

# Fishergate Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121277
<b>Local Authority</b>	York
<b>Inspection number</b>	339910
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 January 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Keith Bardon

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	214
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Paul Mulvey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Andrew Herbert
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 November 2006
<b>School address</b>	Fishergate York North Yorkshire YO10 4AP
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors spent 65% of their time looking at learning; visited 15 lessons; observed 10 teachers and held meeting with governors, staff and groups of pupils. The inspectors observed other aspects of the school's work, and looked at a range of evidence including policies, the improvement plan, pupils' work and the school's records indicating pupils' progress and attainment. The inspectors also analysed 38 questionnaires returned by parents.

The inspectors reviewed many aspects of the school's work and looked in detail at the following:

- the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make in Key Stage 1
- how well teaching is matched to pupils' needs in the mixed-age classes, particularly for those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language
- pupils' attainment and progress in writing
- how good outcomes for pupils are and the effects the school's initiatives are having to promote good attendance and punctuality
- children's attainment and progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the effects of the improvements to outdoor provision
- the contribution the school makes to community cohesion.

## Information about the school

Fishergate is a medium sized school which serves a socially and economically mixed community close to the city centre. The proportion of pupils eligible to take a free school meal is broadly average. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is made up of a Nursery and a Reception class which work together as a unit. The school has six other mixed-age classes. While a large majority of pupils are White British, one in five is from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds and often speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils, who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement for their special educational need, is broadly average. The school has achieved the Healthy School and Inclusion Awards and the Basic Skills Quality Mark. A privately managed out-of-school club is available to pupils before and after school each day and at holiday times.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Fishergate Primary provides its pupils with a good quality, well-balanced education, which they enjoy thoroughly and gain much from. 'I go to school with a smile, be at school with a smile and come back with a smile' is typical of the positive comments many pupils make. The school is a harmonious community in which pupils from a wide range of national and cultural backgrounds are made equally welcome and thrive.

Pupils of all ages are taught well and make good gains in their knowledge and skills. The independence and confidence children gain in the Early Years Foundation Stage is nurtured throughout the school. By Year 6, many pupils are mature learners who engage readily in decision making and make a full contribution to lessons.

Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 has improved substantially since the last inspection and generally is above average, particularly in mathematics and science.

While pupils read well, weaknesses in writing adversely affect their attainment in English. The school has begun to address the problem areas and there is clear evidence of improvement, particularly in handwriting and presentation. However, attainment in writing has further to rise to match that in other subjects, particularly in the quality of pupils' sentences and the consistency with which they apply key writing skills.

The school's recently revised mission statement 'Achieving great things together' epitomises the ambition and unity of purpose shared by all who work and learn at the school. However, transition between Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is not as smooth as it could be in some respects, particularly with regard to the progression of early writing skills.

Challenging performance targets are set and almost always achieved. Leaders have a realistic and accurate view of how well the school is performing and maintain a sharp focus on the raising of standards and the promotion of pupils' personal development. The school has made good improvement in many areas since it was last inspected but there is no complacency. Priorities for development are clear and well structured, giving the school a good capacity to improve in the future.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress in writing by:
  - increasing pupils' ability to construct refined, well-structured and interesting sentences, which make full use of their good vocabulary
  - ensuring that pupils acquire secure writing skills and build progressively on them as they move through the school.

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- Improve transition between the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 in order to ensure that children progress smoothly between these two key stages in all aspects of their learning.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Pupils describe their lessons as being 'a lot of fun' and clearly enjoy the wide variety of interesting experiences the school provides. They are keen to learn, listen carefully to their teachers and take pride in meeting the targets they are set. Well developed social skills ensure pupils work productively together, discussing their thoughts and ideas openly and sensibly and sharing responsibilities for tasks amicably and productively. Pupils work hard and concentrate well for lengthy periods of time. By Year 6 many have developed into confident, independent learners who consistently produce work of an above average standard for their age. While pupils express themselves clearly during discussions and read very well, their writing is often of a lower standard. Many make simple mistakes and their sentence structure often lacks refinement. Since the last inspection, changes of class teachers have caused pupils' attainment and progress to fluctuate in Key Stage 1. Staffing is now stable and in lessons seen during the inspection pupils were making mostly good progress. Pupils who join the school part way through their primary education and those who speak English as an additional language are supported and integrated well. As a result, they make good progress and by the end of Year 6 many are attaining above average standards, in line with their peers. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported and taught well and they make good progress relative to their starting points and individual targets.

Pupils are happy at school because they feel safe and well cared for, confident in the knowledge that any problems they encounter will be quickly and effectively addressed. Pupils' behave well, respond quickly to staff and show consideration towards for each other. Many pupils make healthy food choices at lunchtime and participate regularly and enthusiastically in the many sports activities the school offers. Growing fruit and vegetables in their own allotment has added a valuable extra dimension to pupils' understanding of healthy living. Older pupils willingly take on responsibilities around school and some have established their own clubs for all to enjoy. Most pupils attend school regularly and their attendance and punctuality are improving. Pupils develop a good range of academic and personal skills which provide a secure platform for their future learning and life. Most are thoughtful, reflective individuals with a well-developed sense of social and moral responsibility. Through the many opportunities provided by the school and regular contact with pupils of different nationalities, cultures and religions pupils acquire a good understanding of the wealth and diversity of different cultures.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

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

**How effective is the provision?**

Teachers identify clear learning objectives for each lesson and share these constructively with the pupils. Older pupils are encouraged to identify the success criteria for themselves, helping to further their independence and ability to self-assess. Lessons are planned thoroughly, with teachers using good subject knowledge to ensure learning is appropriate and progressive. The use of assessment to match work to the differing needs of the pupils, including pupils with special educational need and/or disabilities and those with specific language needs, is often good. Very occasionally, the most-able pupils are not challenged enough by the tasks set. In most lessons, effective classroom management helps promote a fast pace of learning, although on occasions the flow is broken as teachers recover some pupils' attention. Strategies, such as 'talking partners', are used effectively to encourage discussion and to help pupils to develop their thinking skills. Teaching assistants are deployed well and most make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously and provide useful information about what has been done well and what could improve.

Pupils benefit from a broad and colourful curriculum which meets their needs well. By regularly involving pupils in the direction learning will take, teachers ensure that the curriculum is relevant and engaging. As a result, pupils' knowledge and understanding build progressively and at a good pace. The implementation of a creative, skills-based curriculum is well advanced, but still being honed in light of experience and pupils' response. The curriculum for writing has been the least successful element in the period since the last inspection. This is now being addressed, but there is some way to go before the developments have full effect on pupils' learning and attainment. The school

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makes excellent use of its central position in this historic city to enrich pupils' experiences and give them a full appreciation of the wealth of culture which surrounds them. The good range of extra-curricular activities the school provides is well attended and adds much to pupils' enjoyment of school.

Staff pay close attention to all pupils' welfare and keep a vigilant watch to ensure that they are safe and secure. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. 'I know who to go to when I am sad and all the teachers are nice to me' is typical of the views they hold. Procedures to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who need help learning English are well managed and effective. Pupils new to the school settle quickly in its warm and welcoming atmosphere. Well considered strategies are raising attendance and improving punctuality. Good links with outside agencies enable specialist help to be provided for those who need it. Effective procedures ensure pupils transfer smoothly at the end of Year 6 to the next phase of their education. Arrangements for children's transfer into Year 1 at the end of Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory, but lack a little cohesion.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Led purposefully by the headteacher, senior staff provide cohesive and focused leadership and management which move the school forward at a good pace. Management responsibilities are distributed well and good quality information to guide decision-making is readily available. Rigorous tracking procedures ensure that staff have an accurate picture of how well pupils are progressing and that they are able to act quickly to support their learning. Very occasionally indications of a possible problem are not picked up early enough, as occurred with writing, but once identified leaders act decisively to address any shortcomings. By paying close attention to the needs of the individual, the school ensures that all pupils are fully included and have equal opportunities to learn and progress.

There is no discrimination and pupils from a wide range of social and cultural backgrounds are made extremely welcome. The school recognises its social responsibilities fully and makes a strong contribution to community cohesion. The strong sense of community within the school itself is of particular benefit to pupils and their families who arrive from many different parts of the world. The school has rigorous safeguarding procedures which meet requirements and are checked frequently to ensure

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they are fully up-to-date and effective. Governors are fully involved in the life of the school and in determining its strategic direction. There have been a number of changes to the governing body since the last inspection and some governors are still becoming familiar with their role as a critical friend of the school.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children's attainment on entry to Nursery is broadly as expected for their age, although in some years it varies widely. The Early Years Foundation Stage setting provides a secure and welcoming environment which promotes children's early learning and their enjoyment of school well. Children make good progress and by the end of Reception a large majority are working securely within the expectations for the age in most areas of learning. Teaching is good and children benefit from stimulating and free flowing indoor and outdoor provision which encourages them to make choices and to initiate their own learning activities. As a result, children develop a high level of independence and become confident individuals who play and work well together.

Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good and provision for learning out of doors has improved substantially since the last inspection. Activities are generally balanced well across the different areas of learning. However, the writing skills children acquire do not always marry well with those they need in Key Stage 1. Staff work cohesively as a team, ensuring that all children receive the attention they need to stay safe and learn well. Links with parents are good and smooth induction procedures ensure children settle quickly into Nursery. Staff assess children's progress thoroughly and keep parents well informed as to how well they are progressing.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

With very few exceptions, parents hold very positive views of the school, describing it as a having pastoral care that is 'second to none' with staff who have a 'genuine commitment to improving the quality of children's lives and opportunities'. Parents often comment on the school's 'inclusive ethos' and 'community atmosphere' and identify the welcome their children have received as something they are particularly pleased with. Very occasionally parents express concerns about the provision made for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, but inspectors found this to be well managed and effective.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Fishergate 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 38 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 202 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	30	79	8	21	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	28	74	8	21	1	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	22	58	16	42	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	20	53	17	45	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	27	71	10	26	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	61	14	37	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	53	17	45	1	3	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)	20	53	15	39	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	50	17	45	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	50	17	45	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	55	16	42	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	28	74	10	26	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	28	74	10	26	0	0	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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



20 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fishergate Primary School, York, YO10 4AP

Thank you very much for the very friendly greeting you gave the inspectors when we visited your school recently. We thoroughly enjoyed finding out about the work you do, and special thanks go to those who talked with us about the school. Fishergate is a good school and I understand fully why you enjoy it so much. Some pupils told inspectors how pleased they were that the school did not close during the recent snow when many others did. This shows an excellent attitude to school and something of which you can be very proud. It was lovely to see how well everyone gets on together and how welcome new pupils to the school are made. You behave well, show a strong sense of responsibility and develop into sensible and caring young people. Well done!

The progress you make is good because you are taught well and work hard. Many of you produce work that is above average for your age, particularly in mathematics and science. Your reading is good and you explain your thinking well during discussions but this does not always carry through into your writing. Quite often there are simple mistakes with punctuation and sentences that do not always read as well as they could. Your teachers have recognised these problems and I have made a few suggestions to help improve matters. You can play your part by trying your best to combine words in interesting ways that go beyond the ordinary and using what you have been taught about punctuation accurately and consistently.

While children get a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and enjoy a wide range of interesting activities, their move into Year 1 could be a little smoother in some respects and this is something we have asked the school to look into. Staff take good care of you and I know you appreciate all the help, support and guidance they provide. It was good to see how many of you take part in the after school activities. Many of these are helping you to stay fit and healthy and I was very impressed on hearing that you have started and organised some of them yourselves. Thank you once again for a very enjoyable two days and best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Keith Bardon

Lead inspector

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