

Cracoe and Rylstone Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121558
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	314038
Inspection date	11 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Kath Halifax

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	54
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Peter Vernon
Headteacher	Mrs Margaret Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	17 May 2004
School address	Cracoe Skipton North Yorkshire BD23 6LQ
Telephone number	01756 730259
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards, teaching and learning, personal development and well-being, care, guidance and support, and how well the school leadership promotes high standards. Evidence was gathered from the observation of lessons, assessment data, the pupils' work, discussion with them, and with the staff and representatives of the governing body. 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 judgements, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified. These have been included where appropriate within the report.

Description of the school

This small primary school serves a number of villages in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage with a very small number from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. None has a statement of special educational need and no pupil is in receipt of free school meals.

The school has achieved the Activemark, the Healthy Schools Award and the local authority Highly Effective School status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Comments such as: 'There is always something to look forward to' and 'The school helps children develop personal skills that make villages such special communities' are representative of pupils' and parents' views of this good school with outstanding features.

Pupils make good progress in all age groups from a broadly average starting point. Standards have remained above average since the last inspection. Results in the 2007 tests for Year 2 and Year 6 were well above average in mathematics and above average in science, but higher attaining pupils in both age groups did not do as well as expected in writing. The school's focus on improving writing is paying dividends so that standards are now on a par with reading, but pupils do not always apply their skills well enough when writing in other subjects. Since the last inspection, the provision of a computer suite and improved staff knowledge have resulted in good achievement in information and communication technology. Achievements in physical education and music are strengths of the school. The choir and instrumentalists are renowned for their performances.

Pupils make good progress in their learning because of good teaching. Teachers plan work meticulously for each age group as well as for pupils' individual needs. As a result all are stretched. Achievements are recorded conscientiously and used effectively to plan further work. Support assistants are used well and included in planning so that they make a good contribution to pupils' progress. Pupils who learn more slowly receive valuable support which gives them confidence. Teaching is sometimes inspirational. For example, the use of a 'wolf mask' accelerated pupils' learning when writing free verse. Colourful displays of pupils' work celebrate achievement and support learning.

Excellent opportunities for sport, the creative arts and visits to make learning exciting and meaningful enrich the good curriculum. Pupils say they especially enjoyed a visit to the local quarry, where they were amazed at its depth, and finding out about life in Victorian Cracoe. A wide range of sports, including cross-country running on the fells, encourage pupils to keep fit and healthy. Very good links within the Upper Wharfedale cluster of schools, for example in the recent introduction of the teaching of modern foreign languages, complement the skills of a very small teaching staff. School leaders have correctly identified the need for more staff training to support gifted and talented pupils.

Adults provide outstanding care, support and guidance. Careful attention is paid to health and safety and to safeguarding pupils, including the most vulnerable. Relationships are excellent with mutual respect between pupils and adults. Attendance is above average. Most pupils respond exceptionally well to the high expectations of staff. However, inspection findings differ from the school's evaluation of outstanding for pupils' personal development. The attitudes and behaviour of older pupils are exceptional, with many caring for younger pupils and some voluntarily undertaking follow up homework. The attitudes and behaviour of younger pupils are variable. A handful of high-spirited pupils, some with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, in Key Stage 1 are taking longer than usual to adhere to the school's code of conduct. Despite good behaviour management, their exuberance sometimes has an effect on the learning and play of others. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good with some outstanding elements within this. A very good understanding of right and wrong comes through strongly in pupils' actions. Because almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds, a useful link has been made with a school of pupils of Asian descent and major

world faiths are studied in religious education. Despite this, pupils' understanding and appreciation of other cultures is not sufficiently well developed. Pupils make a significant contribution to the school, village, and wider communities. Financial acumen is gained through a horticultural enterprise, and leaders have acted on the school council's travel plan to improve access for cyclists and pedestrians.

It is because of good leadership and management that the school has made good improvement since the last inspection and has the capacity to continue to do so. The school's aim 'in constant pursuit of excellence' is evident in all aspects of its work. Leaders know what they do well and what needs to be done to raise standards further. The recent appointment of an experienced literacy coordinator has led to rising standards in writing as well as relieving some of the heavy management load. Governance is good. Alongside teachers, governors track the progress of individual pupils in order to set challenging targets. Their programme of classroom visits is working well for pupils, teachers and governors alike. The exceptional link with cluster schools and other professionals brings new ideas to the school and contributes considerably to pupils' achievements and well-being. Of necessity in a small school, the cost of educating each pupil is high. Nevertheless, the school provides good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children of all abilities make good progress in the Foundation Stage because of the good provision and good management. They start the Reception year with skills which are broadly typical for their age. Their speaking and listening skills are well-developed, but their knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development less so. Nevertheless, through good teaching, by the end of the year most are working securely within the expected levels in all areas of learning, with over a half of the children doing better than this. Considerable improvement to the building has enhanced the facilities for outdoor play and for practical activities.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils write to the best of their ability in all subjects.
- Ensure that pupils have a good understanding of, and appreciation for, the rich cultural mix of modern Britain.

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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
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?	1
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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
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	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?	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?	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.

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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Inspection of Cracoe and Rylstone Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School,
Skipton, BD23 6LQ

First may I say how much I enjoyed my short time at your school and thank you for looking after me and helping me with my work. You attend a good school where lots of exciting things happen. From talking to you and looking through the photograph album, I can see the enormous enjoyment you had learning about Victorian Cracoe and visiting the quarry. These are some of the things I feel are especially good about your school.

? You make good progress because of good teaching and your national test results are above average.

? Your headteacher is a good leader who works extremely hard to provide the best for you, as well as making sure you are part of the village community.

? You are keen to learn, and most of you are extremely polite and very well behaved. You have some really good ideas, especially the travel plan and work towards ECO schools.

? You certainly enjoy the impressive range of clubs, visits and visitors that make learning so much more exciting

? Adults treat you all as individuals and conscientiously provide very good care and helpful guidance.

There are a couple of areas that I feel could be better. Writing in your English books is of a high standard. I would like you to make sure that you always write to the same standard in your geography, history and science books. Your school has linked with a school in Bradford and you are finding out about the Islamic way of life. It is important you have an even better understanding of the beliefs and traditions of a wide range of cultures.

I am sure you will continue to do all you can to help your teachers. I wish you well for the future.