

Sleights Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121491
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	292136
Inspection dates	26–27 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Les Schubeler

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 on roll	
School	104
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs A Fletcher
Headteacher	Ms G Teanby
Date of previous school inspection	4 March 2002
School address	Ingham Close Sleights Whitby North Yorkshire YO22 5DN
Telephone number	01947 810 395
Fax number	01947 810 395

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is much smaller than the average primary school. All four classes have pupils from more than one year group and most have more than one teacher. The school serves an area of mixed local housing association and private developments, mainly in the village of Sleights, although some of its pupils are drawn from a wider area. All pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with good features. It is successful in developing a strong, caring environment in which the individual is valued and personal development thrives, but the school has not sufficiently built on these foundations to raise academic standards to the same level. The number of pupils in the school is small and there are variations in the levels of children's attainment when they enter the school. In most years their language and mathematical skills are below expectations for their age. In the Foundation Stage, achievement is good because children are taught well. In Years 1 to 6, achievement is satisfactory. Pupils at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 reach standards that are broadly in line with the national averages. In 2006, Year 6 pupils did not reach their expected levels, but the school is beginning to use its assessment procedures and tracking systems more effectively to prevent that fall from becoming a trend.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall in Years 1 to 6. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well, often by effective teaching assistants. There are good relationships in lessons and teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. In most lessons teachers plan content that is well matched to the different year groups within the class, but they do not always make the most effective use of available assessment data to plan the work for individual pupils. The school offers a good curriculum to meet pupils' needs. The introduction of a programme that emphasizes the social and emotional aspects of learning has been effective in improving standards of behaviour, raising pupils' self-esteem and helping them to settle inter-personal conflicts. Many enriching experiences beyond the school day valuably support pupils' learning, enjoyment and personal development. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their attendance is now satisfactory and matches the national average. The school is succeeding in its efforts to dissuade parents from taking their children on holiday during term time, which in the past has had an adverse effect upon rates of attendance. Pupils enjoy coming to school and speak enthusiastically about their varied experiences. They have a good awareness of safe and healthy lifestyles. Many participate in sports clubs after school. As parents recognise, the school provides high quality care and support. The adults who work in the school know the pupils well. Consequently, pupils say they feel safe and are confident they have someone to turn to if they need help. Good links with external agencies ensure that individuals with particular needs are very well supported.

Leadership and management are satisfactory but monitoring of the work of teachers and the progress of pupils is not sufficiently rigorous. The school has a view of its performance which is in some areas generous, but the process of self-evaluation has been invaluable in enabling it to identify some facets of its work to improve. Well considered action has been taken to address weaknesses in pupils' skills in problem-solving and mental mathematics, and improvements are now being seen, especially at Key Stage 1. Satisfactory improvements have been made since the previous inspection and there is sound capacity for further improvement. Governors are committed, supportive and fulfil their statutory responsibilities. They are well informed and help the school to provide satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the rates of pupils' progress, particularly at Key Stage 2.
- Ensure rigorous, focused and systematic monitoring of teaching and learning.

- Analyse more rigorously performance data in order to track and respond to the needs and progress of individuals or groups of pupils.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are average and achievement is satisfactory overall. Children make good progress in Reception. Most reach, and some exceed, the nationally expected goals for learning by the end of the year. Throughout the school, pupils with learning difficulties make sound progress as a result of carefully planned support. Standards fluctuate from year to year but have been broadly average in most recent years and achievement has mostly been satisfactory. There is no consistent pattern of performance with, for example, one subject being much weaker than another. Particular difficulties relating to attendance, behaviour and disruption caused by having a significant proportion of pupils in the school for only a limited period contributed to the lower achievement at the end of Year 6 in 2006. The school's assessments for current Year 6 pupils indicate a pattern of performance that is similar to last year's. However, more effective use of assessment procedures is now beginning to have a positive impact, seen in the relatively faster progress of pupils in Years 1 to 5.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils behave well throughout the day because they are well managed by the staff. They demonstrate care and responsibility towards one another and most are positive about their school work. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They enthusiastically support and participate in musical and drama productions. They help and show respect for others and make a good contribution to the wider community. They organise fundraising events to support charities.

The recently established school council successfully involves pupils in contributing ideas to improve the school and new play equipment has been acquired as a result of its efforts. Pupils are reaching the expected levels of skills needed for the next stage in their education, but aspects of learning in information and communication technology (ICT) are hindered by equipment failures.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In the Foundation Stage, children learn with confidence and enthusiasm. Their teachers provide a good balance between independent and adult directed work in experiences that are frequently linked to a common topic. This helps to consolidate their learning. There are common strengths in the teaching across the rest of the school. Teachers' explanations and instructions are clear and teaching assistants are effectively deployed. Teachers with strong subject expertise in, for example, science and music, teach more than one class. This helps boost the quality of learning in these subjects. Pupils'

learning is helped by some teachers' marking of their work, which reminds them of their curricular targets, for example, aspects of punctuation or grammar. However, because there is some inconsistency of practice, not all pupils have a clear awareness of how to improve their work. Additionally, learning slows down when tasks are not closely matched to what particular pupils already know, understand and can do.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Arrangements for both indoor and outdoor activities are good and well managed. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well planned, enabling them to be fully integrated in all activities. Ongoing improvements within the curriculum include the specialist teaching of French to all pupils in Years 2 to 6. The provision for personal, social and emotional development is good throughout the school. There are many enriching experiences beyond the school day for all year groups, including a wide range of sporting activities, visits from authors and theatre groups and residential visits to outdoor activity centers. Technical problems have adversely affected the opportunities for greater use of ICT in all areas of the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This aspect is good. There are good induction procedures for pupils on arrival in Reception and for the substantial numbers who join later in their school career. These sometimes involve close links with outside agencies and help pupils to settle quickly and focus on learning. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well by teachers and other assistants, and their targets are reviewed regularly to ensure they understand what is expected of them. Safeguarding procedures are firmly in place. Pupils receive good guidance for their personal development. Although some pupils have a good awareness of their strengths and weaknesses, the impact of academic guidance is too patchy.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The experienced headteacher provides clear direction and has ensured sound improvements since the time of the last inspection. The school makes good use of links with external agencies to support pupils' development. Parents place a high value on the work of the school. The recent restructuring of management roles is further developing a shared vision and common sense of purpose across the school. A cohesive team works well to overcome the restrictions imposed on the running of a small school, such as the 40% teaching commitment of the headteacher. As a result of the process of self-evaluation, staff are developing a clearer view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school as a whole. They have helped to identify the key areas for improvement and are involved in evaluating the effectiveness of actions. Systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory but there is insufficient analysis of the impact of teachers' work on pupils' learning. Recently refined tracking procedures are well designed to bring about earlier and more effective intervention. However, they are not yet used to full potential by all teachers to pinpoint where individual pupils may not be achieving as well as they should.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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?	3
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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
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	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of Sleights Church of England Primary School, Whitby,
YO22 5DN

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave to me when I visited your school recently. I would like to thank you for being so courteous and friendly. I enjoyed talking to you and listening to your views about the school. I spent a lot of time finding out how well you learn in your lessons, looking at your work and talking to your headteacher and school staff. Sleights is a satisfactory school with a number of good features.

I think your teachers and teaching assistants care for you and look after you well, keeping you safe and healthy. It was very pleasing to see that you get on well with one another and all the adults who work with you.

It was heart-warming to see the enthusiasm that you show for the wide range of after-school activities, for helping others in the wider community and, of course, for taking part in the school production.

To help your school to become better, I have asked your headteacher and the other staff to make sure that close checks are kept on your work and learning so that you can be helped to make progress more quickly.

I am sure that you will carry on enjoying school and continue to build on the good work that you do now. Most of all, I hope that you will continue to work hard and help all the staff to make Sleights an even better school in the future.