

Michael Syddall Church of England Aided Primary School

Noels Court, Mowbray Road, Catterick Village, Richmond, North Yorkshire, DL10 7LH

Inspection dates 12–13 September 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils' achievement is good. They make good progress and attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is above average in reading and mathematics although not as high in writing.
- Teaching is mostly good and some is outstanding. Teachers and pupils have supportive relationships and teachers plan lessons which help them to learn well.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils say that they feel safe. They enjoy learning and are keen to do their best.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. They are polite and courteous at all times.
- The determined leadership of the headteacher, supported by an equally effective senior leader, has resulted in significant improvements in a relatively short space of time. Both achievement and the quality of teaching have improved since the previous inspection.
- The governors are ambitious for the school and are increasingly effective in holding the school to account. They are well-informed and know their school well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The teaching of writing is not as strong as it is in other subjects because pupils are not given enough first-hand and interesting things to write about.
- Pupils are not actively involved enough in their learning and do not have sufficient opportunities to learn on their own.
- Pupils do not have regular opportunities to use the skills they are developing in English and mathematics in other subjects.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 lessons, one of which was a joint observation with the headteacher. They observed a small-group intervention in phonics and a one-to-one intervention in mathematics. They listened to pupils read in Year 1.
- Inspectors took account of 15 questionnaires completed by the staff. There were only five responses to the Ofsted on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and as a result the results were not available to the inspectors.
- They held meetings with the school council and with a group of pupils from Year 6 and talked informally with other pupils at lunchtime and break time. Inspectors talked to eight members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. They also had discussions with senior leaders as well as leaders with other responsibilities including the leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Inspectors observed the school at work and looked at a range of documentation including internal and external information relating to pupils' progress, their workbooks, school improvement planning and the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its own performance. They also considered reports written by the local authority, documents relating to the management of teachers' performance, minutes of governing body meetings and safeguarding and child-protection documents.

Inspection team

Peter Eeva, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

John Pattinson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (the pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after) is lower than average
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- Since the previous inspection the school has been through a period of change including a change of leadership at senior level and other staffing changes.
- There is a significant number of pupils who have joined or left the school other than at the usual time and the proportion of pupils from service families is larger than average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to be involved in their learning and to learn by themselves
 - making it possible for pupils to apply the English and mathematical skills and knowledge they have developed across all subjects.
- Raise attainment in writing further by providing pupils with more exciting first-hand experiences to write about.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- By the end of Year 6 pupils reach above-average standards and have made good progress during their time in school. While standards in writing are above average they are not as high as in reading and mathematics and some boys do not achieve as well as they could.
- Pupils get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and settle in well. They make good progress in Reception and develop their knowledge of the sounds letters make so that they enter Year 1 with standards that are expected of pupils of their age.
- Progress continues in Key Stage 1. Pupils develop as readers and many can write sentences using correct grammar and punctuation. Most pupils understand the basics of times tables and can calculate well.
- Progress accelerates in Key Stage 2, especially in Years 5 and 6, as a result of good and sometimes outstanding teaching. However, progress in writing is slower than in reading and mathematics because pupils do not have enough interesting first-hand experiences to write about.
- From a low point in 2011, achievement has improved because of teachers' higher expectations and leaders' effective use of data to track pupils' achievement. There are effective systems in place to check on pupils' progress throughout the school and, as a result, the school can quickly identify any gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills. Action can then be taken to provide support to boost pupils' learning.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make the same good progress as that of their peers as a result of the timely and effective interventions to meet their needs. Teaching assistants provide high-quality support when it is needed both in class and in small groups and one-to-one sessions.
- The pupil premium is used effectively to make sure that any pupils who are at risk of underachieving do as well as they can. This has led to those who are eligible for the pupil premium making as much progress, and sometimes more progress, than that of their peers. They reach the same standards in English and in mathematics and sometimes higher than those of their peers.
- The most-able pupils make similar good progress to reach above average standards at the end of Year 6.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved, particularly in Key Stage 2, and this is reflected in the improved progress pupils are making especially in reading and in mathematics.
- Some teaching is outstanding. In a Reception class children were absorbed in a wide range of activities about spiders and were eager to talk about what they were learning.
- Teachers mark pupils' work carefully. In the best marking, constructive feedback from teachers suggests how work can be improved and pupils respond to these suggestions, often at length.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well and have a clear understanding of the needs of different groups of pupils including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. They provide effective support to these pupils which helps them to achieve well.
- Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and want them to do their best. Good relationships are typical and pupils are keen to succeed. A Year 5 class energetically threw themselves into a starter activity which meant that they were more than ready for an exciting lesson.
- Pupils develop good skills and understanding in both English and mathematics. However, they are not given sufficient opportunities to further develop these skills in meaningful contexts regularly in other subjects.

- Occasionally, the pace of learning slows because teachers talk for too long and when pupils have grasped what is required of them. As a result some pupils lose interest. This is particularly the case in some Key Stage 1 lessons.
- Teachers use the data available to them to plan lessons which interest their pupils. However, sometimes pupils are given too much guidance and so pupils do not routinely learn by themselves and are not fully involved in their learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour around school and in lessons is good. The school keeps careful records of behaviour which confirm that this is typical.
- Pupils are invariably polite and courteous and are proud of their school. As one boy explained when asked what he would change, 'Nothing really, it's pretty much perfect'.
- In the playground, pupils play well with each other and look out for those who have nobody to play with, even inviting an inspector to go in goal. They use the play equipment sensibly but say they wish they had more.
- The school has an effective system for managing behaviour and rewarding good work which all pupils understand. Pupils say that they know exactly how to behave in and out of class and treasure their 'golden time'.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and that since the headteacher arrived bullying has almost stopped and any that occurs is dealt with effectively.
- Pupils are clear about how to stay safe in a range of situations including when using the Internet.
- The wide range of after-school clubs and activities and the good teaching of physical education contribute to the development of pupils' well-being. The school is developing plans to improve this even further.
- Although attendance is low it has improved as a result of the determined efforts of the school. The school is understanding about the particular circumstances of some parents returning from active duty in the armed forces and the resulting need for some pupils to take holidays in term time. The mobile nature of part of the school community has also affected attendance in the past.
- Pupils have opportunities to take on responsibilities such as being buddies and worship assistants and take their roles very seriously.

The leadership and management are good

- The school is led very well by a determined headteacher who is ably supported by an equally effective senior leadership team and by leaders at all levels. All staff have high aspirations for pupils and adopt a tenacious approach to ensuring that each pupil is able to achieve their best.
- The school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its performance are thorough and as a result the school has an accurate picture of its strengths and where improvements need to be made. Areas for improvement are prioritised and are reflected in well-designed plans which are carefully monitored to see if they are proving to be successful.
- There are effective systems for monitoring the performance of staff. Teachers are held accountable for the progress their pupils make and any increases in salary are closely linked to these outcomes. Appropriate training to improve teachers' skills has helped to improve the quality of teaching.
- The school provides many varied opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding and these are real strengths in this happy and friendly school community.
- The curriculum meets pupils' different needs and helps prepare them for the next stage in their education and to live in a diverse society. The school's new venture 'HMS Heroes' is proving to

be popular.

- The curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage is stimulating and interesting and has an appropriate balance of adult-led activities and those that children choose for themselves.
- All staff are committed to promoting equality of opportunity and all pupils have equal access to the different after-school clubs and activities and to the many educational visits which they thoroughly enjoy.
- Safeguarding and child-protection policies and practice meet current requirements.
- After a period of intense support the local authority now provides a lower level of support which is highly valued by the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are well-informed about all aspects of the school's work and in particular about what the data provided for them are telling them about pupils' performance and the quality of teaching. They challenge the senior leadership team in relation to the targets that have been set. Governors are familiar with the national Teachers' Standards and use them to help manage teachers' performance. They are ambitious for the school to continue to improve and actively support leaders in their drive for further improvement. Governors check that the pupil premium funding is used appropriately and are aware of the positive difference it is making to pupils' achievement. They are active in seeking training to help them fulfil their roles increasingly effectively.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	121609
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	425842

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	174
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robert Knowles
Headteacher	Alison McHarg
Date of previous school inspection	11 January 2012
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