

Castleton Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121376
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	339926
Inspection dates	25–26 November 2009
Reporting inspector	John Foster

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	31
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Delia Liddle
Headteacher	Mrs Jane Douglass
Date of previous school inspection	0 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector visited five lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. He observed the school's work and looked at the school's development plan, the governing body's minutes, the headteacher's records of monitoring teaching and learning and pupils' records. Analysis was made of the 17 questionnaires returned from parents and carers.

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

- the accuracy of the school's evaluation of provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the school's evaluation of care, guidance and support and the curriculum as outstanding and how this relates to the progress made by pupils
- the school's arrangements for safeguarding
- the potential differences in progress made by different groups of pupils.

Information about the school

This very small primary school serves a rural area situated in the North Yorkshire Moors National Park. Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage at the age of four in the Reception class. All pupils are of White British heritage with English as their first language. Because of the small number of pupils, data has to be treated with care as each pupil represents about 3% of the school's population. Within these parameters, the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. The percentage with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The school holds the Basic Skills 2 Award, the Healthy Schools Award, the Inclusion Quality Mark 4 and the Activemark Award.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is an outstanding school with many strengths and few weaknesses. The headteacher works alongside governors, staff, and parents and carers to improve on the many excellent judgements identified in the previous report. The leadership of the headteacher and governors is outstanding.

Entering the Reception class with widely varying attainment, children are settled well into school alongside pupils in Key Stage 1. Overall, their attainment is about what is expected for their age. The good, and at times outstanding, teaching they receive helps them to make outstanding progress. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have made outstanding progress overall so that they attain above average standards. The very few pupils in each cohort mean that data available has to be treated cautiously when judging pupils' attainment and achievement. Over the past three years, however, it is clear that significant improvement has been made in the levels of progress and that attainment has risen significantly year by year. The 2009 unvalidated data show that the Year 6 pupils who sat the tests in 2009 all made better than average progress.

Of lessons seen, none were less than good and a significant proportion were outstanding. This, alongside pupils' excellent attitudes to their work, allows for outstanding learning in lessons by all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils maintain high levels of concentration throughout lessons and apply themselves conscientiously to their work. At its best, teaching allows pupils to participate in lively activities and learn extremely well through the experiences they are given. The curriculum is outstanding. Carefully planned, it enhances pupils' learning well. In addition to the expected areas, the school uses the environment very well to help pupils develop their skills. The levels of care provided by the school are excellent. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They relate exceptionally well to each other, and many opportunities are provided for them to mix with pupils from other schools.

The headteacher and staff share a positive vision for moving the school forward at a fast pace leading to the best education possible for their pupils. New members of staff have taken on board their subject responsibilities enthusiastically. As yet, however, they have had limited opportunities to participate in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects. The school uses partnerships excellently in promoting learning, particularly with other schools in the locality. Community cohesion is good. Because the school is led and managed so well, the excellent support from staff, parents and carers, and the many outstanding features identified, place the school in an excellent position to maintain its current high quality of provision and improve further.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the work of subject leaders in monitoring teaching and learning by:
 - arranging a programme for them to observe the teaching of their subjects
 - providing support to enable them to make accurate judgements on the quality of teaching and learning
 - enabling them to undertake joint observations with colleagues to establish conformity in judgements.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Over the past two years, since the appointment of the headteacher, achievement and attainment have improved significantly. Because teachers have high expectations of them, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, work with increasing levels of concentration as they move through the school. Pupils willingly take responsibility for their work and discuss it readily with their teachers. In a Key Stage 1 science lesson about electricity, for example, pupils set out on their task enthusiastically, discussing with each other how they were to complete it. They used appropriate language for what they were doing and most in the group completed the challenging task independently. Though a large percentage of pupils attained high scores in the 2009 national tests at the end of Year 6, the school's and the national data, show that pupils' attainment overall is currently above average and rising. Pupils' achievement has accelerated and their learning is now outstanding. The outstanding achievement is evident across each key stage for all groups of pupils; pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make equally good progress to that of other groups of pupils.

Pupils say that they feel totally safe in school and this is shown well in their work and play. Behaviour, because of the staff's high expectations and the pupils' attitudes to learning, is exemplary. Very occasionally younger pupils call out in class, but the staff deal with this in a positive and effective way. Pupils are very aware of how to live healthy lives, and they are very well informed of potential dangers such as those of drug and alcohol abuse. They take regular exercise in school and many maintain this outside school time. Pupils join with pupils from other schools in many sporting activities, such as football, netball and cross-country running. In recognition of their knowledge about healthy eating, they have a say in what is provided for them as snacks and at lunchtimes.

Many opportunities are provided for pupils to be involved in their community. Within the school community the school council is elected by the pupils themselves and has a positive effect on what is happening in the school. Pupils have been involved in the development of the school site. They organise many fundraising activities for local, national and international charities. Pupils are very active in the wider community. They enjoy close links with the local churches, taking part in festivals, helping to run village events and inviting the community to school events. While attendance is above average,

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the school maintains a careful watch on pupils' absences and deals with these effectively. Pupils enjoy numerous opportunities to develop their spiritual understanding. They have an excellent understanding of right and wrong and they maintain this in their relationships with other children. At lunchtimes the older pupils take responsibility for the younger ones, serving them as a family. Extending beyond the school, pupils' social skills are extremely well developed and this together with their good basic skills prepares them exceptionally well for their future lives. The school has developed excellent links with many schools in the Esk Valley and the schools collaborate well in many activities. These include sporting and musical activities and the school is rightly proud of having instigated a samba band, where pupils from neighbouring schools join together to make music.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is consistently good or better, allowing pupils to make good or better progress in their lessons. The major reason for this the wide range of learning opportunities available for pupils. Where teaching is at its best, meticulous planning

¹ 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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identifies what pupils are to learn and how this is to be accomplished. For example, in a Key Stage 1 science lesson, the teacher checked on pupils' previous knowledge about electricity before setting them a task to light one bulb. Pupils' interest was then captivated when they used two bulbs to become the eyes of a robot. Where teaching is less effective, the work planned for individuals across the wide age range in each class occasionally does not match all pupils' needs. Teachers' assessments are very largely accurate, giving them clear knowledge about what each pupil knows and what individuals need to do to improve. This information is shared with pupils through discussion, thus helping them to know what they have to do to make their work better. The curriculum is planned very well to ensure that all pupils receive an outstanding education. In order to ensure that there is full coverage of national requirements, a two-year plan has been devised enabling teachers to prepare for pupils' learning over this period. The curriculum is supported excellently through a range of visits and visitors, and through the close links established with other schools. Pupils are given the chance to learn to play a musical instrument, and the instruments offered range from recorders and guitars, to brass and reed instruments. Visits and visitors are used well to enhance the curriculum. The links to other primary schools are used very well when, for example, three schools join together to take pupils on residential visits to encompass outdoor pursuits. The extensive school grounds are used excellently to support learning. Pupils take part in gardening work and the different areas within the grounds are used well for play. The school has devised plans to develop pupils' understanding of the environment. While at an early stage of development, pupils talk eagerly about what they are to do in the future. They know the process for the school to gain Eco-Schools status and are working hard with the staff to achieve this.

The care provided for pupils is exemplary. Pupils are confident in the staff and relationships throughout the school are excellent. Pupils say that they feel secure in school and identify little to improve it. As a boy in Year 1 said, 'I just love everything about the school.' Arrangements for child protection are fully in place and regular risk assessments are carried out on the premises and for activities undertaken. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are cared for and supported very well. Effective arrangements exist for pupils moving to secondary education. For example, during inspection the Year 6 pupils attended a day at the receiving secondary school where they enjoyed activities in science, and information and communication technology.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

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How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's inspirational leadership is shared by staff and governors and they work unceasingly together to give pupils a high quality education. The newly developed mezzanine area, though not yet fully operational, is the result of the headteacher's vision. It will provide much needed space for the library and computer suite, in addition to being available for community use. This is a community school in all senses.

Monitoring of the school's performance is accurate and the evaluation of its performance closely matches inspection findings. All monitoring of teaching and learning has been by the headteacher since her appointment, but the newly appointed subject leaders are set to begin monitoring their subjects in the near future. This is a fully inclusive school in all senses. The staff work unceasingly to ensure that all pupils are involved in all activities and those experiencing difficulties in learning are given good support.

The governors have a wealth of expertise and experience and use this very well to support the school. They are fully aware of what the school is good at and where improvements can be made because they visit the school regularly. They are involved in planning for the future from the early stages and use their knowledge of the school's development plan well when monitoring and evaluating its performance.

The school enjoys excellent relationships with parents and carers. They are involved well in their children's education and know that the staff are always available should they wish to discuss any concerns. The partnerships the school has established help to promote learning excellently. The many local schools of similar size to Castleton, that the school has developed links with, work extremely well together to support each other in providing for pupils. Links to schools beyond the immediate area help pupils to appreciate the rich cultural diversity to be found in Britain. For example, close links with a school attended by pupils from different ethnic groups, in a nearby town, have resulted in the pupils visiting each other's schools.

Arrangements for promoting community cohesion are good. Excellent work with the local community is a feature of the school and there are good links nationally. Global links, however, are not as well established, though plans are in place to develop these when the new computer suite is fully operational. The school's safeguarding arrangements are exemplary.

The school gives excellent value for money because the high-quality education provided is the result of excellent leadership and outstanding provision for its pupils.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1

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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	1
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	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

The very few children in the Early Years Foundation Stage receive an excellent start to their school life. Though they are in a class with older pupils from Key Stage 1, the learning activities planned for them are appropriate to their age and stage of development. They are cared for exceptionally well and all children are very well supported in learning because of the excellent adult-to-child ratio found in the school. While children's attainment varies greatly when they start in Reception, overall it is about what is expected for children of their age. The wide range of activities and opportunities to work alongside older pupils help their development, particularly their speaking and listening skills and their social development.

The children enjoy a wide range of experiences, both inside and outdoors. The small play area is equipped well for the small number of children in Early Years Foundation Stage. Leadership and management are excellent. Children's work is assessed accurately and excellent individual records of their progress have been developed.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers overwhelmingly support the school. They are happy with what it provides for their children and the support it gives them. Of the responses to the questionnaire, there was only one with negative views, while most responded with strong support. The few negative responses do not reflect inspection findings.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Castleton Community 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 17 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 31 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	25	83	3	10	2	7	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	25	83	5	17	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	22	73	8	27	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	60	12	40	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	25	83	5	17	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	60	12	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	73	8	27	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)	21	70	8	27	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	80	6	20	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	83	3	10	1	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	77	5	17	2	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	25	83	4	13	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	25	83	4	13	1	3	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.



30 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Castleton Community Primary School, Whitby, YO21 2DA

Thank you very much for the welcome you gave me when I came to inspect your school recently. I would like to thank you for the ways you helped me with my work and to tell you what I found out about your school.

Your teachers and other staff care for you very well and work extremely hard to make sure that you have the best education they can give you. They plan exciting lessons and you, in your turn, work hard to please them. As a result, you make excellent progress. Your excellent behaviour helps you to maintain this outstanding progress. Your headteacher does an excellent job and she works hard alongside the other staff and governors to make your school lives enjoyable. The new building development in the main part of the school is superb, and when it is finally completed it will give you a wonderful computer suite and library.

Because the staff has developed good links with other schools, you are able to meet children from other towns and villages to share such activities as sport and music.

In order to make the school even better, I have asked the headteacher, governors and staff to:

- keep a careful check that you are always taught well in every subject.

You can play your part by continuing to behave well and working hard at all times.

Yours faithfully

John Foster

Lead Inspector

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