

Elvington Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121531
Local Authority	York
Inspection number	339966
Inspection dates	28–29 April 2010
Reporting inspector	Paul Lowery HMI

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	139
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Andrea Lawson
Headteacher	Mrs Joanna Rawling
Date of previous school inspection	16 May 2007
School address	Dauby Lane Elvington York YO41 4HP
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. Seven lessons were observed; six teachers were seen; together with discussions with parents, groups of pupils, a governor, and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at policy documents, records of meetings, schemes of work and samples of pupils' work. The inspection took into account questionnaire responses from pupils and 60 parents and carers.

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

- whether pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those in Key Stage 1, are making at least good progress in their learning
- the effectiveness of the systems to monitor the quality of teaching and learning
- the quality of the provision and leadership within the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

This is a small rural primary school which draws the great majority of its pupils from the village of Elvington. Pupils are taught in mixed-aged classes, except during Year 6. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well below average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below average. There is daily provision for an on-site breakfast club. The school holds the Artsmark Silver and Healthy School Award.

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Elvington School is providing its pupils with a good education. It has a number of outstanding features. This is apparent on entering the school where at once there is a feeling of orderliness, warmth and a caring atmosphere. Pupils are cheerful, extremely polite, well behaved and report that they really enjoy being at school.

Children enter the school with skills and abilities typical for their age. Outstanding provision for children in Reception enables them to make rapid progress during the Early Years Foundation Stage. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is above average. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress. Attainment in reading, whilst still above average, is slightly below that of writing and mathematics. Learning is supported by pupils' positive attitudes. Good relationships between pupils and adults, combined with effective teaching are typical of the lessons observed. Teachers have a secure knowledge of their pupils' needs. However, assessment information is not used consistently to plan lessons and on occasions, the most able receive insufficient challenge. In a few classes, marking does not give precise enough guidance to pupils on how to improve their work. Careful thought has been given to developing the curriculum which ensures that pupils develop good core skills and gain an appreciation of the wider world. Pupils have been supported to develop an impressive understanding of how to establish a healthy lifestyle. Outstanding use is made of the school grounds, including the science garden, to stimulate pupils' interest in learning.

Attendance is high and effective support ensures that any period of absence is challenged at an early stage. Pupils are well cared for; older pupils, the 'helping hands', willingly take on responsibility for supporting younger children. Staff work effectively with external agencies to ensure good transition into, and from the school.

There is clear and effective leadership from the headteacher and her deputy headteacher. They ensure there is a strong drive and ambition, with the focus on continuing to raise standards, improving learning and progress and the growth of a vibrant learning environment. Senior staff and governors have a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further development. Formal systems to monitor pupils' progress are in place. However, the routine monitoring of groups, by race, disability or gender, to ensure equality of opportunity are not yet embedded across the school. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led, outcomes here are outstanding; it is a real strength of the school.

Strong leadership has helped the school to ensure good outcomes and thus give good value for money. There is good capacity for further development.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the use of assessment in order to support learning, by:
 - the consistent use of assessment information to plan lessons which meet the needs of all pupils, especially the most able
 - ensuring that marking consistently provides pupils with clear guidance on how they can improve their work.
- Improve race, disability and gender monitoring systems in order to ensure the effective promotion of equal opportunities, by:
 - the systematic review by groups, of pupils' levels of achievement
 - developing an analysis by group of pupils' well-being data.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The learning and progress made by pupils is steadily improving. Work seen during the inspection confirms that pupils are now making good progress. They demonstrate a commitment to learning and a real interest in their studies. Pupils are proud of the high quality of their work and keen to acknowledge others who demonstrate particular skills or high levels of attainment. In one outstanding art lesson, pupils made rapid progress in acquiring new skills, resulting in an immediate improvement to their sketching. Standards in reading, whilst still above average, are consistently below those in writing and numeracy. The school has rightly identified the need to raise reading levels amongst the most able. The small number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive effective additional support and make progress in line with their peers. Pupils behave considerately towards each other within class and around the school. They enjoy coming to school, which is reflected in high levels of attendance; one pupil was keen to say 'this school is great!' Pupils feel safe in school and welcome the support they receive from adults. An increasing majority choose a healthy school lunch and participation rates in additional sporting activities are high. Pupils have a strong moral code and their spiritual development is effectively supported by the extensive links with the church. However, the school recognises it needs to strengthen the curriculum to enhance pupils' cultural awareness.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
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?

The school correctly identifies that the very large majority of its teaching is good or better. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan stimulating activities. Staff have a good personal knowledge of pupils in this small school. However, whilst tracking data is effectively collected not all staff use it consistently to plan lessons. As a result, on occasions, the most able are insufficiently challenged and their learning slows. Good use is made of resources, including digital whiteboards, to motivate pupils. The effectiveness of marking varies, with some teachers giving insufficient guidance on how pupils can improve their work.

The curriculum is well matched to the needs and interests of pupils. An emphasis is placed on developing good writing and communication skills. Pupils develop a secure understanding of the wider world through a carefully planned programme of cross-curricular themes. Strong local partnerships result in a wide variety of visitors brought into school to enrich pupils' learning. During the inspection, this included a visiting group of Norwegian teachers, helping pupils' international understanding. Parents and local business have also assisted in developing the grounds, providing pupils with secure play facilities and outstanding opportunities for outside learning. In one science lesson, pupils were excited about using the well resourced science garden to research natural habitats. Pupils enjoy the broad range of additional clubs and are keen to participate in the well planned programme of local sporting competitions.

Pupils are valued and cared for as individuals; this gives them the confidence to flourish. The Breakfast Club provides good support for children of working parents. Child protection procedures are thorough and the care provided for more vulnerable pupils is

outstanding.

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?

Since the last inspection, leadership and management have been strengthened. All staff are now involved in development planning and as a result, there is a shared understanding of school priorities. Secure systems have been established to track pupils' academic progress. Detailed plans are in place to enhance community cohesion, and links with schools in contrasting communities in the United Kingdom and abroad are now strengthening pupils' appreciation of different cultures. Equality of opportunity is promoted well within the school; however, the monitoring of specific groups needs to become a part of the formal system for self-evaluation. Senior staff undertake a regular review of lessons and there is a clear understanding of what constitutes good and better teaching and learning. Consequently, the quality of teaching continues to improve. The governing body offers good support and is effective in holding leaders to account. Financial management is secure and budgets are linked to planning. The school has positive relationships with parents and carers and the local community. One parent commented, 'all my three children have been through the school and they have all had a great start in life'. However, systems to involve parents and carers in key decision-making are not yet in place. Effective partnerships, in particular with local schools, ensure the moderation of pupils' work and staff training is effectively delivered. There are good systems for safeguarding pupils, including robust procedures for appointing staff and assessing risk. Staff receive regular training and are clear about their role in child protection. Pupils get explicit guidance on the appropriate use of the new technology and demonstrate a secure understanding of how to keep safe whilst accessing the internet.

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	2

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

In this highly effective setting, where independence is encouraged, children make rapid progress supported by outstanding teaching. By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage all children have made good and some outstanding progress. Their knowledge and understanding of the world is a strength. The need to further develop children's skills in calculation and in their physical development have been quickly identified by the school and are being effectively addressed. Children clearly enjoy their learning; they are inquisitive and thrive on solving problems. They develop excellent relationships, appreciate what is expected of them and use the outside area with confidence. Effective systems of observation inform the exemplary planning. As a result, the lessons and activities are tailored to closely meet children's interests and needs. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is strong and all staff work well as a team. Whilst there are strong links with parents and carers, their involvement in the assessment of their child's progress is limited. The mixed-age provision with Year 1 is a strength and allows children to progress smoothly onto Key Stage 1 learning.

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	2

Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were positive about the education provided and felt that their child enjoyed school. This was also reflected in the generally positive written comments made by parents and carers. A few expressed concern about the mixed-age classes and the impact this may have on

their child's progress. Inspectors found no evidence that the mixed-age classes had a negative effect on pupils' learning. A very small minority of parents and carers expressed concern over a lack of communication between school and home. Inspectors found that whilst written communication with the home was extensive, there was less opportunity for parents and carers to be involved in a dialogue over the school's key decision making.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Elvington 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 inspection team received 60 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 139 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	37	62	20	33	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	36	60	24	40	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	21	35	39	65	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	53	23	38	4	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	36	60	22	37	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	50	25	42	3	5	2	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	52	28	47	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)	25	42	31	52	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	47	28	47	1	2	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	35	28	47	5	8	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	30	32	53	5	8	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	24	40	25	42	4	7	3	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	31	52	25	42	1	2	2	3

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 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 April 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Elvington Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, York, YO41 4HP

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and taking the time to show us your work and talk to us during our recent inspection. We judged your school to be providing you with a good education with several outstanding features, in particular, the education in Reception for the youngest children.

You told us through your questionnaires and in discussions how you feel safe in school and welcome the strong support and care you receive. Your relationships with adults and each other, and your attitudes towards learning, are excellent. Your attendance is high. You understand the importance of regular exercise and eating healthily. The teachers are working hard to make sure you are taught well and make the lessons interesting. You are making good progress and your levels of attainment are high. Well done!

We found that your school is well led and that there is a real commitment to help you all to attain well. In order to make your school even better we have asked that:

- teachers make more use of assessment information to plan your lessons
- there is a closer check kept on ensuring you all have an equal chance to do well and get involved in what the school has to offer.

We are sure you will continue to work hard. Good luck in your future studies.

Yours sincerely

Paul Lowery

Her Majesty's Inspector

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