

Reeth Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121311
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	313941
Inspection date	18 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Roger Gill

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	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	69
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Martin Bearpark
Headteacher	Mrs Vivienne Smith
Date of previous school inspection	6 June 2005
School address	Healaugh Road Reeth Richmond North Yorkshire DL11 6SP
Telephone number	01748 884308
Fax number	0

Age group	3-11
Inspection date	18 January 2008
Inspection number	313941

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' achievement; the quality of teaching; the benefits from confederation; and the degree to which leadership and management have created a satisfactory or a good school. Evidence was gathered from the school's judgements about attainment on entry, test results, teachers' records, observations of teaching, scrutiny of pupils' current work and discussions with the acting headteacher, staff, pupils and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a small primary school situated in a relatively remote village in north Yorkshire. It is paired, as part of a Federation {established under School Governance (Collaboration) (England) Regulations 2003}, with Gunnerside Primary School, which is about six miles away. The schools share the same headteacher, have different governing bodies and call themselves a Confederation. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A below average proportion of pupils has learning difficulties and/or disabilities, very few have a statement of special educational need. Pupils in Years 3/4 and 5/6, from both schools, are split into two classes and alternate between sites during the week, using the same classrooms on a rota basis. Younger pupils do not commute between the two schools. Reeth has a Healthy School's Award and an Activemark for physical education. The school has a Nursery class that serves three villages. The attainment of children on entry to Nursery and the Reeth Reception class is broadly typical for their age. At the time of the inspection, an acting headteacher had been in post for four weeks owing to the ill health of the substantive headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Reeth is a good school, which has risen well to the challenges associated with the development of its confederation. Most parents and their children say that the linking of the two local schools has brought significant benefits. Pupils have expanded their social horizons and gained from the opportunity to work with more teachers. There are still some mixed opinions about the way that the two schools work together, but the majority of parents subscribe to the notion that, 'The school provides a well rounded education and an imaginative approach.' The inspection supports this view and agrees with those who believe that the confederation has helped their children grow in confidence.

Standards fluctuate year-on-year because of the small number of pupils involved and the different make up of each year group. Nevertheless, standards, by the end of Year 6 have risen in recent years. They were well above average in 2007, which represented good achievement for the pupils' involved. Pupils' achievements are not uniformly good: progress in writing, for example, is only satisfactory by the end of Year 2 and 6. This is because the more able pupils do not always make sufficient strides in their learning. This is pronounced in writing, but also applies to mathematics to a lesser extent. The school has a general idea that achievement could be better in English and mathematics, but cannot tell with precision exactly the degree of improvements needed. This is because assessments are not always recorded in a way that provides comprehensive information about reading, writing and mathematics for each year group. As a result teachers do not readily possess the complete picture relating to achievement and pupils do not receive enough individual guidance about what to do next.

Most pupils enjoy school a great deal, which is demonstrated by their above average attendance. Pupils' good personal development is directly related to the family atmosphere in school, the emphasis on healthy living and the wide range of additional activities. These opportunities develop in pupils a keen appreciation of rural life in a Yorkshire Dale, but also widen their horizons: nationally and internationally. Music adds verve to school life, particularly pupils' connection with the local brass band. Regular dramatic and musical performances provide pupils with a chance to share their talents within the village. They are in tune with their environment through an involvement in rural crafts, growing vegetables and the school's wildlife garden. Further afield, pupils have beneficial cultural links with schools in Middlesbrough and France. School council meetings have lapsed lately, which has resulted in a temporary loss of direction for the older pupils. However, they still talk with pride about wearing the confederation's new sweatshirt, having helped, last term, to design the logo.

Pupils make good progress in most aspects of their learning. Teachers get pupils to work well together. For example, in a Year 5 and 6 lesson pupils from Reeth and Gunnerside became more versatile at using calculators for solving problems owing to the way they tackled the various challenges. They swapped ideas in a productive and collaborative fashion, which raised their game at multiplication and division. Equally, pupils of all ages, in the infant class, discussed well in groups when designing a leaflet aimed at advertising the virtues of living in their village. Teaching aims to cater for all abilities and it manages this in most respects. Nevertheless, some higher attaining pupils state that work is occasionally too easy. This lies behind the lapses in achievement for these pupils. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is generally good, which helps them keep up with their peers. Sometimes plans for their learning are not specific enough and this causes slower progress, but the school is aware of this and has plans in place to rectify the issue.

The headteacher, governors and staff have worked together well to improve standards and develop the confederation. Temporary leadership by the acting headteacher has complemented the process productively. Parents are justified in praising the efforts taken to keep the school moving forward in difficult circumstances. Several are worried that they do not know enough about what is going on in school, but improved communication between home and school is high on the governors' agenda. The acting headteacher is vigorous at keeping parents informed.

Being a small school, the levels of informal communication and evaluation are high, but more formal systems to review success are not fully in place. As a result, leadership and management cannot set the most ambitious targets for all pupils. The school is poised to tackle this issue, having appointed a member of staff to oversee the developments, but it is too soon to see any results. The capacity to improve even further is good as judged by the advances made by the school since its last inspection and the inception of the confederation.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start in the Nursery. Effective teaching and a well planned curriculum ensure that children play purposefully in a variety of settings. Inside, the animal rescue centre is a popular place in which to develop social skills and practise writing. Sometimes the animals cared for are quite unusual as was the case when children noted and discussed the welfare of a unicorn. Outside children can play in an orchard, grow their own vegetables or pretend to be witches and wizards in a log cabin. Reception aged children continue to receive good teaching and progress well in the mixed-age class alongside pupils in Years 1 and 2. Their classroom contains little zones in which children can continue to play in role, for example, in a Victorian kitchen. Unlike the Nursery children, they cannot learn outside so effectively, but the school has good plans to address this shortcoming. By the end of Reception, children reach the national goals for their age with some having gone beyond them. Learning is observed carefully, but there is not yet a fully operational system to chart children's progress throughout the Foundation Stage.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the challenge for the more able pupils, particularly in writing, so that they reach the higher levels of attainment by the end of Year 2 and 6.
- Improve the way that assessment is recorded, used to set new targets and how these targets are communicated to pupils.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

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

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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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?	3

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	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

Inspection of Reeth Community Primary School, Richmond, DL11 6SP

Thank you for being so helpful when I inspected your school. I thoroughly enjoyed my visit because everyone was so welcoming and friendly. I was unlucky enough to miss those of you in Years 3 and 4 because you were at Gunnerside, however, I could see your books and I heard about how you are getting along.

You go to a good school, which has made a success of its partnership with Gunnerside. You know just how closely you all work together. This is summed up neatly in your new logo of children fitting together like jigsaw pieces. I know that you enjoy yourselves a lot because children at my lunch table told me so. I also saw it with my own eyes in lessons and around the school. I heard that the travelling by coach gets the older children down at times, but that this is made up for by the larger space in which to play when you get to Gunnerside. What impressed me most was the confident way in which you approach things and the wide variety of activities that are on offer, from links with schools abroad to juggling and brass band playing at home. You are all growing up to be positive young people who know a lot about your local area, but also have an eye on wider issues in the world at large.

You told me that teaching is good and helps you to learn well, and I agree. I know everyone wants to do even better and I have asked your school to do two things to help. These will fit in well with all the other things that you and the adults want to do, such as improving the play space for Reception children. Teachers need to make sure that children who can reach higher standards get a chance to do this, particularly in writing, but also in mathematics. Secondly, they need to check that you are all getting on as well as you can by studying the progress you are making half-termly, termly, annually, and from year-to-year. They can then tell you, more exactly, what you need to do next in your work.

You can all help the school do better by enlarging your vocabulary, composing stronger sentences, improving your punctuation in writing and enjoying any extra challenges in mathematics. Do not forget to make good use of your teacher's advice, when it comes your way, about how to improve your work.