

Thornaby-on-Tees Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111669
Local authority	Stockton-on-Tees
Inspection number	378335
Inspection dates	12–13 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Irene Cochrane

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	301
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Hilary Askin
Headteacher	Elaine Hughes-Narborough
Date of previous school inspection	21 May 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 15 lessons, taught by 13 teachers and held meetings with pupils, members of the governing body and staff. They observed pupils at work, and looked at the data the school has collected on pupils' progress, the safeguarding procedures, samples of pupils' books and records of the school's monitoring and review process. They also considered 97 questionnaires returned by parents and carers as well as analysing questionnaires from pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The impact of the curriculum on improving pupils' basic skills, particularly in mathematics and their personal development.
- The quality of teaching, particularly in the use of assessment to meet individual pupil need.
- The rigour by which leaders and managers at all levels monitor and evaluate the impact of initiatives on improving outcomes for all groups of pupils.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average-sized primary school. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average and most pupils are from White British heritages. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The school holds a number of awards, including the Activemark and Eco Silver School Award. Since the last inspection, the nursery and reception children have moved into a new purpose-built Early Years Foundation Stage unit which forms part of the main school building.

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

The school provides pupils with a satisfactory education. The care provided for pupils is a particular strength of the school, which is valued by parents and carers. Pupils enjoy the many opportunities to take responsibility and most say they enjoy coming to school. As one pupil said, 'Teachers work hard to help you understand'. The school's ethos promotes a sense of community and contributes well to pupils' personal development and good behaviour.

Children generally enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with a wide range of abilities which are broadly typical for their age. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall. Across the school rates of progress vary, with learning accelerating in Year 6 because of the sharply-focused support and interventions in place. As a result, during Year 6, attainment improves to above average. These outcomes represent satisfactory achievement.

Teaching is satisfactory and improving, as a result of regular monitoring by senior leaders. Lesson plans are based on pupils' prior learning and effective use is made of teaching assistants to support pupils' learning. However, there is inconsistency in the expectations of teachers to ensure that all pupils make good progress and in the use of assessment to reshape tasks in lessons. Insufficient use is made of the new well-defined target system the school has introduced to help pupils reach the next steps in their learning.

Strong partnerships with other agencies and good management systems ensure that those pupils who are potentially vulnerable due to their circumstances are identified accurately and action is taken to ensure their safety and well-being. The curriculum is enriched well by a wide range of visits and visitors to the school which contribute significantly to pupils' enjoyment of school and their personal development.

Leaders and members of the governing body understand the school's main areas for development and self-evaluation is broadly accurate. Action taken by the headteacher has been successful in accelerating progress in Year 6, and developing the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Effective partnership-working with a local school has led to improvements in developing the skills of senior leaders in their monitoring role and, although there has been some success, it has not yet resulted in securing good progress consistently across the school. For these reasons, the school has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Up to 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement further by strengthening teaching so that:
 - the proportion of good, challenging teaching is increased by raising teacher expectations.

- Improve the use of assessment by:
 - ensuring that effective use is made of informal assessment to reshape lessons so that pupils make good progress
 - giving a higher profile to involving pupils in their use of individual targets so that they know exactly what they have to do to achieve the next steps in their learning.

- Ensure leaders at all levels contribute effectively to school self-evaluation and improvement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils' good behaviour in lessons contributes well to their learning. They listen carefully to their teachers and try to do their best. Pupils enjoy the opportunities they have to work with others and say that this contributes to their learning. When working in this way, pupils are keen to share their ideas and opinions and they show respect and courtesy to one another. Despite these positive aspects of learning, pupils' progress is satisfactory rather than good, because they do not consistently receive the advice they need to help them improve their work and teachers' expectations are not always high enough.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or learning disabilities make satisfactory and on occasions good progress because their needs are identified accurately and they receive the support they need to contribute fully in lessons.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and enjoy taking part in sport and after-school clubs. They say they feel safe and are confident that if they have a problem, there is an adult that they can go to for help. They know their views are taken into account, for example; in establishing the trim trail and wild life area in the school grounds. Pupils' application of their basic skills in literacy and numeracy across the school, and their developing awareness of cultures other than their own contribute to their satisfactory preparation for their next phase of their education.

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

How effective is the provision?

Established routines and good relationships contribute to good behaviour in lessons and a positive climate that is conducive to learning. Pupils enjoy the interesting activities that teachers plan with a key focus on pupil involvement through paired work and practical engagement. In the most effective lessons, teachers have high expectations and work builds well on previous learning. Informal assessment opportunities and effective questioning are used frequently throughout the lessons to inform pupils of the progress they have made and further extend their learning. As a result, good progress is made. However, these features are not embedded consistently in all lessons. Teachers ensure that pupils understand the task set for them but they provide insufficient information to assist pupils in evaluating and improving their work during lessons and do not refer to the well-defined targets pupils have to help them move to the next level in their work.

The curriculum is appropriately matched to pupils' learning needs and contributes to their personal development and well-being. A key focus on basic skills in mathematics and literacy skills is evident throughout school with opportunities for practical engagement. Focused intervention and additional support is generally having a positive impact on pupil outcomes for those involved. However, this approach is varied across the school and is more successful in upper Key Stage 2, where pupils make better progress. A wide range of well-planned visits and visitors to the school is appreciated by pupils and contribute to their enjoyment of school.

The school has a wide range of effective transition arrangements to ensure that children get off to a good start in the nursery and transfer smoothly to secondary school at the end of Year 6. Most parents and carers appreciate the high priority given by staff to keeping pupils safe, and as a result, the school is a welcoming and friendly place to be. Good care is taken to ensure that pupils are safe in and around school and their views are taken into account. They appreciate the new fencing and that there is an adult on hand to help, should the need arise. Pupils that are prone to

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

be vulnerable due to their circumstances are well-supported by the school’s tenacious approach in engaging multi-agency support.

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 has a clear vision for improvement and is increasingly supported by other senior leaders. The leadership team has been strengthened by a review of roles and responsibilities. Partnership-working with other professionals has increased the confidence of leaders to undertake a range of monitoring activities which are being used to support the school’s main priorities for improvement. The introduction of a new system for tracking pupils’ progress is used increasingly well by senior leaders, but the most effective practice has not been fully extended and embedded by all leaders and in all classes. It has assisted the school to set more challenging targets and to identify pupils at risk of underachievement more quickly, in order to plan appropriate support. This is having a positive effect of increasing attainment rapidly in Year 6, but is not used to ensure good progress across the school.

The governing body is very supportive of the school and understands the school’s strengths and main areas for development. The expertise and skills needed to monitor, evaluate and hold the school to account are recognised and beginning to be developed in all aspects of school life. Safeguarding procedures are in place and the school is effective in ensuring site security and integrating safe practices into the curriculum, for example, pupils’ awareness of Internet safety. Particular strengths lie in the recording systems for vulnerable pupils and the work the school does with multi-agencies to provide good care arrangements. Community cohesion is a developing area with some strong features in helping pupils understand about others less fortunate than them through fundraising and the work within the local community. However, links beyond the school and local community, although improving, are less well-developed. Positive action is taken to involve all pupils in lessons and the broader life of the school. The school now has more accurate information about the attainment of pupils so that those at risk of underperformance are identified; however, monitoring by leaders to ensure that all pupils make good progress is still at an early stage of development. Consequently, promoting equal opportunities is judged satisfactory.

These are the grades for the 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	3
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

The newly-built Early Years Foundation Stage unit runs smoothly because staff understand their roles and work well together as a team. Adults are caring and supportive and consequently, relationships between adults and children are good. Children are confident, understand school routines and can readily make choices from the wide range of activities provided. As a result, children are active, enthusiastic learners and enjoy learning through play. Adult-led activities impact positively on improving children's learning. Children have access to all the areas within the Early Years Foundation Stage unit but there are missed opportunities to follow children's interests and build on prior learning, particularly for the reception children.

Children's attainment on entry to nursery varies, but is broadly typical for their age with skills that are sometimes below in their language and communication skills. In recent years, the proportion of children identified with delays in their development of speech and communication skills has increased. Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is adjusted well to take account of these needs. Children make satisfactory progress overall in the Nursery and Reception classes but progress is stronger in their language and communication skills because of the daily support in sounds and letters acquisition. Their attainment is broadly average by the time they enter Year 1.

A regular focus on learning letters and sounds in the reception classes is having a positive impact on children's communication, language and literacy skills and progress is improving. Opportunities to explore and investigate outdoors are provided but the school is aware of the need to increase the flexibility available for children's choice to go outdoors and the time available. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation stage is swiftly improving as a result of continual self-evaluation of provision and close liaison and support from the headteacher. Welfare requirements are met.

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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

A small minority of parents and carers returned the questionnaires. The majority of those who responded to the questionnaire was positive about the work of the school and appreciates the way staff care and support their children to give them the best opportunities. Inspectors found that the school takes good care of its pupils. A small number of parents and carers expressed individual concerns; these were brought to the attention of the school and care was taken to maintain the confidentiality of the parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Thornaby-on-Tees 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 97 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 301 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	52	54	43	44	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	59	61	34	35	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	37	38	54	56	6	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	44	45	48	49	5	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	52	54	41	42	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	37	38	49	51	11	11	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	46	47	45	46	3	3	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)	34	35	52	54	3	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	37	38	53	55	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	32	50	52	6	6	3	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	32	49	51	12	12	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	36	37	51	53	3	3	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	51	53	40	41	3	3	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 and is consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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 up exactly to 100. Sixth-form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



14 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Thornaby-on-Tees Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Stockton-on-Tees, TS17 9DB

Thank you for being so helpful when we inspected your school. We enjoyed the time we spent with you and were pleased to see how well you behave and how keen you are to take on responsibility. You told us that you enjoy school and the interesting activities and visits your school plans for you. Your school is satisfactory. Adults care well for you and you told us this makes you feel safe. Your behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. We have asked your headteacher and the people that work with her, to do the following things to make your school even better:

- make sure that your teachers always expect the very best from you in lessons
- ensure that your teachers reshape your lessons when necessary to make sure you learn as well as you can
- make sure that you use your targets in your files more regularly so you know how well you are doing
- make sure that those who lead the school help you improve even further.

You can help by working as hard as you can and continuing to attend regularly. We hope that you continue to enjoy your learning and wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Irene Cochrane
Lead Inspector

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