

Giggleswick Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121392
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	327476
Inspection dates	7–8 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Mr Adrian Gray

The inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–10
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	59
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sue Butler
Headteacher	Ms A Michelmores-Brown
Date of previous school inspection	February 2006
School address	Church Street Giggleswick Settle BD24 0BJ
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The inspector visited nine lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. He observed the school's work, and looked at the school's policies, assessment records, minutes of the governing body and the school improvement partner's reports. Twenty nine parental questionnaires were received and considered.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. He looked in detail at the following:

- how successfully the Early Years Foundation Stage has been introduced
- the progress of girls in a school where they are in the minority
- whether progress of pupils is equally good in all years.

Information about the school

Giggleswick Primary School is idyllically situated at the back of a narrow village street with a babbling beck nearby and looking onto fields and hills. It is a small school with three classes, each one taking two years of the range from Reception to Year 5. It is experiencing a small fall in numbers, but it has benefited from recent improvements to its buildings. The school has had to manage several staffing issues over the last two years.

The school draws its pupils from a number of villages around Settle and the level of socio-economic disadvantage is very low. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic groups and very few have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It has links with a Children's Centre and a local group of schools provides curriculum support so that pupils often visit other schools, or have teachers from elsewhere visit them.

Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

3

Capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Giggleswick Primary School is a school where children genuinely want to learn and where they are very well cared for. They treat each other very well and respond enthusiastically to a good range of extra-curricular activities, including competing against other schools in team sports. During the inspection, some examples of very good teaching were seen, including in science and in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The headteacher and staff are fully committed to the care and personal development of the pupils, whose spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Behaviour is exemplary. The school has introduced good assessment systems that can track the progress and attainment of pupils term by term, and this is helping to inform its evaluation of its own performance. The school's self-evaluation is direct, honest and accurate. The school has a governing body that is increasingly rigorous in its approach to the school and has raised its expectations.

Despite these many strengths, the school is not fully consistent in its performance and this has been reflected in fluctuating attainment and progress by the pupils over the last two years. In places, pupils have made – and continue to make – good progress, but this is not found consistently in all classes and all lessons across the school. Some teaching is not sufficiently fast-paced to galvanise the enthusiasm of the pupils and teachers' use of short-term assessment techniques, to gauge progress and redirect teaching, can be ineffective.

These inconsistencies are partly the result of a period of building work and staff change or absence. In a small school, these have placed a lot of pressure on the leadership of the headteacher, who also teaches, because there has not been a sufficiently consistent contribution to whole-school leadership by all the other teaching staff.

Parents like the school and so do the pupils. Nonetheless, a small group of parents had some concerns which the inspection investigated, and these have been used to inform the inspection findings.

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.

What does the school need to do to improve further

- Devolve leadership responsibility throughout the school to enhance its capacity to sustain improvement.
- Ensure that satisfactory teaching is converted into teaching that is at least good by ensuring that the variety of learning approaches is effective for all pupils and lesson observations maintain a sharp focus on pupils' progress and the pace of teaching.
- Ensure that all lessons incorporate effective use of day-to-day assessment strategies.
- Ensure that teachers promote improved understanding of learning targets by all pupils, especially the less able, to support the raising of achievement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Standards of attainment at the school have generally been above average over the last few years, notably at the end of Key Stage 1, building on comparatively high levels of attainment on entry to this key stage. However, performance at this age dipped in 2008, particularly in mathematics and girls' writing, and, although the school has introduced various strategies to remedy this, the levels of the recent past have not so far been recovered. The school's assessment records show gradual improvement in both attainment and progress in Year 2 and Year 3 over the course of recent months, but in classroom observation it was still the case that some pupils were not being provided with a challenge well matched to their prior knowledge. As a result, attainment in lessons was sometimes below the capabilities of the pupils. The school, working in partnership with the local authority, has been able to identify weaknesses in attainment and in progress such as in mathematics, and to respond accordingly. As a result, achievement is generally satisfactory, though still not secure because of the weaknesses in assessment practice.

Attainment has been at least average in Years 4 to 5 in past years and has often been above average, with some pupils doing exceptionally well. After a phase of staff change, internal assessments show that pupils are now generally at or above age-related expectation at the end of Year 5. Progress in Years 4 and 5 was observed to be good in some lessons, where the teacher's knowledge was good and the lesson delivered with pace. The pupils responded best when challenged by thought-provoking and smartly-paced work, whereas some of the time their progress was more pedestrian.

The small number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities makes the analysis of trends unreliable. However, care is taken in the first two years to identify particular learning needs and these are often addressed very well so that pupils progress confidently. This is not always followed through consistently so that some groups of older, less able pupils have very little knowledge of their own targets for improvement, such as in writing. The performance of gifted and/or talented pupils is monitored systematically. The most significant group of pupils for the school to consider is girls, since they represent a much lower than usual proportion of the school's population. This has meant that, in some classes, girls have few other girls

to work with. In Key Stage 1, in 2008, girls performed less well than boys and they have been less certain of attaining their challenging targets than the boys. The school is planning for this issue carefully and teachers now consider the interests of girls when planning their teaching groups.

Pupils enjoy their lessons, especially when they are creative and challenging. This is not always so, with some lessons lacking pace and excitement.

Pupils feel safe and behave very well, enjoying the very warm and supportive atmosphere of the school. However, they are aware of external risks such as those from the internet and can discuss them sensibly. Within the school, pupils report that there is almost never any form of bullying and that, if they accidentally upset someone, it is the usual thing to say you are sorry.

Pupils' absence is low compared with the national figure but has been slightly above the typical level for schools of this type. Most year groups now attend well, but one year group currently has relatively low figures.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is an outstanding feature of the school, though the social development of girls is not easy to manage with such small numbers. The school has managed this using various approaches, including separate play provision and links to other schools for activities such as sports, which the girls appreciate. Pupils respond very well to spiritual inputs such as assemblies and enjoy cultural activities such as music greatly, as well as opportunities to learn about people who are different to themselves. Pupils have a very well-developed sense of morality. Pupils' workplace skills are good; they are seen to best effect when they are given challenging tasks to plan together and work on in groups, such as in a science lesson; this approach fosters social and problem solving skills.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	3
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	3
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	2
How well do pupils behave?	1
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	2
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	2
.Pupils' attendance ¹	2
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	1

¹The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching at the school varies from examples of outstanding work to aspects in which it is just satisfactory. Pupils at this school love the stimulus of fast-paced, colourful and challenging lessons in which they have the opportunity to make some decisions for themselves. In one science lesson, pupils were set a challenging group task which involved them thinking about possible problems and developing their own solutions. Some lessons set a very high standard but this is not found in all classes. Some of the teaching to the middle and older range of pupils lacks pace. Although the school has some good systems now in place for assessing progress term by term, teachers are not always so effective in using assessment to make short-term adjustments to what they plan to do. For example, in two lessons teachers did not make use of any strategy to assess prior learning on a topic with the result that some pupils made too little progress as the work given to them was not challenging enough. At the end of lessons, teachers do not always use the plenary session to assess the progress that has been made or make use of the available teaching assistant to support such work. Pupils have targets and these are reinforced by 'I can' statements which often help to focus learning in the classroom; however, the use of targets in writing is ineffective because pupils do not make daily reference to them and do not always know what their targets are, which was particularly the case with less able pupils.

The curriculum is improving and the school is developing its work in science, in particular. There is a good range of resources to support the curriculum, including ready access to computers to extend the range of what is being learnt. The school seeks to enhance the curriculum through its partnership with other local schools and offering a range of extra activities, including opportunities to take part in team sports. Music is popular. The school carefully monitors which children are involved, including the take-up by boys and girls. Judicious use is made of part-time and external staff to add variety and expertise to the curriculum. Pupils had, in the past, expressed a wish for more exciting science lessons and the school has added some capacity in this respect.

The care, guidance and support of pupils are strengths of the school to which all staff subscribe. Parents express very strong support for the school and the headteacher in this respect. The school takes advantage of its small size to think about the individual pastoral needs of each learner, and the staff have good knowledge of them. Pupils from other European countries who spend part of the school year at the school are helped to access the curriculum and adjust to the different routines.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The school has made some progress on tackling the areas for improvement indicated in its last inspection report. Assessment has improved at school level, but there remain areas for improvement in its daily use and the knowledge pupils have of their own means of securing improvement. Monitoring of lessons has improved but the quality of teaching has remained inconsistent.

The small size of the school has meant that leaders have little flexibility when required to manage change or staffing issues and also requires all staff to contribute more to whole-school leadership than might normally be the case. The headteacher has managed to ensure some stability through this period, but performance across the school remains uneven and there are more changes to come. The instability of staffing has made it a challenge to sustain improvement and, under these circumstances, it remains a challenge for the school to demonstrate that improvement can be sustained independently. However, the improved school assessment structure indicates that improvements have been made. Also, the school's self-evaluation is very clear and accurate in identifying its strengths and weaknesses, suggesting that it has the capacity to make improvements as staffing becomes more settled. The governing body actively contributes to the drive for improvement, informed by improved reports from the headteacher which contain plenty of evidence about pupils' progress with which the governors engage. A system of key performance indicators is used effectively to manage the accountability of the headteacher.

The school prides itself on treating all as valued members of its community and it has a clear equalities policy, though the impact of this needs to be evaluated and discussed by the governing body. It has a clear grasp of community cohesion, with pupils able to talk warmly about what they had gained from working with pupils in a contrasting type of school. Some work remains to be done in planning for structures that promote understanding of other people's faiths and lifestyles, but pupils are very interested in this work. Local authority processes provide a good level of challenge in this area.

Safeguarding procedures are effective and the school has demonstrated its ability to identify and respond to need as it arises. Staff are able to identify and respond to concerns where they might occur amongst pupils of all ages. Safe recruitment arrangements are in place, although a more consistent clerical approach would be beneficial.

The deployment of resources is a challenge for the school because its small size means there is limited flexibility, for example in providing sufficient management time for the headteacher. The school has plans to handle the variation in pupil numbers expected over the next two or three years which shows that it is planning for efficiency.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in communicating ambition and driving improvement	3
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The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Although most children come from relatively advantaged backgrounds, they enter the school with a wide variety of past experiences and prior learning. They mainly make rapid progress in the Reception year due to the warm and stimulating learning environment and the very well-structured range of learning opportunities to which the teaching assistants fully contribute. Some make outstanding progress and exceed the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year. The teacher and assistants provide children with a range of interesting activities to choose from, providing scope for children of all types. During the inspection, very good and enthusiastic learning was observed and some children displayed very high standards in reading, writing and talking for their age. More able children find plenty to stimulate them in both indoor and outdoor areas.

Assessment of attainment and progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is done thoroughly and carefully. The assessments show that almost all children achieve at least age-related expectations across all six areas of learning and many exceed this standard. Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy are areas of strength. Where children are working below expectations, the school is proactive in diagnosing their needs and introducing appropriate support strategies.

The personal development of the children is fostered by their close working relationship with the Year 1 pupils, who model learning behaviours. This is especially helpful to some of the more able children, who are keen to emulate the achievements of the older pupils.

The school introduced the Early Years Foundation Stage at a time when it was affected by staff absence but, through energetic work and good external support, it is now well established.

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Most parents are very pleased with the school, some exceptionally so. They paint a portrait of a caring and supportive environment where children learn to live and work happily together. However, a few others have concerns about the variability in the quality of its provision between classes; they feel there is too little challenge in some classes and that pupils do not always receive an appropriate challenge. The HMI and the school agree that this is still the case, although efforts are being made to secure consistent improvement. A small number of other parents wished to see improvements to the site and greater supervision at break times.

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Giggleswick Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. If a parent has more than one child at the school, we ask them to record an answer against all the questions, for each of their children.

The inspector received 29 completed questionnaires. In total, there are 59 parents and carers registered at the school, but several have more than one child.

	Always	Most of the time	Occasionally	Never
Overall I am happy with my child's experience at this school	22	11	1	0

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2007-8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2007-8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, training or development. This may refer to the acquisition of skills, knowledge, understanding or desired attributes. Attributes include qualities or personal competencies which are important to the development of the pupil; for example personal, social, cultural, emotional or health.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.



9 July 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Giggleswick Primary School, Settle, BD24 0BJ

I would like to thank you all for making me so welcome during my two day visit to your school and also thank you for being welcoming to my colleague Tom Grieveson, who joined me on the second day.

I had some very enjoyable times at your school and I will always remember the snail hunting with the Reception pupils, putting seeds into various types of fizzy drink in a science lesson and the accordion player.

Your school really impressed me as a lovely place to learn. Your teachers and teaching assistants really care about you and know you very well. I talked with many of you during my time in the school and you all told me how much you liked coming to school. We agreed that many of you reach a good standard in your work and that your behaviour is excellent. You told us that you are very happy at the school and that you enjoy the extra things the school provides such as the music, visiting teachers, and trips to other schools and the visits to other places.

I have talked with your headteacher and some of the school's governors about how the school can become even better. The part that you can help with is by knowing more about your targets. Some of you were able to tell me that you had got targets – for example, in writing – but did not know what they were, although all of you had them written somewhere in your books. Whenever you do some writing, it would be a good idea to remind yourself what you are trying to improve by checking your targets. We also discussed ways in which your learning could be improved by checking what you already know about a subject and by speeding up the pace of some lessons.

Best wishes for the future

Adrian Gray
HMI

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