

St Hilda's Ampleforth Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Station Road, Ampleforth, York YO62 4DG

Inspection dates	6–7 July 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The new headteacher has high aspirations and acted quickly to bring about improvements in teaching, learning and assessment at key stages 1 and 2.
- Teachers use their good knowledge of individuals to plan learning accurately matched to their needs. Strong relationships promote learning well.
- Pupils develop a good understanding of grammar which they apply well to their writing. Pupils develop their mathematical understanding well through well planned practical work.
- Pupils at different ages and stages make generally good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The most able, disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs make at least expected rates of progress.
- Pupils behave well, enjoy learning and contribute well to the positive and cooperative ethos of the school.
- Governors have developed a sharper approach to checking the impact of leaders' actions.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In the early years, the quality of teaching and learning is not consistently good. Adults do not regularly identify and record next steps in children's learning. Too few children exceed the expected levels of development.
- Teachers are in the early stages of taking on lead responsibilities for subjects.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the leadership and management of the early years to bring about more precise assessment, more consistently good teaching and higher levels of children's development.
- Ensure that teachers with a subject leadership responsibility make a greater contribution to school improvement.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The new headteacher brings extensive leadership experience and gives strong direction. He communicates his high expectations effectively to staff and governors. The school improvement plan is sharply focused on tackling accurately evaluated weaknesses. Objectives are clear and actions have been implemented decisively to improve staffing and the quality of teaching. Pupils, staff and parents welcome his high aspirations and fresh approach.
- The headteacher manages the performance of staff effectively. His evaluation of teaching accurately identifies strengths and areas for development. He takes effective action to support improvements in teaching. Instability in staffing temporarily affected the continuity of teaching and learning in one class this year but this has been overcome with the arrival of a new full-time teacher. The newly qualified teacher has been inducted well and is well supported by her mentor and other staff.
- The headteacher is outward looking and has enabled staff to learn from other schools in the region. Additional specialist support from the local authority, following the inspection of the partner school, has contributed to improvements at St Hilda's. As a result, teachers are more secure in teaching grammar and encourage lively and purposeful writing. Teaching is making better use of practical resources in mathematics to develop fluency in arithmetic and enable pupils to solve mathematical problems.
- The headteacher has strengthened the use of assessment through regular tests aligned accurately to the new national curriculum. Test analysis has helped teaching to focus precisely on individual weaknesses. Plans are in place to broaden assessment methods to evaluate the depth of learning and identify misconceptions. Marking and feedback to pupils is now frequent and specific and provides helpful guidance for pupils.
- The headteacher is developing leadership effectively across both schools. Some middle leaders are new to their role this year and others will take on a new leadership role in the autumn. Subject leaders have taken responsibility for analysing pupil progress data for the first time this year. Leaders of the early years and mathematics at the partner school have only visited St Hilda's termly, although they have met with staff on shared curriculum days. They have provided constructive suggestions and advice but have had limited time to support planning or to evaluate the impact of actions. More time for middle leaders, and common times for staff development in the coming year, are designed to strengthen the leadership of teaching and learning across the schools.
- The special educational needs coordinator actively seeks advice and resources from other schools and agencies. As a result, staff identify needs accurately and pupils receive effective support to tackle a range of difficulties, including dyslexia.
- Shared provision with the partner school enables pupils to widen their experience through a broad and balanced curriculum, including music and French. Outdoor learning, funded by the primary sport and physical education (PE) premium, provides challenge and develops initiative. After-school clubs, including ukulele and badminton, will be extended in the autumn with the addition of sports coaching.
- The additional sport and PE funding has been used effectively to provide challenging experiences, such as a climbing wall, and accessible ones such as keep fit with parents. Pupils have also benefited from inter-school sports competitions and cricket coaching.
- Pupils take their learning about different religious beliefs and life in modern Britain seriously. They visited a mosque in Bradford last year and the girls wore headscarves as a mark of respect. They have gained experience of different parts of Britain through visits to Edinburgh, Middlesbrough and York. Topic work develops their awareness of different parts of the world. A magistrate's workshop enabled pupils to understand how the law works.
- All the parents spoken to, or who responded to the online questionnaire, were highly positive about the school.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The governing body supports the high aspirations set by the headteacher. Since the partner school was inspected in November 2015 the governing body has brought a sharper focus to its questioning and is increasingly confident to ask for evidence of impact. Link governors have developed a first-hand knowledge of school improvement issues through visits with subject leaders. Governors understand the contribution of pupil premium funding to meeting individual needs but are less clear of its impact on academic progress. A correctly identified priority in the school improvement plan is to improve governors' challenge in relation to pupils' progress over time.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff are trained appropriately and the required checks are in place. Staff identify vulnerable pupils' needs accurately and keep full records of the liaison with a range of agencies and the planning and review of individual cases. The governing body took part in a recent local authority safeguarding audit and have acted upon the recommendations.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teaching is typified by strong relationships, good questioning and productive dialogue. Well-planned tasks generally meet the range of needs and abilities in the mixed-aged class. Staff use their good knowledge of the pupils well to plan tasks that meet the wide range of needs in the class.
- Staff use half termly assessments accurately to check pupils' attainment against the higher expectations set by the new national curriculum. These are checked with other schools. The introduction of regular testing and the analysis of pupils' answers have helped to identify precisely specific weaknesses. School assessments correlate well with the 2016 results in the new national tests in Year 2 and Year 6. Plans are in place to widen the scope of assessment by using talk to assess pupils' understanding and misconceptions.
- Marking gives pupils clear feedback and identifies next steps in learning. Pupils regularly use their personal targets to improve their work in lessons.
- The good use of practical resources enables pupils to explore problems and grasp mathematical concepts. Teachers challenge pupils effectively to reason and explain in mathematics. Methodical tasks pitched at the right level enable pupils to make good progress in mathematics.
- Teaching displays good grammatical knowledge and enables pupils to understand English language and to extend their writing with a wider range of language forms. Pupils' writing becomes more varied and expressive over time. Pupils develop good handwriting and presentation.
- A new school library promotes reading well and pupils participate in a reading challenge provided by the library service. The encouragement and rewards for wider reading are not sufficiently systematic.
- At key stage 1, earlier in the year, leaders identified a lack of clarity in objectives for writing and limited opportunities to practise and extend writing. As a result, a few pupils made less progress in writing than in reading or mathematics. Currently, pupils are developing their writing and handwriting skills securely in response to clear guidance and constructive feedback. On occasion, the needs of Reception children are not fully catered for when taught with key stage 1.
- Pupils who have special educational needs are supported well as result of careful assessment. When questioned, parents and pupils spoke very positively about how well pupils' needs were identified, the helpfulness of the support provided and the progress made.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are keen to learn and have positive attitudes. They are stimulated by the teaching and concentrate well in lessons. Staff are developing younger learners' ability to persist with tasks and overcome difficulties.
- A school assembly, led by the headteacher, centred on a personal family story which carried moral impact, promoted respect and stimulated spiritual reflection well.
- Pupils enjoy the opportunities for outdoor learning which provide personal challenge and opportunities for teamwork and initiative.
- Pupils' particular difficulties are identified well and pupils appreciate the support given to overcome obstacles to learning.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are friendly and cooperative. The atmosphere in the school is calm and orderly and pupils move about sensibly.
- Pupils of different ages play cooperatively and happily together, using the good range of equipment in the playground.
- Parents and pupils said that children are safe in school and that they are well looked after. Any occasional bullying or name-calling is handled well by staff. Pupils are able to explain the steps they take to ensure they are safe on the internet.

- Attendance has remained below average. In part, this is due to illness and medical needs which have a disproportionate effect on measures of attendance in a small school. Parents receive warnings for taking children on unauthorised holidays in term time. Good attendance is celebrated.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Overall, current pupils are making at least expected progress from their starting points. Most pupils across the school are reaching the standards expected for their age. When they are not, this is sometimes due to special educational needs.
- In 2016 the majority of pupils met the nationally expected standards in the tests at the end of key stages 1 and 2.
- In recent years, attainment has been average or above at the end of key stage 1. The proportion meeting the required standard in phonics (letters and the sounds they make) has been broadly average. Small numbers account for variation from year to year.
- In 2015, weak outcomes at the end of key stage 2 were due to the particular difficulties faced by some pupils in this small year group.
- The most able are on track to exceed age-related expectations in mathematics and some are on track to exceed in reading. Teachers indicate that progress by the most able in writing is not as strong but this may reflect their caution while standards remain uncertain nationally.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium are making at least expected progress and most are on track to meet their age-related expectations. When pupils are adrift, further action is taken to overcome obstacles.

Early years provision

requires improvement

- Numbers are too small to comment on outcomes on an annual basis. Over the last few years the proportion reaching a good level of development has been variable and no children have exceeded national expectations. Currently, children appear to be making broadly typical progress.
- The quality of teaching is not consistently good and has been affected by difficulties in finding the best arrangement for teaching key stage 1 alongside the early years. The balance of responsibilities between adults is not as effective as it could be. This is reflected in the learning journeys documenting the progress of each child. Most observations are recorded by the teaching assistant and few by the teacher. The quality of evidence is limited and next steps in learning are not identified.
- Parents complete a form about children's interests and discuss their children with staff in the weekly 'stay and play' sessions. However, they do not make ongoing comments about their child's progress in relation to the early learning goals.
- The headteacher and the early years leader recognised these weaknesses and action has been taken to introduce a more formal assessment system in autumn 2016. The early years leader is based in the partner school and her termly visits to support and monitor developments are not frequent enough. The headteacher has increased the early years leadership time from the autumn term. Training and visits to other settings are supporting the development of the newly qualified teacher's skills in phonics.
- The teaching assistant interacts well with children and stimulates their interest and involvement in imaginative activity while developing their knowledge, understanding and vocabulary. Sometimes when children are playing independently adults do not provide them with a clear focus or challenge.
- A recent safeguarding audit carried out by the school confirmed to the local authority that the required policies and procedures are in place.
- There are no disadvantaged children eligible for additional funding in the early years.

School details

Unique reference number	121475
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10003783

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	25
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Wilson
Headteacher	James Pynn
Telephone number	01439 788357
Website	www.st-hildascofe.n-yorks.sch.uk
Email address	admin@st-hildascofe.n-yorks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24 March 2011

Information about this school

- This is a very small primary school. There are two classes: one with Nursery to Year 2 pupils, the other with Year 3 to Year 6 pupils.
- Children attend Nursery on a part-time basis in the mornings.
- More pupils than average join or leave the school between Nursery and Year 6.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium fluctuates from year to year, from above to below average. Currently, the proportion is below average. The pupil premium is funding the school receives for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is average.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2015. A teacher is leaving at the end of the summer term; replaced by a newly qualified teacher who took up post in April 2016.
- In April 2015, the school federated with Hovingham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School. Both schools share a governing body and headteacher.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed parts of lessons in both classes, with the headteacher.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour around school and in the playground. He also observed an act of collective worship.
- The inspector scrutinised pupils' work and the early years learning journals with the class teachers.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher and teachers responsible for leading English and special educational needs. Telephone meetings were held with teachers at the partner school leading early years and mathematics. A meeting was also held with the newly qualified teacher.
- The inspector met with a group of governors and a representative from the local authority. He also had telephone calls with two representatives from the Diocese of York.
- The inspector met with a group of pupils and heard a pupil read.
- The inspector held discussions with parents at the start of the school day and took account of 11 responses on Ofsted's online parent survey, Parent View. There were no responses to the online staff and pupil questionnaires.
- The inspector checked the school website and looked at a number of documents in school, including minutes of the governing body meetings, pupils' achievement information, performance management records, and the school's self-evaluation and development plan. Attendance records and information relating to safeguarding were also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Bernard Campbell, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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