrounding areas.
- By Year 6 you reach standards in English which are well above average.
- Your attendance is above average, you achieve and behave well and have a good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles.

To make your school even better we have asked the staff to ensure that:

- your lessons in mathematics help you to have a better grasp of mental mathematical skills so that you will be able to solve problems confidently
- those of you who find learning easy are set harder tasks to help you reach higher standards
- governors are going to be more involved in making regular checks on how well the school is doing.

We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Kathleen Yates

Lead inspector

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