

Ravensthorpe Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107699
Local Authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	331884
Inspection dates	24–25 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Kathryn Dodd

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	384
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr K Rawson
Headteacher	Mr C Lockwood
Date of previous school inspection	8 March 2006
School address	Myrtle Road Ravensthorpe Dewsbury West Yorkshire WF13 3AS
Telephone number	01924 326610
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Almost all the pupils at this much larger than average sized school are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The vast majority are of Pakistani heritage and speak English as an additional language, with almost one quarter of pupils at an early stage of learning to speak English. The proportion of pupils leaving or joining the school other than at the start of Year 3 is higher than usually found. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average, as is the proportion with a statement of special educational need. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is also well above average. The school serves the local community, where there is significant social and economic disadvantage. The school holds the Activemark and Healthy Schools awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school, which provides good value for money. Some aspects are outstanding, such as the quality of care, guidance and support provided to pupils and their families, the partnerships fostered beyond the school and the very effective way in which it promotes cohesion, both within the very diverse community that it serves and further afield. Pupils thoroughly enjoy learning, feel particularly safe and make a positive contribution to the school and local community; their personal development is outstanding. Exceptionally warm and caring relationships with adults and between pupils are highly evident. Behaviour is exemplary and pupils consistently demonstrate sensible attitudes to learning. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive. They particularly appreciate that the school provides a 'very positive and encouraging environment for everyone' where their children are 'able to celebrate both their own culture and learn to respect the cultures and traditions of others'.

As a result of good quality teaching and learning and an effective curriculum, pupils of all ethnic backgrounds, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those at an early stage of learning to speak English, make good progress from their significantly lower than average starting points. Although standards by the end of Year 6 are below average, they are steadily improving and pupils' progress is accelerating. This is notable in mathematics, where pupils of all ages complete work that is well matched to their varying abilities. In English, standards are lower. Limited language skills sometimes restrict the pace of pupils' learning and younger pupils do not always complete work that is sufficiently challenging. Pupils' progress accelerates in Years 5 and 6. Consistently good and sometimes outstanding teaching and learning contribute to this picture. High expectations, skilful questioning by staff to check pupils' understanding and frequent opportunities for pupils to discuss their learning together, typify these best teaching practices. These qualities, however, are not yet consistently well embedded in all classes. A good curriculum provides a wonderful range of exciting and memorable learning experiences that contribute significantly to pupils' thorough enjoyment of school and to their sense of achievement.

Pupils' good academic achievement and outstanding personal development are the result of good quality leadership, management and governance. Strong commitment to providing a fully inclusive education, within an exceptionally caring, safe and supportive setting, underpins the school's ethos. An extremely watchful eye is kept on the personal and academic progress of individual pupils. However, leaders, managers and governors do not yet make the most effective or efficient use of the exceptionally detailed records of pupils' academic progress to evaluate the school's overall performance or to influence the scope of their monitoring. Nevertheless, there is a strong sense of shared responsibility and accountability for bringing about improvement. Efforts to eradicate any barriers to learning and to raise standards are paying dividends. Good improvement since the previous inspection is seen in pupils' more regular attendance, strengthened partnerships, particularly with parents, and in pupils' outstanding personal qualities. This demonstrates that there is a good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the best teaching practices are fully embedded in all classes, particularly to provide work that challenges the younger pupils in English.
- Make improved use of the records of pupils' progress to influence the school's monitoring and self-evaluation processes.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Although standards by the end of Year 6 are below average, pupils of all ethnic backgrounds, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those at an early stage of learning to speak English, achieve well from their significantly low starting points. In 2008, standards were higher in mathematics and science than in English. In recent years, the proportion of pupils making progress at a faster rate than expected nationally has started to increase, although this is more notable in mathematics than in English. School data and inspection evidence indicate that this trend of improvement is set to continue. Standards currently in Year 6 in mathematics, for example, are now broadly average, and pupils are set to exceed their challenging learning targets. Standards in English remain below average. Pupils' progress accelerates in Years 5 and 6. Pupils' improved language skills, coupled with consistently good quality teaching and learning, contribute to this picture.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. Pupils' enjoyment is reflected in the enthusiastic way in which they participate in everything on offer. Pupils feel a keen sense of belonging to their vibrant school and to their community. They are eager and proud to contribute positively to it. They relish opportunities for taking on responsibilities, such as school councillors or as 'Red Hats'. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They respond extremely well to the consistent application of a clear code of conduct and to the high expectations of their attitudes, which are regularly celebrated and valued highly. Mutual respect and courtesy with adults and between pupils pervades. Pupils say confidently that incidents of bullying are rare and that they feel totally safe and secure. Pupils show great sensitivity and respect for the similarities and differences of individuals within their school. Consequently, they learn together harmoniously. Similarly, pupils' knowledge of their cultural and faith differences is impressive. Pupils' excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles shows in their eagerness to take part in many energetic sporting activities and to make healthy choices at lunchtime. These outstanding personal qualities, along with good academic achievement, prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education. Attendance has improved since the previous inspection and is now close to the national average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good teaching and learning enable pupils to achieve well. Good organisation, very positive relationships, effective use of praise and careful deployment of highly supportive teaching assistants all make a strong contribution to pupils' good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are at an early stage of learning to speak English achieve well because they have good support within the classroom to complete work that is matched carefully to their needs. In mathematics, pupils of all ages are taught in groups of similar ability. As a result, work is usually well matched to their varying needs and standards are rising. In English, however, planned activities for the younger pupils do not always challenge them sufficiently well to enable them to progress at a good rate. Although there are examples of

good teaching and learning in all year groups, in Years 5 and 6, they are consistently good and sometimes outstanding. As a result, pupils' progress accelerates. Here, a combination of lively and fast moving teaching presents ongoing challenge. Skilled questioning that checks pupils' understanding at every step, along with regular opportunities for pupils to discuss their learning together, ensure that pupils rise to the high expectations placed upon them. These best teaching practices are not as consistently well embedded in other classes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

A good quality curriculum enables pupils to make good progress. A strong commitment is made to providing a curriculum that offers a very broad, enriching, exciting and memorable variety of learning experiences. The range of trips, including a residential visit, visitors and clubs on offer is excellent. These, along with many other creative activities such as in the 'craft carousel' sessions, contribute significantly to pupils' thorough enjoyment of school and to their sense of achievement. Similarly, a keen emphasis on promoting pupils' personal development and well-being ensures that they can achieve well academically. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are at an early stage of learning to speak English achieve well because they access a good range of individualised support programmes. This, along with encouraging support from adults in lessons enables them to learn effectively alongside their peers, having full and equal access to the curriculum. Pupils' achievement in basic literacy skills and in information and communication technology is sometimes held back because there are not always enough opportunities for pupils to practise them across other curriculum subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pupils' care and welfare are at the very heart of the school. Exceptionally high quality pastoral support is evident in daily practices. Rigorous attention is given to making sure that the school's safeguarding arrangements are firmly in place. Relationships between adults and pupils are extremely positive. Pupils are very confident that someone is always on hand to offer support and to respond promptly if they place a note in the 'tell me' box. Concern for each child's welfare extends beyond school. Excellent partnerships fostered within the locality, such as with the mosque and with many external support agencies, reflect the school's commitment to providing seamless support. Tireless efforts to help parents to understand that poor attendance adversely affects their children's achievement, to engage them in school life and to offer opportunities to extend their own personal and academic skills are contributing successfully to a picture of rising standards. Regular special events, such as a 'Health and Beauty Day' are very well attended and highly valued by parents. The academic performance and personal development of every child is very regularly and closely monitored. Staff provide regular opportunities for pupils to assess how well they are getting on and to check what they still have to do to achieve their individual learning goals. Very supportive marking provides pupils with a clear view of how they can improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership, management and governance are good. Pupils achieve well, within an exceptionally caring, safe, supportive, and fully inclusive setting due to the effective leadership of the

headteacher. Governors have strengthened their work since the previous inspection. They share the same vision as staff, who all strive to meet it with equal determination. Senior leaders and subject coordinators are hard working and very committed, and there is a strong team spirit. Despite the many and diverse challenges faced, pupils make good progress and their personal development is outstanding. The promotion of community cohesion is outstanding so that pupils' knowledge about culturally, socially and economically diverse communities nearby and further afield is impressive. The deputy headteacher skilfully ensures that accurate information about the progress of each pupil is collected meticulously. Leaders and managers, however, do not yet make the most effective or efficient use of this wealth of information to evaluate the school's overall performance or to influence their choice of monitoring activities. Nevertheless, the school's mission to provide an 'oasis' for pupils and to be a focal point for the community is highly effective. Excellent partnerships fostered nearby such as with schools, churches, and local community groups, support agencies and with parents all successfully extend the quality of education on offer.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
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 the warm welcome you gave us when we inspected your school. We really enjoyed being part of your school community. You were eager to talk to us and answered our questions thoughtfully, politely and maturely. Your behaviour was excellent; you showed wonderful attitudes to your learning and it was good to hear that you feel so very safe in school. Adults take excellent care of you and give you lots of encouragement. I particularly enjoyed reading the display of your work about what makes a 'good friend' and seeing how well you care for one another and learn together in peace. I was impressed with how much you know about the different cultures and faiths within your school, in your community and around the world. You get lots of chances to learn by taking part in exciting activities, such as the 'craft carousel', by going on trips and taking part in lots of clubs. No wonder you told us that you enjoy coming to school so very much.

Your parents told us how very pleased they are with your school too. You go to a good school. Although by Year 6, the standards you reach are not as high as expected for that age, the rate at which you learn is faster than expected. Your good progress and brilliant attitudes to learning are the reasons why you are well prepared for going to secondary school. Even though the adults who work at your school know that you do well in your learning, they still search for ways to improve your school. This is why we have asked the school to make sure that:

- make sure all teaching is the same as the best seen and that the work that the younger pupils are given, particularly in English, always gives them the chance to show what they are capable of
- school leaders make even better use of the information they collect about how well you are learning, so that they find out how you might do even better.

You can help by making sure that you always tell your teacher if your work is too easy for you, by checking what you still have to do to reach your learning targets, and, of course, by continuing to try your very best in everything you do.

I wish you all the very best for a successful future.