

Riccall Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121457
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	292121
Inspection date	10 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Ralph Higgs

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	180
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Paul Brough Jones
Headteacher	Mrs Sue Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	8 July 2002
School address	Coppergate Riccall York North Yorkshire YO19 6PF
Telephone number	01757 248234
Fax number	01757 248575

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This small village school draws most of its pupils from the locality, although some travel from farther afield. Most pupils are from relatively advantaged homes and almost all are of White British heritage. The school is popular and its roll is increasing. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. Currently, no pupil has a statement of special educational need. After their Reception year, pupils are organised into mixed-age classes. The school holds a number of awards in recognition of its work, including an Activemark and Investors in People status. A new headteacher took up post in September 2004.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with several outstanding features. It provides good value for money. The school has a well articulated vision which informs all of its work. Pupils strive to realise the school's main aim which is to 'Be the best that we can be'. As a result, they learn a great deal and not just about their subjects. They learn confidently and are proud of their school. This is shown by their good achievement and by their outstanding personal development.

The attainment of children when they first enter school is broadly average, but the proportion that is above or below average varies from year to year. Children get off to a good start in the Reception class. They make good progress, no matter what their starting points, due to the good provision made in the Foundation Stage. Consequently, by the time they enter Year 1, they are mostly reaching, and some are exceeding, the standards expected for their age. Pupils continue to make good progress to reach standards which are above average overall by the end of Key Stage 1. This good level of progress is sustained across Key Stage 2. The slight dip in standards evident in the 2006 national test results has been resolved, and standards are now above average overall. However, compared to their other subjects, a smaller proportion of pupils reach above average standards in mathematics.

Pupils' enthusiasm for school is reflected in their very good attitudes and behaviour, and well above average attendance. They say there is very little about school that they would change because they enjoy it so much. They work hard in lessons and are very considerate towards each other. They say that one of the best things about school is 'what we achieve together'. Pupils play energetically and safely, and move around school with a high degree of self-discipline. They know how to lead healthy lifestyles and participate keenly in the many sporting activities on offer. These qualities are promoted strongly by a good, rich curriculum, a very caring staff and the outstanding guidance they receive to overcome any personal difficulties.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. It is underpinned by excellent relationships and effective planning which recognises the diversity of pupils' needs. Teachers use their good subject knowledge creatively to make learning interesting. As a result, lessons move at a good pace and pupils sustain their efforts. However, in mathematics, the most able are not always stretched to the full extent of their capability across the school. There are also inconsistencies in the feedback to pupils about their work. Pupils are aware of the targets which teachers set for them but are not always sure what they have to do to improve their work. The information gathered from assessments is being used increasingly well to track pupils' progress. However, the school recognises that the current system needs to include other subjects, such as science, and to be extended to provide more frequent information during the year.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides clear direction, in partnership with an effective governing body. They know the school well and the school development plan sets appropriate key priorities. Staff have a strong commitment to raising standards and to moving the school forward. Hence, there is a good capacity to build on the strong record of improvement evident since the last inspection.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the teaching of mathematics consistently challenges the most able pupils in order to accelerate their achievement.

- Involve pupils more effectively in the assessment of their work so that they clearly understand what to do to improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are rising by the end of both key stages. The school has successfully maintained the last year's improvement at Key Stage 1 despite the larger numbers of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in the current Year 2. However, in common with the picture in Key Stage 2, the proportion of pupils reaching above average levels in mathematics is lower than for other subjects. Standards in work seen by the end of Key Stage 2 are higher than shown by the results of national tests in 2006. The school has largely re-established the typically above average standards of previous years. In particular, science shows a significant improvement, as more attention has been given to the teaching of investigations. Consequently, pupils generally make good progress from entry to the school to reach challenging targets at the end of Year 6. This represents good overall achievement among all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, there is inconsistent progress in mathematics among the most able, which holds back their achievement.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils develop into extremely mature young citizens during their time in school. Their self-esteem blossoms because they know that their opinions count. Staff encourage them to make choices, to try new things, and to become independent. This strongly motivates them to learn, as shown by their very good rates of attendance. Pupils' attendance is outstanding. They have a strong sense of what is right, which they reveal in their excellent support for one another and for worthwhile causes at home and abroad. They say there is very little bullying as they get on very well together and because they know precisely how to deal with any if it occurs. They are developing very good insights into diversity. For example, they have learned a great deal from the exchange of letters with a school in Kenya and from visits to other communities outside their village. They readily take responsibility, such as by serving on the school council. Pupils' good basic skills prepare them well for their adult life. Older pupils have recently set up a 'wrap and roll' food company, gaining a good appreciation of the realities of work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers have high expectations for learning, to which pupils respond well. This is evident in lessons throughout the school. Their classrooms are welcoming and they make good use of the available space. They collaborate effectively on their planning, which ensures that pupils in the same age group but in different classes receive good common provision. This also enables teaching assistants to make a good contribution to pupils' learning, particularly for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has successfully extended the range of learning methods used since the last inspection. Teachers provide a good mix of activities which pupils really enjoy, such as teamwork, role play and discussions. However, the teaching of mathematics does not consistently challenge the most able to do harder work. The school has

focused this year on improving assessment but acknowledges that there are inconsistencies to iron out. For example, while teachers set clear learning objectives, they do not always check that the pupils learn what is expected of them. Some marking of pupils' work is precise, but some is too general and does not clearly identify the points for improvement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good, clearly reflecting the aims of the school. It promotes excellent personal development and good learning among all groups of pupils. There is a successful emphasis on basic skills and on participation in sports. The use of computers has improved considerably since the last inspection, as has the use of the school grounds for outdoor learning for all ages. Foundation Stage children enjoy the wide range of simulating activities provided through common themes. Teachers in Key Stage 1 and 2 are beginning to provide opportunities for pupils to learn better still by making creative links between subjects. Activity weeks also bring variety to learning, enabling all pupils to focus in depth on some topics. The school listens attentively to pupils in order to enhance the relevance of the curriculum. For example, this has helped develop the 'enrichment time' timetabled each week and to tailor the extensive range of additional clubs and activities available outside of normal lessons.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support is good overall. The school is welcoming and inclusive, and the required safeguarding procedures are firmly established. The needs of pupils who are vulnerable or who have learning difficulties are met very well, involving external agencies appropriately. Pupils who have trouble settling elsewhere find their feet here. An excellent feature is the personal guidance that pupils receive. Those who have any worries can ask for these to be tackled in discussion times or can receive counselling from a trained adult in 'the attic'. Hence, parents and carers are confident in what the school does; they appreciate its efforts to keep them informed and to involve them in their children's learning. Improvements in the use of data to track pupils' progress are beginning to have a positive impact. However, pupils do not always get good guidance on how to boost their achievement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school has good systems of self-review which ensures that it has a clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. There has been good improvement in these processes since the last inspection. The roles of senior and subject leaders have been significantly extended. This includes accepting greater accountability for their areas of responsibility and focusing more strongly on the impact that teaching has upon learning. However, there has been limited opportunity for them to undertake classroom observations. The school places great store by staff development and this is paying dividends at all levels of responsibility. Consequently, subject and aspect leaders plan for and talk confidently about the challenges ahead. Although there has been a significant turnover recently in the membership of the governing body, it has been able to sustain the good levels of support and challenge it provides for the school.

The school takes good account of the views of pupils and parents and, for example, these have led to improvements in facilities at playtimes and in reporting arrangements. Good links with external agencies and wider school networks have been established, and these are used beneficially. For example, the positive engagement with the local sports partnership has greatly extended opportunities.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for the very friendly welcome you gave to me when I recently visited your school. I really enjoyed the discussions I had with you. You expressed your views very clearly and this helped me a lot to understand your school.

These are the good things I found out about your school, which provides you with a good education with several outstanding features.

- The progress you make in your work is good, and I was impressed by how keen you are in lessons.
- You take a great pride in your school and are becoming outstanding young citizens because of the many opportunities you receive.
- Your attendance is very good.
- You show by your attitudes and hard work that you enjoy school a great deal, whether in lessons or at playtimes.
- You behave very well indeed and are friendly towards one another.
- You really understand how to lead a healthy lifestyle and how to keep fit.
- You have lots of interesting things to learn and teaching is good overall.
- Staff take very good care of you and keep you safe from harm.
- The headteacher, staff and governors work hard to give you a good education.

To help you even more, I have asked your school to:

- help you do better in mathematics by providing you with more challenges; of course you will have to try hard as well
- improve the ways it helps you understand how to improve your work to make sure you clearly know what you have to do to get better.