

Ripon Cathedral Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121581
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	339974
Inspection dates	18–19 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Rajinder Harrison

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	269
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Loretta Williams
Headteacher	Mr Darren Dudman
Date of previous school inspection	20 September 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons and saw eight teachers. Meetings were held with governors, staff, parents, groups of pupils and the School Improvement Partner. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents, including school policies, the development plan, monitoring records, analyses of pupils' attainment and progress and reports from visits by the local authority. Inspectors analysed 122 questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

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

- the attainment of children on entry into the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the progress of pupils in all year groups, but in particular at Key Stage 1
- the effectiveness of leadership and management in monitoring pupils' achievement and driving school improvement.

Information about the school

This primary school is larger than average. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The school has an average proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The school has a Healthy Schools Award, the Activemark, Artsmark Gold, Leading Aspects Award and the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. It is a happy, friendly place where pupils feel very safe and are cared for well. Pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development contributes to their advanced understanding for their age of how to keep safe. Pupils attend regularly, form good relationships and work hard. A vibrant array of activities contributes significantly to pupils' enjoyment of school and to their personal development. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the community through their efforts to improve the environment, help others and take on responsibilities.

Achievement and enjoyment are satisfactory. Given the children's starting points, progress across the school is satisfactory. The rate of progress varies between classes. It is slower in Reception and Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2. When pupils leave at the end of Year 6, their attainment is broadly average. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to their classmates, but the more able pupils could do better.

Many lessons, particularly those of a practical nature, are interesting, lively and effective. Others are too teacher-led and do not build successfully on pupils' previous learning. These lessons often start late and teaching lacks precision and purpose. Pupils of all abilities frequently complete the same tasks and the more able pupils are not challenged sufficiently. While enrichment activities are exciting and popular, the overall curriculum is satisfactory, as it does not extend pupils' basic skills effectively enough. Good links with the community help pupils feel secure within their local area, and they have good opportunities to explore the diverse cultures and faiths represented in this country and globally. Care arrangements are good. Although the quality of target setting is patchy, pupils receive good feedback to help them improve their work.

Leaders and managers aim to provide the best education possible but are not entirely successful because the monitoring of teaching and learning lacks rigour. As a result, the school's self-evaluation is rather optimistic. Although pupils' attainment is no better than at the time of the last inspection there are currently signs of improvement in Key Stage 2. In light of this, leaders demonstrate a satisfactory capacity to secure improvement in future.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and achievement, especially at Reception and Key Stage 1 by:
 - ensuring that teaching is more precisely planned to help pupils build successfully on what they can already do in literacy and numeracy

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- ensuring that teachers plan activities to challenge and engage all pupils, particularly the more able
- ensuring that teachers use assessment information to match work to pupils' needs more accurately.
- Increase the level of challenge in the curriculum by:
 - putting more emphasis on developing pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills
- Ensure that leaders and managers take more effective action to improve outcomes for pupils by:
 - monitoring teaching and learning rigorously to ensure they are consistently good
 - keeping a check on lessons to ensure that pupils of all abilities achieve well
 - tracking pupils' progress more rigorously and holding teachers to account for the progress of all pupils in their classes.
- 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**

Pupils enjoy learning and try hard in their work. They behave well, listen attentively, and work cooperatively with others. Most contribute to good effect in class discussions and ask and answer questions confidently. Occasionally, when they have to listen for too long, a few become passive and inattentive. In the more effective lessons, teachers generate enthusiasm by allowing pupils time to develop their ideas. For example, pupils enjoyed lively interactions in Spanish and delighted in exploring the school grounds as they identified seasonal changes in the vegetation and mini beast habitats. However, pupils' overall achievement is no better than satisfactory as not all lessons are as engaging.

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Children start Nursery with the skills expected at this age. They achieve well in the Nursery and attain as might be expected in all the areas of learning for their age by the time they start in Reception. Progress in the Reception class slows and by the end of it, attainment is a little below average, particularly in children's literacy and numeracy. This steady rate of progress continues through Years 1 and 2, resulting in pupils' attaining slightly below average standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2. Progress accelerates in Key Stage 2, but is uneven because teaching, while satisfactory overall, is inconsistent. The most rapid progress tends to be in Years 5 and 6 where teaching is generally good. Current Year 6 pupils have made overall satisfactory progress since they started in the Nursery. Their attainment is broadly average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils who need help with their learning receive satisfactory support to participate fully in all activities but the more able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently. The pupils' readiness for the next stage of their education is satisfactory.

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Pupils are confident they can go to staff if problems arise and say they feel very well looked after. 'We can tell teachers anything and know they will listen', is a typical comment from pupils. They understand well how to stay fit and healthy. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the community. Monitors and school parliament members take their responsibilities seriously, as they help around the school and decide, for example, how to improve facilities for pupils. Pupils understand the importance of caring for the environment and recycling; they grow vegetables, care for the chickens and clear up litter, 'so we keep the world tidy for others to enjoy'. They are very thoughtful and kind. They participate in numerous church and community activities, for example, visiting the elderly, supporting local projects, organising coffee mornings and fund raising events to help others.

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	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

In the good lessons, teachers plan activities that hold pupils' interest and encourage them to think about their learning. Brisk question and answer sessions keep pupils on their toes and competitive elements, such as timed targets in mathematics, make

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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learning fun. Teaching assistants work with individuals or groups of pupils closely to ensure they all participate confidently and achieve successfully. Pupils have good opportunities to share their ideas, so they are more confident in their answers. Where teaching is satisfactory, teachers use some of these strategies, but tend to direct learning too much and for too long. As a result, pupils have too little time for discussion and questioning and make slower progress. In weaker lessons, little account is taken of pupils' prior attainment. Consequently, all pupils complete the same task rather than having work that challenges them appropriately. These lessons lack clarity and precision as to what pupils are to learn and frequent time slippage reduces pace and progress. Some marking is good in showing pupils what they have done well but the practice is inconsistent.

While the overall curriculum ensures that pupils achieve satisfactorily, more attention is devoted to developing pupils' confidence and interest in investigative and practical skills than in literacy and numeracy. This is particularly so in Key Stage 1, where pupils attain below average standards because these skills are not developed firmly enough to increase achievement. Themes linking work across subjects are developing well and enrichment activities offer pupils a wide range of experiences in school and through visits and visitors, such as artists and authors. Pupils particularly enjoy the retreats that promote their outstanding spiritual development. A very good programme of personal, social and health education ensures pupils develop a very good understanding of how to stay safe and the dangers of drug abuse.

Pastoral care arrangements are very good. Parents and carers are generally happy with the school and say that staff respond effectively when individuals need help. The learning mentor provides valuable and sensitive support to pupils and their families where appropriate. Good partnerships with external agencies ensure, for example, that pupils with emotional needs receive effective support quickly.

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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, staff and governors promote a positive learning environment where pupils are generally happy and develop good personal skills. The premises and school grounds are very attractive, with good quality resources to support teaching and learning. The headteacher and subject leaders monitor teaching regularly, but this process does not focus sufficiently on learning and pupils' progress. The assessment

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systems to track pupils' progress do so accurately. Lower attaining pupils, including those with specific learning needs are supported effectively. However, the information is not examined closely enough to identify quickly any pupils who fall behind in meeting their targets in literacy and numeracy, in order to help them catch up successfully and raise achievement. As a result, the school addresses equality of opportunity satisfactorily although it pays good attention to tackling any issues of discrimination.

Staff have assessment information regarding the progress expected of each pupil in their classes. School leaders are not checking rigorously that these expectations are met and that teachers are held to account for pupils' progress. Current requirements for child protection are met fully. Safeguarding procedures are good, ensuring the safety and well-being of pupils. The school has embraced all the facets of community cohesion well and pupils have a good understanding of the diverse cultures and traditions of communities in Britain and other countries. It values the views of parents and carers and encourages their involvement in school life.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	3
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	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are happy at school because they are looked after well and feel valued. Most are confident learners and work collaboratively with others. Their behaviour is good and they settle quickly because they are supported well. Resources and facilities are good, giving children exciting opportunities to explore and learn independently. Children in the nursery were captivated by watching chicks and tadpoles grow and discussed their observations excitedly. Children who transfer from the Nursery to the Reception classes

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adjust quickly because staff share useful information in preparation for the move. Good relations between home and school benefit children, particularly those who are less confident. Children who need specific help are supported well. 'My child is really happy at school', is typical of parents' and carers' comments.

Teaching in the Nursery is well structured to help children build their knowledge and skills step by step and gain in confidence, particularly in literacy and numeracy which some find difficult. Careful assessments give staff the information they need to plan support for every child effectively so that by the time children enter the Reception class they achieve well in all the areas of learning. This momentum is not maintained in the Reception class because teaching is not structured as carefully.

Leadership and management along with provision are satisfactory. Staff plan a satisfactory balance of activities that children choose and those led by adults. Most children work well in adult-led sessions where teaching is generally satisfactory. Occasionally tasks lack purpose and do not help children build on what they already know and can do. A few struggle to maintain interest and attention because presentations are occasionally too long and the work is not matched accurately to their needs. Staff underestimate the ability of those children who could achieve more through increased challenge. This lack of challenge and insufficient checks to ensure children experience all the areas of learning regularly, results in overall progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage being only satisfactory. The school's assessment data shows children attain below average levels in literacy and numeracy at the end of the Reception year.

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 and carers support the school. A few made written comments indicating that they were generally happy with provision. They said their children were happy and the school took good care of them. The inspectors agree with these positive views.

A few parents and carers raised concerns about their children's progress and that the school does not always deal with bad behaviour effectively. Inspectors find that pupils make satisfactory progress overall but the progress is uneven through the school. They also find that pupils' behaviour is good and staff deal with inappropriate behaviour effectively and promptly.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ripon Cathedral Church of England 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 122 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 269 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	81	66	34	28	5	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	72	59	46	38	4	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	43	35	76	62	3	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	47	39	62	51	5	4	8	7
The teaching is good at this school	49	40	63	52	4	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	50	41	57	47	14	11	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	71	58	49	40	1	1	1	1
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)	60	49	54	44	4	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	48	39	63	52	7	6	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	32	26	66	54	17	14	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	42	34	64	52	10	8	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	56	46	52	43	3	2	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	63	52	48	39	9	7	1	1

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.



20 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ripon Cathedral Church of England Primary School, Ripon, HG4 1LT

Thank you for making us welcome when we visited your school and for being so friendly and polite. I am writing to tell you what we found out. You said that you enjoy school and that teachers help you if you have problems. You also said you like the trips you go on, especially the retreats where you do interesting activities. We were impressed with your good behaviour and how you help around the school. We were particularly impressed with how much you do to raise funds for charity, the way you visit the elderly and your support for local community projects to help Ripon become a better place to live in.

Overall, your school is satisfactory. You try hard and enjoy learning. You make satisfactory progress and the teachers' assessments show that you are working at broadly average standards when compared with pupils in other schools. You have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe. You understand well how to keep fit and healthy. You attend regularly because you say that learning is important. Staff take good care of you and you feel really safe at school. Your headteacher, staff and other school leaders work hard to make improvements because they know that some things could be better. While some aspects of your school are good and some are outstanding, the inspectors think that some important things could be better so we have asked the school to:

- help you do even better in your literacy and numeracy by making sure you have activities matched to your needs, especially in Reception and Key Stage 1, and by making sure that more able pupils are challenged sufficiently
- make sure that teachers spend enough time teaching literacy and numeracy well in every class
- make sure that the adults who manage your school do so really well and keep a close check on how well you all learn in every class.

These improvements need to happen as quickly as possible so that you do even better in your work. There are things you could do to help. For example, you could make sure you get to lessons on time and that you check you work carefully.

Thank you once again for helping the inspectors.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Rajinder Harrison

Lead inspector

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