

Leavening Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121453
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	327491
Inspection dates	6–7 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Robert Robinson

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	76
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Neil Audsley
Headteacher	Mrs M Mellor
Date of previous school inspection	27 March 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Back Lane Leavening Malton North Yorkshire YO17 9SW

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	6–7 May 2009
Inspection number	327491

Telephone number
Fax number

01653 658313
01653 658313

Age group	3-11
Inspection dates	6-7 May 2009
Inspection number	327491

© Crown copyright 2009

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.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average school in a rural area. The socio-economic circumstances of the area are more favourable than average. Very few pupils are eligible for free school meals. An above average number of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the proportion in Years 5 and 6 is high. Almost all pupils are of White British ethnic backgrounds. No pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The school has achieved Activemark, Healthy School and Inclusion Quality Mark Awards. It has reached Financial Management Standards in Schools (FMSIS). There have been substantial staffing changes and lengthy staff absences since the previous inspection. The headteacher joined the school in April 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Leavening Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The school is well placed to continue to improve because of the good leadership and management of the headteacher, senior staff and governors. The headteacher has dealt most effectively with the exceptionally high staffing changes and staff absences since the previous inspection. The school works well with other educational establishments and this benefits pupils' education.

Pupils' achievement from entry to the school to the end of Year 6 is satisfactory. Standards by the end of Year 6 have been broadly average since the previous inspection. Standards of the present Year 6 are also in line with national expectations, though standards in writing have risen this year to come closer to those in reading and mathematics. This reflects the success of the leadership's efforts to improve pupils' writing skills. Standards have also improved in Year 2 to be above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' progress, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is satisfactory over time. Recently, pupils' progress has accelerated because of improvements in the quality of teaching and learning.

A strength of the school is the good care that it provides for all pupils. As a result, equality of opportunity is fostered well. Pupils' good personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, contributes well to their learning and future prospects. Pupils enjoy learning, especially the opportunities to take part in sporting activities. They appreciate the caring atmosphere within the school. Behaviour is good. Pupils are polite and courteous to each other and to adults. They conduct themselves safely around the school and in the playground. Pupils are keen to improve their academic performance and are actively engaged in assessing their own work.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory which matches pupils' progress over time. The curriculum is good, having been enhanced this year. This has had a positive effect on pupils' pace of learning. Lessons are planned effectively to enthuse pupils' interest in learning by linking subjects together into purposeful topics. For example, in a study of mountains, pupils gained geographical skills, practised mathematical learning, developed research skills and wrote enthusiastically in different styles. It also increased their awareness of different cultures, such as those in Peru and Nepal, as well as knowledge of famous mountaineers. The marking of work is consistent throughout the school and clearly shows pupils how well they are doing and their next step of learning.

The school tracks individual pupils' progress well and uses the information effectively to plan work for individuals. It has recently introduced half-termly assessments to check more closely pupils' progress throughout each year. However, it does not collate this information sufficiently to monitor the progress of different groups from year to year, such as year group, gender or different ability groups, to check the impact of initiatives to raise standards for different sets of pupils.

Parents praise highly all aspects of the school's work. A typical comment was, 'Very friendly environment and a happy place to learn'.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Attainment on entry is broadly as expected of children of this age. Parents are happy with their children's start to schooling.

Children settle quickly into school routines and most children behave well. Their achievement is satisfactory as is the quality of teaching. Standards by the end of Reception, including personal, social and emotional development, are as expected for children of this age. A broad range of activities both in the classroom and outdoors develops children's basic skills in all areas of learning. The balance of teacher-led and child-initiated learning is appropriate. However, the planning of activities for individuals and small groups is not focused sufficiently on children's prior learning. The assessment of individuals' progress is not precise enough. The attainments of different groups of children are not recorded succinctly to enable the leadership to gauge accurately their progress. The accommodation and resources have been improved substantially since the previous inspection. Welfare arrangements are good. The headteacher and governors know what needs to be done to improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. A detailed action plan for improvement is in place, involving local authority consultants and opportunities for staff to visit other schools.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop accurate assessment and recording procedures in the Early Years Foundation Stage and use the information to plan more closely to match individual children's needs.
- Improve the systems for monitoring the rates of progress of different groups of pupils to check the success of initiatives to raise standards.

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

Present standards are broadly average in Year 6. In the 2008 national tests at the end of Year 6, standards were overall average but standards in English were lower than other subjects because writing performance was low compared with reading. A high proportion of pupils had identified learning difficulties and their standards in English were low, though broadly average in mathematics and science. Other pupils reached broadly average standards in each subject. Pupils' progress, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, from the end of Year 2 to the end of Year 6 is satisfactory. In this academic year the pace of learning has improved in all age groups. As a result, standards are rising particularly in writing and in Years 1 and 2. The setting of challenging targets for individual pupils and involving them in assessing their own work is helping to speed up their progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are well aware of the need to eat a healthy diet and to exercise regularly. They thoroughly enjoy outdoor experiences such as exercising in the multi-use games area, gardening and other extra-curricular activities. Pupils are considerate of one another and are aware of safe practices. Attendance rates are good. Pupils benefit from the many opportunities to discuss their learning with staff and partners. This develops them into confident speakers and thoughtful listeners. Pupils have good opportunities to develop awareness of their local area and other national and international communities, though some pupils' understanding of major world faiths is limited. Good attitudes to learning and behaviour, as well as pupils' current academic progress, prepare them well for future learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory because frequent changes of teachers have resulted in some slowing of pupils' progress. In lessons, work is planned carefully to meet pupils' needs. Teachers are assisted extremely well by capable teaching assistants and other voluntary helpers. This enables more help to be provided particularly for those with learning difficulties and higher attaining pupils. A recently introduced initiative to improve pupils' reading in Years 3 to 6, involving teachers and teaching assistants was most effective in speeding up pupils' learning. Lesson objectives are consistently shared with pupils, though occasionally too much time is spent explaining what is to be learnt which reduces the time available to practise new learning. Class management is good and minimal time is lost dealing with misbehaviour. The carefully focused questioning of pupils draws out their understanding. Encouragement of pupils to discuss their work with partners helps to consolidate and extend their learning. Homework provides additional practice for pupils and involves parents in their children's learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum has been recently successfully revised to provide a greater emphasis on linking learning between different subjects. Purposeful links are resulting in pupils having better attitudes to learning and making faster progress in English and mathematics. A strong emphasis on practical tasks and discussion promotes collaborative learning and good relationships. The curriculum is enriched well through well thought out visits to develop pupils' experiences. For example, they visited a large multicultural school in a local city and went with some of these pupils to the local mosque to find out more about Islam. Social aspects of learning are skilfully developed through other subjects. For example, discussion of photographs of pupils taken around the school raised awareness of 'dilemmas' as well as providing opportunities for reflective writing. Pupils are encouraged to raise funds for local worthy causes as well as to support national and international charities. International links with schools abroad are currently being sought to extend pupils' understanding of life in other countries. The good range of extra-curricular clubs is highly appreciated by pupils as well as sporting competitions with other local schools.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Safeguarding procedures meet current government requirements. Health and safety measures and risk assessments promote a safe environment. Procedures to ensure good attendance are fully in place. Vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are provided with effective support by staff and outside agencies. Good arrangements are made to assist gifted and talented pupils. The assessment of individuals' work is thorough and targets are set to assist pupils' further development. Pupils are actively involved in assessing their own work and in developing an understanding of their next steps of learning linked to levels of the National Curriculum. For example, at a consultation meeting with their parents and teacher, pupils explained the positive features of their work as well as suggesting what could be improved and they must do to achieve the next level of the National Curriculum. This approach was

applauded by parents. A typical comment was, 'Excellent idea, enjoyed hearing what really goes on at school'.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, supported by governors, has dealt very well with the substantial staffing difficulties since her appointment. Despite many unavoidable changes of staffing, the headteacher has maintained standards and facilitated the recent rapid school improvement. Teachers have been empowered to take on a greater role for subject responsibility. Together with the headteacher they have enlivened the curriculum resulting in pupils making better progress. Teaching assistants' roles have been enhanced. They play a valuable and effective part in working with small groups, such as in the regular Year 3 to 6 reading advancement groups as well as supporting teaching in lessons. The tracking of pupils' progress is well established and used well to support the learning of individuals in Years 1 to 6. However, the school has an insufficient grasp of the progress of different groups of pupils to check the impact of school improvement initiatives and set challenging future targets. Governors promote community cohesion effectively, particularly locally. For example, they organised fundraising with the village residents to provide a multi-use games area. This facility has benefited both the school and local people. The school is well advanced in working towards forging links with an Australian school.

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?	3
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	3
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

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/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which 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	2
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 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

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	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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**

Thank you for welcoming me to your school. I enjoyed my visit and I was impressed by your good behaviour and interest in learning.

Leavening gives you a satisfactory education. The school is run well by the headteacher, staff, and governors. The school cares for you well. Your achievement is satisfactory during the time you are at the school. Your progress has speeded up this year – so continue to work hard. You reach expected national standards by the end of Year 6.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage the accommodation and resources have been improved. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. To improve the children's learning I have asked the school to develop the way it checks and records their attainments and to use the information better to plan work for individual children.

You enjoy lessons and appreciate all the school provides. Your attendance is good. You get on well together and you are courteous to visitors. The way teachers involve you in the assessment of your work is good and appreciated by your parents. The linking of subjects into topics has improved the way you are taught this year. I particularly enjoyed reading your writing about mountains and Africa. You have many opportunities to keep fit and healthy both during school time and in clubs.

Your headteacher, staff and governors have continued to improve the school since your previous inspection. They check each pupil's progress well in Years 1 to 6 and set you targets for improvement. I have asked the school to refine these systems further to determine the progress of different groups of pupils, such as year groups and boys and girls, to make sure of the success of its work to raise standards.

I appreciated talking to you about your work and watching you learn. I trust that you will keep doing your best and working with the headteacher and other staff to help them to continue to improve the school. I wish you well for the future.