



Copmanthorpe Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 132047
Local Authority York
Inspection number 293927
Inspection dates 8–9 November 2006
Reporting inspector Lesley Clark

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Yorkfield Lane
School category	Community		Low Green, Copmanthorpe
Age range of pupils	4–11		York, North Yorkshire YO23 3SB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01904 705400
Number on roll (school)	324	Fax number	01904 708140
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Steve Teal
		Headteacher	Ms Judith Rigg
Date of previous school inspection	26 February 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Copmanthorpe Primary is a popular school that serves the local village community which is socio-economically advantaged. It is larger than average. In common with other schools in the locality the school has falling rolls but this is now being offset by additional pupils joining the school at times other than the usual. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is smaller than average as is the number with a statement of special educational need. Most pupils are of White British heritage.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This school provides an outstanding education for all its pupils because it is exceptionally well led and managed. The school has improved radically since the last inspection. It is too modest in its assessment of how good it is, illustrating its desire to be better still. Standards are very high and show continual improvement because the school constantly strives to make learning as effective as possible. A dedicated team of teachers and support assistants, led by a highly effective senior leadership team, works extremely well together to deliver lively, interesting and thought-provoking lessons that challenge pupils to think for themselves. Pupils' well-being and achievement lie at the heart of this school's thinking and this is why it is so successful. The school does not rest on its laurels and has a very clear view of where it wants to go and the means to achieve it. Management systems are simple and highly effective. The school gives outstanding value for money.

Pupils really enjoy coming to school as shown by above average levels of attendance. Teaching is good in every class and an exceptionally playful approach is fully appreciated by pupils who regard lessons as fun. Good provision in the Foundation Stage gives children a positive start to learning because they settle really well and are happy. They learn to become self-reliant and independent. The recent push on developing pupils' skills in problem solving has boosted results in mathematics in 2006. Lots of opportunities to carry out investigations and research and to learn through asking questions and talking and listening to each other contribute to the very high standards in English and science. By contrast, the approaches to learning in mathematics are slightly less innovative and so pupils have fewer occasions to use and apply their skills in a wide variety of situations. Behaviour is exemplary in class and healthily energetic at playtimes. Lunchtimes are particularly good social occasions where the atmosphere is more like a caf, than a dining hall because of the wide range of healthy foods on offer and the well mannered and respectful pupils.

The systems to support pupils' personal development and to guide them academically are outstanding and secure good progress for all pupils at each stage of their education. An exceptional feature is the extent to which pupils are involved in assessing their own learning so they have a very clear understanding of what they need to do to improve their work. As a result, those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities learn to be as reflective and self-aware as average attainers and the most able. Pupils are given outstanding care, support and guidance and so they confidently ask when they need help and have no hesitation in discussing any concerns with an adult.

The school provides pupils with many valuable experiences that have a bearing on their academic progress. A recent focus on multiculturalism sparked distinctive artwork, dance and music as well as stimulating discussions and questions encompassing many different cultures from across the world. In addition, the strong focus on research supported by productive links with a local university ensures that the most able pupils are challenged because they are encouraged to think in different ways.

The school is popular with pupils and parents. Parents are welcomed into school. Weekly surgeries with the headteacher provide a drop in service for informal discussions, and regular evening workshops help parents understand how their children learn. Pupils are very sure that their views matter. The increasing levels of responsibility given to pupils in Years 4 and 5 means that by Year 6 they become confident and mature individuals. The school lays an excellent foundation for its pupils' future adult lives.

What the school should do to improve further

- Create more opportunities for pupils to research and investigate mathematical problems so they use mathematical language and skills in lots of different ways.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement is outstanding for all groups of pupils. Pupils reach exceptionally high standards by the end of Year 6. Children enter school with advanced social skills but with broadly average language, literacy and mathematical skills. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage and are well placed at the start of Year 1 to build on what they have learned. Progress increases in Years 1 and 2 where the emphasis on learning ensures that pupils develop independent and enquiring minds. As a result, standards are comfortably above average by the end of Year 2.

Standards continue to rise steadily in Years 3 to 6 because of the school's intense focus on developing learning skills. Challenging targets are often exceeded. Until 2006, the school's results were generally better in English and science than in mathematics. An increased focus on problem solving has helped redress the balance. The strong emphasis on speaking and listening throughout the school is a major contributory factor to pupils' high achievements. Pupils do exceptionally well in science because it is taught through investigation and enquiry. They are encouraged to think for themselves, explain their conclusions and ask questions to which they want to find the answers, such as: 'How high do you have to get before there is no gravity?'

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and are enthusiastic learners. They are happy, confident and poised both in their dealings with each other and with adults. Children in the Foundation Stage quickly settle in and show good levels of responsibility, getting out their own equipment, for example. Adults are skilled at developing their confidence and willingness to learn. Pupils say that teachers 'listen to us'. They feel that bullying is rare and dealt with quickly and effectively by teachers. Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils listen attentively to each other and make constructive comments when working out points for improvement in their own and other people's work, mirroring the sensitivity of the adults who work with them. Above average attendance levels confirm

that pupils are happy to come to school. Pupils are well aware of how important it is to lead healthy lives. The school council takes its duties seriously and currently is sorting out collecting recycling materials from each class. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They learn to appreciate the lifestyles and beliefs of others through the school's extensive community and charity links and through action-packed cultural weeks which give pupils a taste of the richness and diversity of different cultures.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

High quality teaching in all classes, including the Foundation Stage, results in outstanding learning as pupils are given equally good opportunities to learn at each stage of their education. An outstanding feature is the extent to which pupils are involved in assessing their own learning. They become increasingly confident at noticing what they need to do to improve their work, suggesting, for example, that 'buttonly', while highly descriptive, could be replaced with a more accurate adjective. In the Foundation Stage, children have freedom to learn through choosing for themselves from a good range of interesting activities, well supported by teachers who skilfully extend their vocabulary. Throughout the school, teaching is enlivened using interactive technology, including film clips, so that pupils learn through an extensive range of media. Good quality resources, careful planning in year group teams and uniformly high expectations result in consistently good teaching quality with a touch of fun.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The outstanding curriculum supports the school's aim for pupils 'to become independent learners with lively, enquiring and creative minds.' It is matched equally well to the needs of the least and the most able, providing broad, balanced and enjoyable learning experiences as well as a strong framework for learning essential literacy and numeracy skills. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good and improving as the recent focus on developing children's understanding of mathematical language is bearing fruit. Pupils particularly enjoy the special 'themed weeks' such as Environment Week and Healthy Schools Week. They also benefit greatly from the large number of visitors into school and were keen to share their ideas about environmental issues when an education minister recently visited the school and to question the Archbishop of York about Africa. A wide range of clubs appeal to the interests of many pupils and add much to their enjoyment of school. Speaking and listening are promoted exceptionally well to develop pupil's understanding and prepare them for the wider world.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

There is outstanding provision for pupils' welfare, and child protection procedures are robust. The systems to support pupils with learning difficulties or who are gifted and talented are outstanding and the school copes successfully with a wide range of needs and abilities. The strong links with secondary and higher education establishments also ensure that the most able pupils are stimulated and challenged as they have access to a wide range of resource materials. The systems to support academic progress are outstanding and give a clear overview of progress and challenging targets to aspire to. It is easy to track the progress of different pupils and so support is targeted precisely when and where it is needed. Pupils are involved in setting targets and play a large part in checking whether they have met them or not. The upshot is highly effective learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

A highly collaborative leadership style has created a staff team where all feel empowered and all act with a common sense of purpose. By valuing different teaching styles and recognising that teachers too have preferred learning styles, teaching is both distinctive and effective and there is a real buzz about learning. Penetrating evaluation of what has been achieved has led to a very successful programme of improvement, with pupils' achievement and well-being at its heart. Consequently, standards are very high and pupils greatly enjoy their time at Copmanthorpe Primary. Subject leaders regularly review standards in their subject and identify any areas where learning can be enhanced. Governors are very committed and both challenge and support the school, having a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for future development. The school is extremely well organised and managed. Prudent financial management ensures that resources are well used to the best advantage for pupils. The school's very clear, creative, visionary approach stems from the quiet, purposeful leadership of the headteacher, with highly effective support from the senior leadership team. A programme of thoughtful monitoring has brought about sustained school improvement and provides the school with an excellent capacity to improve still further.

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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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

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	1
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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 your help when we inspected your school. We thoroughly enjoyed our visit because everyone was so welcoming and friendly. Your school gives you an exceptionally good education and we would like to share with you the reasons why.

These are some of the things that are really good about your school.

- You achieve very high standards in your work, especially in English and science.
- We like the way you are encouraged to have a say in what goes on at school both in lessons and through your school councils.
- Your teachers make learning fun and you are lucky to have so many different and interesting things to do.
- You have an extremely good curriculum with opportunities to meet a huge range of visitors who do some very important jobs.
- Your school prepares you exceptionally well for your future lives.

We know everyone wants to do even better and we have suggested one thing that will help:

- Create more opportunities for you to research and investigate mathematical problems so you can use mathematical language and skills in lots of different ways.

We hope this will make mathematics more fun, like science and drama!