

Sand Hutton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121513
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	339960
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Robert Jones

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	66
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sarah Charters-Reid
Headteacher	Mrs Janet Wardell
Date of previous school inspection	21 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited six lessons, observed three teachers and held meetings with governors, staff, pupils and parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including policies, the school improvement plan, records of pupils' progress and child protection records. The inspection team received and analysed 24 questionnaires from parents and carers as well as a number of questionnaires completed by pupils and staff.

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

- the progress Key Stage 2 pupils make in mathematics and science
- how pupils are helped to understand cultures other than their own
- the accuracy of self-evaluation and improvement planning across the school
- the progress children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average primary school serving the rural population to the north east of York. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and none speak English as an additional language. More pupils than average have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has achieved Healthy Schools status and holds various awards, including the Basic Skills Qualitymark and the Activemark. The school is part of a soft federation with another primary school in a neighbouring village.

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 school. It is improving significantly in key areas. These strengths are aptly summarised by one parent's comments: 'The pastoral care is wonderful. The rich curriculum is impressive for such a small school.' Pupils too speak highly of the school, commenting on the 'very caring adults', and the numerous opportunities to take part in sports which give them an outstanding awareness of how to lead fit, healthy lifestyles.

Achievement is satisfactory overall. Pupils' attainment varies from year to year, but is generally average. Pupils make satisfactory progress from their starting points, although progress in lessons is mostly good due to emerging strengths in teaching and the curriculum. The rate of progress pupils make over time varies between year groups and between subjects. The rate of pupils' progress in mathematics has been slower than in English or science.

The quality of teaching has improved recently and is now good although it is too soon for the impact of this good teaching to be evident in data that measures pupils' progress over longer periods of time. Literacy is particularly well taught in Key Stage 2. The quality of assessment although inconsistent across the school, is improving. In 2009 attainment in science was low. Over the past year the school has been concentrating its efforts within the curriculum to develop science skills and understanding. This has included many school visits and visitors to the school to explore science topics with pupils. This has had dramatic results in raising attainment in science, which is now high.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress overall. Dedicated staff make regular assessments of children's skills, although the information they gather is not summarised effectively enough to identify quickly what needs to be done to boost children's progress. This means that in some areas of learning children make satisfactory rather than good progress, particularly in developing communication, language and literacy skills and in mathematical development.

Self-evaluation is incisive, accurate and undertaken by all the school's leaders. Morale among staff is high. The quality of teaching is improving as a result of regular monitoring and good-quality training. In turn this is leading to recent improvements in progress and to rising standards, which is most apparent in science. This illustrates well the school's good capacity to sustain its improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:

- ensuring that the best opportunities are made to develop communication, language and literacy as children are learning and playing throughout the day
- simplifying the methods used to summarise the assessments that are made so that swift action can be taken if children do not make the progress expected.
- Improve the teaching and assessment of mathematics across the school by:
 - ensuring that pupils acquire basic calculating and number skills in Key Stage 1 so they are able to build on these skills in Key Stage 2 and make faster rates of progress
 - developing assessment in mathematics so pupils are left in no doubt what they need to do to improve.
- 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

A striking feature of lessons is how articulate and confident pupils are, particularly those in Years 5 and 6. Pupils spoke enthusiastically to inspectors about their interests, ranging from West African tribal hierarchies to ponies. Pupils are given ample opportunities to work in groups, write stories and discuss issues that interest them. This helps them develop into confident, mature young people. Pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) work is of impressive quality. The school's drive to improve literacy has been particularly successful with boys, whose standards of attainment in English are now above average.

Pupils in Year 6 have made satisfactory progress overall. Improved tracking of pupils' progress introduced relatively recently has enabled teachers to monitor progress more carefully. As a result, Year 5 are making good progress overall. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress due to the very close attention to their needs. Standards in mathematics overall have been below average for some years, but have improved and are now average. Some essential skills in calculation are not embedded effectively enough in Key Stage 1. This adversely affects pupils' rate of progress as they move into Key Stage 2. Ultimately this means they do not progress as quickly in mathematics as they do in English and science.

Pupils say they enjoy school a great deal, which is reflected in their above average attendance, and that bullying is very rare. They say there is always a caring adult to lend an ear should the need arise. They particularly relish the abundant opportunities to make positive contributions. They play various sports and many adopt very healthy lifestyles. A good appreciation of other faiths and cultures along with the very caring ethos of the school ensures that their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school makes best use of the rural setting, with fruit and vegetables from local farms being brought into the school regularly. Pupils' strong ICT skills along with their remarkable confidence and above average literacy, prepare them well for the next stage in their education.

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

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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers skilfully develop speaking and listening systematically across the curriculum. In one lesson pupils were enthralled as they took turns acting out the character of a book they had been reading, as the class asked them questions. Work is well matched to pupils' abilities and very good use is made of ICT to extend and enhance learning. The quality of assessment is improving but is not yet consistent in quality. Some, particularly in English, is excellent, but in mathematics it is more variable and does not always give pupils precise enough advice on how to improve.

The curriculum is varied and is customised well to meet the needs of pupils. The school identified a need to raise the profile of science. Consequently, visits were arranged to water works, streams and a suspension bridge. This brought science alive to pupils who then took a keener interest which was reflected in high standards of science. Many pupils take part in arts and music activities. During the inspection, all pupils in Year 5 and 6 were involved in staging a play in partnership with a professional theatre.

The school takes very good care of pupils, particularly those whose circumstances make them the most vulnerable. It works very successfully with outside agencies to support

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

pupils. A range of interventions are in place for those who need the most support and these are effective in securing good progress for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher leads with drive, passion and energy. She is supported by a dedicated team of staff. As a result of very good teamwork, the school's leaders have driven ambition and secured improvement well. Teachers now use data successfully to arrest any underachievement and target interventions. Middle leadership is effective, being particularly strong in literacy where the consistency in teaching and assessment is most evident.

The school promotes equal opportunities well and any discrimination is tackled decisively. Any gaps in achievement between boys and girls have been eliminated. The school adopts best practice in its arrangements for safeguarding. Staff are very regularly updated on child protection matters. The school has undertaken a thorough analysis of its position in relation to community cohesion. This is promoted well and is particularly strong in relation to the rural community, local farms and its link with the local church. A link with a contrasting city school gives pupils an insight into different socio-economic backgrounds. The school has close links with its federated partner school, with a shared extra-curricular programme and joint school visits that enrich pupils' opportunities for learning.

The school's leaders have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses as a result of good self-evaluation. Development plans are concise and well conceived in targeting remaining areas of weakness. Members of the governing body are supportive of the school, meeting all statutory requirements, but they do not have sufficient information on progress and standards to challenge the school adequately on these matters.

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

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

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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Caring adults ensure that the welfare of children is given the highest priority. In this safe, secure environment, children of different backgrounds play and learn together happily. For example, children enjoyed painting each other's feet and making footprints, learning about size and shape. They choose fresh fruit and drink water throughout the day but have to share toilet facilities with the main school, which are away from the Reception class area.

The outdoor area has recently undergone development and is now beginning to enhance children's learning experiences. Staff question children well which requires them to answer in full sentences. This is helping to develop their speaking skills. There are, however, missed opportunities to develop children's writing and reading skills. They make satisfactory progress in personal, social and emotional development but slower progress in their mathematical development, particularly skills in calculating.

Staff assess children's skills regularly and accurately, although the system used to track children's progress across the areas of learning is cumbersome and unpopular with staff. This has led to a lack of clarity in how best to support children's development and means that staff are unable to identify quickly what needs to be done to boost children's progress. Children's skills at the end of Reception therefore vary between areas of learning and between cohorts, but are generally below national expectations in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development.

Learning journey books provide examples of children's work and are helping to involve parents and carers more fully in their children's learning.

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

Parents and carers are entirely supportive of the school's work. Their very positive comments related to the caring ethos of the school, how much they appreciate the 'open door' policy of the headteacher, the good leadership, the positive behaviour of pupils and the interesting curriculum which makes learning relevant for pupils. Parents and carers also commented on how pleased they were with the progress their children are making.

Inspectors endorse the view that there are strengths in leadership, the curriculum and the care, guidance and support afforded to pupils. While these elements are indeed driving up standards and rates of progress, inspectors found that these improvements are yet to have an impact on the progress pupils make in mathematics and that pupils in the current Year 6 have overall made satisfactory rather than good progress from their starting points.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sand Hutton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received 24 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 66 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	79	5	21	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	18	75	6	25	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	14	58	9	38	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	16	67	7	29	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	15	63	8	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	71	6	25	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	71	6	25	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)	15	63	8	33	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	67	7	29	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	75	5	21	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	71	6	25	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	16	67	5	21	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	18	75	5	21	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



08 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sand Hutton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, York, YO41 1LB

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we came to inspect your school. This letter is to tell you what we found out. You go to a satisfactory school, but it is improving quickly and many things about it are good. One outstanding thing about your school is how it helps you to understand about being fit and healthy. You told us about the many sports activities you take part in and how you eat healthily. You said you felt very safe and secure and how there was always a caring adult to lend an ear. You told us about the interesting things you do in lessons and the many school visits that make learning fun for you. The school takes very good care of you, particularly those of you who need the most support. You make satisfactory progress overall, but the school is improving and those of you in Year 5 are making good progress. You make better progress in English and science than you do in mathematics. To make your school better, I have asked your headteacher and staff to do the following.

- Help children in the Reception classes to make better progress, especially in their language and communication.
- Improve teaching and the way your work is marked in mathematics so that you make good progress.

The school is improving quickly because of the dedication and hard work of your headteacher and staff. You can help them by asking if you don't understand the work you do in mathematics and being the delightful young people you are today. You are a credit to your school.

Yours sincerely

Robert Jones

Lead Inspector

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