

Sherburn In Elmet, Athelstan Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121461
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	339945
Inspection dates	16–17 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Derek Pattinson

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Richard Worlock
Headteacher	Miss Karen O'Donnell
Date of previous school inspection	7 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons, and held meetings with the chair of governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at, among other documentation, the school's development plan, the latest School Improvement Partner's annual report to governors, the most recent national and school data on attainment and progress, the latest attendance figures and a sample of pupils' books from Years 2, 4 and 6 in English, mathematics and science. Documentation on safeguarding was also scrutinised. In addition, 53 parental questionnaires were analysed, along with questionnaires returned by staff and most pupils from Key Stage 2.

- how well pupils are doing and how the school is seeking to raise standards
- how effective teaching is and whether and to what extent any weaknesses in its quality are limiting pupils' progress
- how well issues from the last inspection have been addressed
- how effective new and established leaders and managers are in driving forward school improvements
- how accurately the school evaluates all aspects of its work.

Information about the school

Athelstan is a smaller than average community school. Its intake comes from across the local, mainly residential, area and from further afield. Almost all pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average, but is steadily rising. There are no pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language. An average proportion of pupils has special educational needs and/or disabilities. Early Years Foundation Stage provision consists of a Foundation 1 class (Nursery) and a Foundation 2 class (Reception).

The school has achieved the Healthy Schools, Arts Mark Gold and Activemark Awards since the last inspection. It was awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark for the second time in 2008.

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a satisfactory and steadily improving school. A particular strength is the outstanding care, guidance and support it provides for its pupils, which is reflected in its excellent safeguarding arrangements and in some good outcomes for pupils. For example, pupils behave well, feel safe and know very well how to lead a healthy lifestyle. Inspectors agree with a typical parental comment that 'staff put a great deal of effort into making the school a happy place'. This helps to explain pupils' excellent attendance.

Children enter school with skills, knowledge and understanding that are broadly average for their age. All make at least satisfactory progress as they move through the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, in this key stage, assessment is not used as rigorously as it might be to meet children's individual needs fully. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 also progress satisfactorily overall. As a result, attainment in English, mathematics and science is usually broadly average by the time pupils leave Key Stage 2. However, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the effective support they receive. Overall, achievement is satisfactory and this is why the overall effectiveness of the school is judged satisfactory. The school is a cohesive community; the school council has a high profile and relationships in school are good. However, links to foster greater understanding of our multicultural world are in their early stages of development. Good spiritual, moral and social development underpins the school's work.

The headteacher and senior leaders have established a clear agenda to secure continued school improvement. The appropriate priorities to move the school forward are being rigorously pursued. Subject leaders of literacy and numeracy, have good knowledge of the areas they lead so that they know what works well and what needs doing. Governance is satisfactory overall. Governors are not yet involved enough in monitoring the schools' work and performance. This means that they are not in the best possible position to help secure further improvement. Teaching and learning and the way assessment is used to support learning are satisfactory. In some of the teaching observed there was a lack of balance between teachers' talking and pupils working independently and pace was not maintained throughout a lesson. However, the amount of good teaching is steadily increasing. This is because robust data analysis, frequent checks on how pupils are performing to identify rates of progress and the regular monitoring of the quality of teaching, are helping to identify where improvements are most needed.

The current capacity for sustained improvement is good. This is because:

- the school is well led
- improvement since the last inspection has been good
- senior leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses
- checks on pupils' progress are now rigorous and regular
- pupils have an increasing knowledge of what they must do to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure all pupils, including the most able, always make good progress as they move through the school by:
 - - focusing more sharply on pupils' learning when checking on the quality of teaching
 - - ensuring that enough time is provided in lessons for pupils to work independently
 - - keeping the pace of lessons brisk and providing consistently interesting activities to keep pupils well motivated
 - - always checking and building carefully on what pupils have learnt.
- Improve the governing body's monitoring and evaluation of the school's work so that it can more effectively contribute to school improvement.
- Improve provision and outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage by :
 - - establishing clear benchmarks for children when they start in the Nursery from which to measure their subsequent progress
 - - making better use of assessment information to plan focused activities
 - - providing consistently high quality, stimulating and 'language' rich areas to help boost learning
 - - using the outdoor area more widely to help children make best possible progress.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Most pupils enjoy lessons. They are keen to learn when lessons are interesting and challenge them, and they have time to work at their own rate. However, some lessons lack a brisk enough pace and pupils have to listen to the teacher for too long. As a result, time for them to work independently is limited, which slows progress. Achievement is satisfactory for most pupils as they move through the Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 1 to 6. It is not good overall because children learn at a faster rate in some classes than in others. However, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the carefully targeted and high quality support they receive. More able pupils do not always make the best possible progress because of a lack of challenge. The school has worked successfully to boost pupils' performance in writing. Attainment overall is broadly average, but the standards of the current Year 6 cohort are likely to be below average because the overall attainment of this year group is significantly lower.

Pupils are very well aware of the benefits of regular exercise and many walk to school.

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

They know a great deal about healthy eating. Pupils feel safe and know who to turn to if there is a problem. Pupils have a voice in school through the good work of the school council, with members taking their responsibilities very seriously. Support for charities helps them to develop their knowledge of citizenship. Pupils' good personal qualities, the way in which they apply their skills for different purposes and their developing understanding of how to improve, mean that they are increasingly well prepared for the next stage of their education. Events for older pupils, such as human rights workshops, contribute well to this effective preparation for the future. Pupils know right from wrong, know how to conduct themselves and constantly strive to achieve the school motto 'to be the best we can be'. Their punctuality and attendance are much better than is often the case.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory and improving throughout the school, with good practice increasing. This is a view supported by pupils who believe their teachers, 'are always helpful and sometimes funny'. The best lessons are typified by short, sharp and focused

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

activities which encourage the active participation of pupils and provide enough challenge for pupils of all abilities to make good progress. In some successful lessons, pupils say how well they understand so the teacher can help them where they are less sure, but these good practices are not consistently evident. Teachers' marking is usually used well to help pupils reach the next steps in their learning, as well as acknowledging what they have achieved. Pupils have targets, which gives them a good understanding of what they must do to improve. In all lessons, good relationships, effective control strategies and much use of encouragement and praise, ensure that there is a firm platform for learning to take place. However, sometimes teachers talk too much at the expense of pupils independently practising and applying their knowledge and skills. Sometimes not enough is expected of more able pupils.

The good curriculum helps pupils develop knowledge, skills and understanding and outstandingly promotes their healthy lifestyle. Teachers are now linking subjects together well to help make learning more relevant and to bring it to life. For example, an Egyptian Day resulted in good quality work in art and craft, which is celebrated in vibrant displays. There are many opportunities provided to stimulate pupils' interest and to enhance their learning. These include links with emergency services and visits, including residential and concerts. Visitors also promote aspects of pupils' learning, for example in writing, and help to prepare them well for the next stage of their education. A wide range of after-school clubs enrich pupils' experiences further.

The school has outstanding arrangements to support pupils who may be vulnerable, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are consistently well supported. The progress of all pupils is closely tracked so that they can be given extra help when needed. Transition arrangements for pupils entering and leaving the school and moving from one key stage and class to another are very good. As a result, pupils settle quickly into their new classes and routines. Good attendance and punctuality are promoted strongly and successfully.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The school is well led by the experienced headteacher, who strongly promotes a caring ethos in which all are valued. All staff have ownership of the school's vision and a strong sense of team spirit pervades the school. Senior leaders know the school's strengths and areas for development. As a result, their evaluation of the school's performance is very

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

accurate. Priorities for development are largely the right ones and are rigorously pursued. English and mathematics leaders are effective. Others, who are new to their roles, are developing their understanding of what works well and what needs doing. The monitoring of teaching is undertaken regularly and is helping teachers to improve. However, it does not yet focus sharply enough on pupils' learning to be of maximum benefit. The supportive governing body meets its statutory requirements, has clear plans for its further development, but is not at full capacity. It is not yet involved enough in monitoring the school's work or setting its direction.

Pupils benefit considerably from the close partnerships with parents. Relevant workshops for example, about cyber bullying, help to develop these strong links further. As a result, most parents are supportive of the school. Partnerships with a range of institutions and agencies, such as, with local schools, a residential home, and business organisations, make a good contribution to pupils' well-being. The school is fully inclusive, seeking always to treat its pupils fairly and equitably. However, not enough attention is given to ensuring the progress of the most able. Safeguarding arrangements are high profile and rigorous, with vigilance from all adults, ensuring that pupils are safe and secure. The school has very rigorous systems for risk assessment and health and safety and consistently reviews and updates its procedures. The school is a cohesive and harmonious community with local links being strong. However, links with the wider world, for example, to raise awareness of other cultures and lifestyles, are in their early stages of development. While some outcomes for pupils are good, the school's overall satisfactory effectiveness demonstrates satisfactory value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, which is soundly led and is steadily becoming more successful in laying down secure foundations for future learning. From broadly average starting points in Foundation 1, they leave Foundation 2 with skills broadly expected for children of their age. Children settle quickly in the friendly and supportive environment in which they are well looked after. As a result, children feel safe and a calm atmosphere prevails. Many parents comment about how happy their children are. Good opportunities, both inside and out, enable children to develop positive attitudes, improve their confidence and establish positive relationships with others. However, the outdoor area is not yet used widely enough to help children extend their learning and some areas are not 'language rich' or exciting enough to help boost children's language skills, stimulate imagination and enthuse them with a love of learning. The leadership team is aware of what needs to be done and is working hard to ensure improvements continue. As a result, there is increasing rigour, regularity and accuracy of assessments, recording and data analysis. Nevertheless, the team recognises that there is still more to do to ensure all pupils make good progress, through, for example, ensuring children's attainment is assessed accurately when they start school and that assessments and observations are used to plan activities that are consistently challenging.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Most parents are positive about the way their children are educated and nurtured in school. They believe that their child enjoys school because of the 'friendly and helpful' staff and the good support they receive. However, over 20% of parents made negative comments about aspects of the school's provision covering a range of issues including the expense of school trips, the need for more parents' evenings, the perceived lack of sport in school and the view that parents' suggestions were not always acted upon. Despite this, no pattern of negative comments emerged from the analysis of responses. Inspectors found no evidence to support these minority views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sherburn In Elmet, Athelstan 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 inspection team received 53 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 199 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	33	62	14	26	5	9	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	30	57	22	42	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	25	47	23	43	5	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	45	23	43	6	11	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	28	53	23	43	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	49	22	42	5	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	58	17	32	4	8	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)	24	45	22	42	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	55	18	34	5	9	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	32	25	47	7	13	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	34	28	53	5	9	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	24	45	23	43	4	8	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	57	17	32	5	9	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 pupils' 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.



18 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sherburn In Elmet, Athelstan Community Primary School, Selby, LS25 6AY

Thank you for being so friendly and talking to the inspectors when we visited your school recently to find out how well you are learning. We enjoyed being in your school, visiting your lessons and listening to what you had to say. Many of you told us how much you like your school. It is giving you a satisfactory education. There are also some good things about your school.

- We especially like the friendly atmosphere and the way in which staff take good care of you so that you feel safe and happy.
- Visits, visitors, clubs and exciting events help make your learning interesting.
- We saw that almost all of you work hard and behave very well.
- You know very well about the importance of staying healthy and keeping safe.
- We are pleased that so many of you come to school often and arrive on time.
- You go to an improving school which is well led by your headteacher.

I have asked your headteacher and staff to do three things to make your school even better.

- Your teachers should make sure that you always make good progress.
- The governors of the school should check as often as they can on how the school is doing so that they know as much as possible about what is going on.
- For the children in Early Years Foundation Stage to learn more outside and for their teachers to record how well they get on and use this to plan activities which help them to learn even better.

Thank you for being so helpful when we inspected your school. I hope that you will continue to work hard so that your school becomes a good school in the near future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Derek Pattinson

Lead inspector

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