

# Applegarth Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121308
<b>Local Authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	339914
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 March 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Lesley Clark

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	244
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Craig Milner
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Alison Goodwin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 December 2006
<b>School address</b>	Upwell Road Northallerton North Yorkshire DL7 8QF
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons taught by nine teachers. The inspector held meetings with the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body, staff, the learning mentor, parents and carers, and three groups of pupils, including school council and eco-council members. They observed the school's work and looked at extensive documentation, including paperwork and policies relating to safeguarding, pupils' work in English, mathematics and science, younger children's learning journals (detailed records of children's progress and development), and assessments of pupils' progress. Inspectors analysed 49 completed questionnaires from parents and carers as well as completed questionnaires from pupils and staff.

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

- the achievement of more-able pupils in mathematics and science, especially in Key Stage 2, and whether lessons are sufficiently challenging
- whether pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make better progress than other pupils and, if so, the reasons for this
- how well the curriculum extends and promotes pupils' learning and enjoyment
- the impact leadership and management have on pupils' outcomes and where this is most effective and why.

## Information about the school

Applegarth Primary is an average-size school in the centre of Northallerton. It is popular and numbers of pupils are increasing rapidly. Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, as is the number with a statement of special educational needs. The school employs a learning mentor to support the 20% of pupils who are vulnerable. Three per cent of pupils are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal is broadly average. The out-of-school club was not part of this inspection. The headteacher was appointed in September 2008 after a period as acting headteacher. The school holds the Healthy Schools Award, the Activemark and the Eco Schools Bronze Award. It has achieved the Financial Management in Schools Standard.

**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?**

**3**

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

**2**

### Main findings

Applegarth Primary gives pupils a satisfactory education, one that is improving rapidly and has significant strengths. The school is a friendly community with a strong sense of purpose. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress and have very enjoyable learning experiences. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress. They attain above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics because they are well taught. Standards in writing have improved across the school and are now above average by the end of Year 4. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, vulnerable pupils and the small proportion of pupils learning English as an additional language also make good progress because the school makes good provision for their individual needs. The curriculum is lively and interesting and enriches pupils' learning. Staff have had a great deal of training and support. As a result, teaching quality is consistently satisfactory and often better. These improvements have been brought about by effective and accurate self-evaluation. All the issues raised at the last inspection have been addressed and are now strengths. This illustrates well the ambition, drive and effectiveness of the senior leadership team and the school's good capacity to improve further.

Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils achieve well in Key Stage 1 and satisfactorily in Key Stage 2, where there is a legacy of underachievement, especially in mathematics and science. Attainment is below average in mathematics by the end of Year 6 because pupils have gaps in their knowledge. Only a small proportion of more-able pupils reach the higher Level 5 because the work has not challenged potentially higher-attaining pupils sufficiently until recently. Attainment now is broadly average in science and English. The curriculum gives pupils lots of opportunities to learn through scientific investigation and to use and apply their literacy skills in many different contexts. Standards are rising as a result. Although the behaviour of pupils with behavioural difficulties is managed very well, lack of engagement by a small minority of pupils slows pupils' progress in some lessons. This is because teachers' expectations are not always high enough.

Leaders, managers, staff and governors work well as a team and there is a real sense of energy, drive and purpose which is clearly having an impact. The systems to lead, manage and check the work of the school are very complicated and time-consuming. While this has been invaluable in terms of making staff more accountable for pupils' progress, it means that a lot of energy is spent on chasing details rather than looking at the bigger picture and extracting clear information and priorities.

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

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- Raise standards in mathematics in Key Stage 2, especially for more-able pupils, by:
  - introducing the successful system of mathematics challenges used in Key Stage 1 into Key stage 2
  - increasing the opportunities for older pupils to work independently and at a higher level
  - giving pupils opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills in many different contexts.
- Improve the behaviour of a small minority of pupils by raising teachers' expectations of them.
- Simplify the systems to check the work of the school so as to reduce the amount of paperwork and concentrate on the main priorities.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Pupils' rate of progress is improving securely and quickly. This is most evident in Key Stage 1 where lessons are practical and pupils have lots of opportunities to explore and make independent choices and decisions. For example, pupils tackled the creative mathematics challenge of the day with gusto, working out how to make multiple pop-up pictures while others organised themselves as a group to solve problems relating to pattern. Learning was successful because the activities were interesting, challenging and made pupils think. They read and write well for their age. Their current work confirms above average standards at the end of Year 2. This way of working is filtering up through the school. For example, in lower Key Stage 2, pupils drew on their thoughts, feelings and speeches from earlier role-play to write a letter from Anne of Cleves to Henry VIII. Writing standards in this age group are above average as a result. Older pupils' learning in mathematics lessons is restricted by the gaps they have, so they still have much basic ground to cover. This limits the learning of more-able pupils and contributes to some restlessness in lessons. While the majority of pupils are keen to learn, a small minority express their frustration which slows down their learning. Attainment, therefore, is closer to average, despite teachers' imaginative approach to problem solving which is designed to appeal to youngsters. An example of this is working out the relative costs of purchasing DVDs after subtracting percentage discounts.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, vulnerable pupils and new learners of English make good progress because they have well-focused extra support which helps them to overcome their difficulties. Those with behavioural difficulties begin to learn self-control because the school has good systems to help them recognise when they need 'time out' of lessons, for example, to cool off. Pupils are clearly keen to come to school because their attendance is above average. They take their responsibilities seriously. Most pupils behave responsibly. They say that there is a small amount of

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bullying but 'there is always someone to go to'. Pupils understand very clearly what constitutes a safe or unsafe situation and have good strategies for dealing with these. They have a good awareness of health and reel off a long list of extra-curricular activities, including cookery. The school and eco-councils have a clear voice in both the school and local communities. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength. They empathise with people in different communities both nationally and globally. Much of their time in school prepares pupils well for their future lives, but the level of basic skills, especially for older pupils, is holding some of them back at the moment.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
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>3</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>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Strengths in all lessons include the use of interactive up-to-date technology as a teaching aid, the use of teaching assistants and planning by year group teams. Teaching quality in Key Stage 1 is good because pupils direct much of their own learning and so more-able pupils forge ahead because tasks are open-ended and questioning extends their thinking. Marking across the school is effective because it celebrates success yet

<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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points out what pupils need to do to improve their work. Pupils are also fully involved in this process. This is having a significant impact on attainment in writing and is beginning to impact on pupils' attainment in mathematics. Some of the most effective teaching strategies to challenge more-able pupils and to give them opportunities to learn independently have yet to be fully implemented across the school, especially in mathematics. While all teachers set suitable tasks for average- and lower-attaining pupils, tasks for the more-able or upper-average Key Stage 2 pupils do not always challenge them or require them to work things out for themselves. While teachers manage extreme behaviours very well, their tolerance for low-level disruption means that some lessons lose pace.

The curriculum is well planned and links subjects creatively together to increase pupils' motivation and enjoyment. The main impact is seen in pupils' improving attainment in science where they record their practical and collaborative investigations in 'big books' and come to their own conclusions. In addition, the 'big books' which pupils produce based on citizenship show a good grasp of global communities, issues of equality, race and other issues such as conflict and its consequences together with poverty and its effects. In this way, the curriculum adds a further dimension to the good care, support and guidance that all pupils receive. Strategies to help individual pupils manage their behaviour are having an appreciable impact because vulnerable pupils and those with behavioural difficulties receive high quality support from the learning mentor. Clearly targeted support for these groups of learners and for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities enable them to make good progress.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</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?**

Senior leaders have focused their energies on raising standards from the Early Years Foundation Stage upwards. This strategy is successful. Provision is improving across the school; standards are rising quickly with attainment now above average in Key Stage 1 and in English in lower Key Stage 2. Stringent monitoring of teaching and expert guidance on how to make lessons and assessment more effective, have brought about these improvements. Senior leaders have identified raising attainment in mathematics in Key Stage 2 as the next step, but this is at an early stage. Staff morale is high and lessons are effective because staff plan together and work well as a team.

The school has useful information about the precise groups of pupils it serves and

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makes good provision for individual needs. As a result, gaps in attainment between different groups of pupils are closing. The school is a friendly community, but the behaviour of a small minority of pupils occasionally affects other pupils' equality of opportunity. The school tackles discrimination and promotes community cohesion well. The impact of its work is felt strongly within the school as pupils from different backgrounds get on well with each other. The school's safeguarding procedures and policies are very thorough. The governing body is fully involved in ensuring safeguarding practices are effective, understood by all and meet requirements. The measures to ensure child protection and safety are good. Procedures are constantly updated to maintain good practice. The views of parents, carers and pupils are taken regularly into account and so they have confidence in the school. Partnerships with parents and carers and external providers successfully extend pupils' learning and development.

*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>3</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>3</b>

### **Early Years Foundation Stage**

From broadly average starting points, children make good gains in their learning during the course of the Reception Year. By the start of Year 1, most are working within expected levels and a growing number exceed expectations. This is because the children largely lead their own learning. Activities both indoors and outside spark their curiosity and give them the chance to work things out for themselves. The outdoor provision is especially good because it presents children with real problems to solve. This develops their reasoning skills and creativity very well indeed. For example, the children created a ship out of wooden blocks and a sea out of dark blue material next to the large sand pit. They drew a treasure map, dug in the sand to find it and then drew and cut out paper



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fish which they attached to the 'sea' with pegs. Elsewhere children worked out how to build a tepee by balancing long sticks after they discovered they could not dig a large enough hole for them to stand upright. Staff question well and take careful note of what children say and do. This helps them to plan the next day's activities. They collate observations of children's learning and development in 'learning journals'. Because these are in date order some areas of learning, such as problem solving, reasoning and numeracy, have more observations than others because there is no easy way to check that observations cover all areas of learning equally well. Children are well cared for and so they work and play happily together. The setting is well led and managed.

*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

Parents and carers have positive views and are pleased with their children's progress. A very small minority raised concerns about behaviour, the way in which the school is led and managed and the extent to which their views are taken into account. The inspection team shares the concerns about behaviour, but judges the school to be well led and managed. Parents and carers receive a lot of information about their children's progress and their views are requested through questionnaires, as well as informally. Parents and carers are welcomed in school.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Applegarth 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 49 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 244 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	41	66	17	27	3	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	44	71	17	27	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	28	45	28	45	6	10	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	50	22	35	5	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	40	65	16	26	4	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	33	53	25	40	4	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	34	55	23	37	3	5	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)	29	47	23	37	5	8	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	53	23	37	6	10	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	24	39	25	40	7	11	3	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	27	44	27	44	8	13	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	36	58	18	29	7	11	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	39	63	20	32	3	5	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.**



24 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Applegarth Primary School, Northallerton, DL7 8QF

Thank you for your friendly welcome and for showing my colleagues and me your work. We agree with you that your school is changing rapidly. Your school gives you a satisfactory education. This means that it has many good features, but there are some things which need improving, especially for older pupils. The best things about your school are the interesting curriculum, the good progress that pupils in the Year 1/2 classes make, the exciting learning in the Reception/Year 1 classes and some of the writing you do. I think the 'big books' you make are a great way of putting all your ideas together. Those of you who find learning difficult and who find it hard to behave also make good progress because adults give you lots of support. You are good at checking your own work and making it better. Some of you in Years 3 to 6 find mathematics a bit of a struggle. This is what I have asked your school to do next to help you all make further progress:

- help you to fill the gaps in your mathematical knowledge. I want teachers to give those of you who find learning easier than most, more opportunities to work things out for yourselves. I also want you to have more times to use your numeracy skills in other subjects
- some older pupils are restless in lessons and this slows down the learning of others. I want you to listen carefully all the time and try your best. I have also asked teachers to make sure that they set you work which makes you think
- your headteacher and teachers work very hard but they have so many files and so much paperwork that it takes them a long time to sort out information. So I have asked them to simplify this.

I hope you enjoy these new challenges. Perhaps you will set each other some mathematical challenges too!

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Lesley Clark

Lead Inspector

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