

Leavening Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121453
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	380244
Inspection dates	31 January 2012–1 February 2012
Lead inspector	Lesley Clark

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	67
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Neil Audsley
Headteacher	Melanie Mellor
Date of previous school inspection	6 May 2009
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Lesley Clark

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed nine lessons taught by five teachers. Meetings were held with three groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. The inspector took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. She observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including: the tracking and assessment of pupils' progress; the tracking and assessments of pupils in the reading improvement group; the school development plan and documentation relating to safeguarding. Questionnaires returned from staff and pupils, and 37 questionnaires from parents and carers were analysed.

Information about the school

This school is much smaller than the average sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. A low proportion is known to be eligible for free school meals. Almost one third of pupils have special educational needs, which is an above average proportion. Very few have a statement of special educational needs or are disabled. The school meets the current floor standard.

The headteacher has a part-time temporary secondment to another primary school. The Key Stage 1 teacher manages the school in the headteacher's absence.

The school holds the Inclusion Quality Mark Level 4, the Activemark and the Sports Mark. It has Healthy Schools status.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
 Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall Effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. Pupils say, 'Small school but big learning!' This sums up their good achievement which is underpinned by an exceptionally rich curriculum. Pupils make good progress from starting points that are generally below average. By the end of Year 6, their attainment is above average in English, especially in reading, and broadly average in mathematics. Fewer pupils reach the higher levels for their age in mathematics compared to English. The accuracy of pupils' spelling in Key Stage 2 does not always match the good quality of their punctuation, vocabulary and paragraphing.
- Teaching is consistently good with some that is outstanding. Teachers use up-to-date technology effectively to make teaching points clear and to enliven pupils' learning. Learning through discovery and investigation are key factors in pupils' good achievement. Lessons are lively, interesting and fun. Pupils are fully involved in checking their work and so they understand what to do to improve it.
- Pupils behave well. They enjoy coming to school and their attendance is high. Pupils enjoy playing with their friends. Lessons are rarely interrupted because pupils are keen to learn and they respect their teachers and classmates. The school is a well-ordered, safe environment and older pupils are proud of their role in helping to make it so.
- Leaders, managers and the governing body have a clear vision for excellence. This is evident in the outstanding curriculum and pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The impact is seen in pupils' high levels of confidence, independence and willingness to learn. The school has made significant progress since the last inspection in terms of raising pupils' achievement, improving the quality of provision across the school and developing a thriving Early Years Foundation Stage. It has yet to have full impact on raising attainment to consistently above average.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that more pupils reach the higher levels for their age in mathematics by:
 - sharpening the focus in guided mathematics sessions to ensure that pupils build on what they know
 - making sure that average-attaining pupils are given suitably different work which is more closely matched to their varying levels of competence
 - developing the role of the mathematics leader in driving improvement.
- Improve the accuracy of pupils' spelling in Key Stage 2 so that it matches the good quality of their punctuation, vocabulary and paragraphing by:
 - increasing the focus on linking letters and sounds throughout Key Stage 2.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils make good progress in lessons; they are attentive and try their best. Parents and carers have an accurate view of their children's progress because the school keeps them very well informed about how well their children are doing and how they can help at home. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress. They become confident, capable learners because they have a good range of challenging indoor and outdoor activities which prompt them to learn through finding out for themselves. For example, nursery children set up a building site and organised the transport of sand by wheelbarrow from one site to another, using cones to indicate different labelled zones.

Pupils make the best progress in reading because they read regularly both at home and in school. They read for pleasure and discuss favourite authors enthusiastically. In lessons, pupils read and follow the instructions themselves. They are taught to 'talk it, solve it' and so they quickly become self-reliant and good at consulting each other. Pupils in the reading improvement group are given effective additional help, which involves reading to an adult every day and practising new skills. After intensive support, these pupils narrowed the gap significantly between their performance and performance nationally, with most making almost a year's progress in one term. Attainment in reading is broadly average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6.

Reception children and pupils in Year 1 make exceptionally good gains in linking sounds to letters because this is extremely well taught. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have not benefitted from this structured approach to reading and writing. The overall quality of their writing is marred by inaccuracies because they do not know systematic or irregular spelling patterns sufficiently well. At the same time, their extensive vocabulary, good use of paragraphs and a wide range of punctuation mean their writing communicates well and engages the reader.

Attainment in mathematics is broadly average; few pupils reach the higher levels for their age. In lessons, higher-attaining pupils undertake very challenging tasks and this pushes their learning on at a fast rate. Most average-attaining pupils tend to do the same work which is not always appropriate to their individual levels of competence. Pupils say, 'Various people should have more time to work and some less time because some struggle and some are really good.' In one lesson, some average-attainers struggled to use a protractor

correctly to measure reflex and obtuse angles whereas others completed the task quickly and accurately.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The large majority reach nationally expected levels for their age and others are narrowing the gap, year by year. This is because their needs are identified early and the school makes good provision for individual learning for both higher and lower attainers.

Quality of teaching

Parents and carers have an accurate view that their children are well taught. Typically, lessons are based round practical activities that encourage pupils to learn through questioning, exploration and discovery. Pupils say, 'You learn it yourself, it's not just teachers talking to you. It's a better way of learning.' Teachers allow sufficient time at the end of lessons for pupils to check their learning. At the end of a mathematics lesson, for example, pupils were asked to jot down 'one thing you didn't know about and one thing you have learnt today'. Clear learning objectives and success criteria guide pupils as to what they are expected to achieve by the end of the lesson. Teaching is most successful when it is exactly tuned to the needs and capabilities of specific groups. For example, in one lesson, children in the Reception class were in no doubt how to read words with 'ee' because they had practised the sound, identified it in different words and then gone on a great adventure collecting pictures of sheep outside. 'We'll find them and save them from the witch!' they cried and were keen to read the words on each 'saved' sheep. Occasionally, pupils' learning slows in guided mathematics sessions because these are not always firmly focused on helping pupils to build on what they know and understand. As a result, some have gaps in their knowledge and skills and others consolidate what they know already without making further advances.

The planned curriculum gives pupils extensive opportunities to use and apply their literacy and numeracy skills, which has a significant impact on the achievement of pupils with special educational needs and those who find it easier to learn practically. For example, 'enterprise' activities, which involve a competitive sales pitch, writing letters and managing a budget, develop pupils' leadership and negotiating skills, meeting deadlines and providing high quality, cost-effective outcomes. Higher attainers are involved in working with others of similar ability in different schools in a 'Tournament of Minds'. Class 'philosophy' books reveal extensive in-depth discussions pupils have at home and among themselves about issues such as 'Is it always wrong to tell a lie?' The teaching promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. A very small minority of parents and carers expressed concerns about bullying. Pupils from different year groups and key stages say they are sure there is no bullying. Older pupils were shocked when they were asked if there was racist or homophobic bullying and said they knew these were wrong. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 explained, 'Sometimes people are mean to you and won't let you join in their games. There's a bit of pushing and shoving.' They explained exactly what to do if this happens and said, 'You say "Stop it!" and then if that doesn't work you tell the teacher who sorts it out and you play with someone else.' When asked to rate behaviour out of ten, they agreed '8½ is about right.' Incident and behavioural records confirm that behaviour is

usually good. Older pupils explained that the 'gold card' reminds them to take their responsibilities seriously because it gives them privileges in return.

Lunchtimes and playtimes give pupils great variety of activity including skipping games and competitive sports on the multi-use games area. As a result, pupils learn to share, take turns and organise popular activities, such as leading dancing to rock music. The school's strong family atmosphere is cemented by different residential trips for pupils from Reception upwards. From these, pupils learn independence and confidence. Visits to an inner city school extend their cultural awareness and competitive sports with other schools help them to have a well-tuned perspective on attitudes and behaviour. Pupils feel safe and understand clearly what constitutes unsafe situations. Parents and carers agree that their children feel safe in school.

Leadership and management

Since the last inspection, leadership, management and governance have successfully raised achievement and improved the quality of teaching. This has been achieved by stringent self-evaluation and effective development planning with an unwavering focus on high achievement for all. Successful steps taken so far towards this goal demonstrate the school's good capacity to improve and raise standards further. Professional development is used well to improve and sustain good teaching quality. This includes visiting other schools in order to learn from best practice and team teaching and mentoring within school. The school has yet to see the full impact of some of its strategies to raise attainment, such as the current one on improving key skills in guided mathematics sessions, to ensure that attainment is consistently above average. Middle leaders are closely involved in this process. However, the role of the mathematics leader is less well developed than that of the literacy leader in terms of checking learning across the school and evaluating the impact of new initiatives.

The curriculum is outstanding because it has a profound impact on pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development. It is dynamic in terms of promoting active, investigative learning through topics such as 'wheels, wings and water'. Pupils' interests are taken fully into account and they extend these through research and practical application. The curriculum also gives pupils an exceptionally wide range of additional learning experiences, such as mountain biking, which develop concentration, stamina, cooperation and leadership skills. The result is articulate and ambitious young people who know how to achieve their goals.

Leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body, promote equality and tackle discrimination well. They make good arrangements for safeguarding to ensure that children are safe and that child protection is effective.

Glossary

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.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
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.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



2 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Leavening Community Primary School, Malton, YO17 9SW

Thank you for your friendly welcome when I inspected your school. A special 'thank you' goes to all the different groups of pupils who spent time talking to me and showing me their work.

You go to a good school. It helps you to make good progress. You are well taught and your teachers are good at making sure that you spend most of your lessons working on interesting, practical tasks. You behave well and you are kept safe in school. I was impressed by your confidence and good social skills. The curriculum is outstanding. It helps you to turn into articulate, ambitious young people who are keen to do well and work hard in lessons. Your school is well led and managed. I have asked your school to do two things to make it better still.

- I have asked your teachers to make sure that more of you reach the higher levels in mathematics just like you do in English. I have asked that they make sure that those of you in the middle groups have suitably different work from each other so you can make faster progress. I have also asked them to make sure that guided mathematics sessions help you to build on what you know.
- I noticed that although in Key Stage 2 you use good words, punctuate well and use paragraphs correctly, some of your spelling is inaccurate. So I have asked your teachers to make sure they help you learn which letters link to which sounds.

I hope you enjoy these new challenges. You can help by making sure you say when the work is too easy or when you find something hard to understand.

Yours sincerely

Lesley Clark
Lead inspector

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