

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

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121475
<b>Local Authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	359021
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 March 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kevin Johnson

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	29
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dr Rosalind Garnish
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Maureen Skinner
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 June 2008
<b>School address</b>	Station Road Ampleforth, York North Yorkshire YO62 4DG
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector observed eight lessons and saw three teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at national assessment data and the school's assessments, samples of pupils' work, school policies, minutes of meetings of the governing body and safeguarding documentation. Also taken into account were 13 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, as well as those completed by members of staff and pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Does teaching challenge all pupils consistently, particularly in mathematics?
- Does the curriculum provide for all pupils' needs, in all age groups?
- What impact has the school's federated partnership had on bringing about improvement?

## Information about the school

This is a very small primary school in which all pupils are White British. Very few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The main school comprises two mixed-age classes with seven pupils from Reception to Year 2 in one and nine pupils from Years 3 to 6 in the other. A nursery class provides places for village children, not all of whom transfer to the Reception Year. Since 2008, the school has been part of a federated partnership with another primary school, in which the headteacher leads both schools, each maintaining its own governing body.

The school's achievements with regard to promoting pupils' health and the curriculum are recognised in several awards, among which are the Activemark and the Primary Science Quality Mark.

**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: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good school in which there has been significant improvement since the last inspection. Leaders have strengthened the quality of teaching and learning and improved the curriculum through positive work within the federated partnership. Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and has improved and some aspects are outstanding. The good quality of care, guidance and support has had a positive impact on pupils' academic and personal development, most notably in the way in which potentially vulnerable pupils are helped to achieve. Leaders have an accurate view of the school's effectiveness and demonstrate clearly good capacity for sustained improvement.

When children enter the Nursery, their stages of development, although variable, are generally below the expectations for their age. They get off to a good start, because of the strength of the provision. Good progress continues through the Reception Year, where, along with Years 1 and 2, children benefit from the continuity of provision and learning which the small class size allows. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 build well on their earlier achievements. All make good progress from their relative starting points. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities progress well because of the effective strategies put in place to support both their learning and social needs. Attainment varies from year to year, depending on the individual differences within the small cohorts. Inspection evidence shows that current attainment in both Year 6 and Year 2 is broadly average. Nevertheless, leaders have accurately identified weakness in mathematics, which is a focus for improvement throughout the school.

Teachers' effective use of assessment information has resulted in good teaching and learning, which accounts for pupils' good progress. The curriculum provides rich learning opportunities which benefit pupils' personal and academic achievement well.

Pupils respond well to the care, guidance and support they receive. They say they feel safe in school, are mindful of one another and contribute well to daily routines which help the school to run smoothly. Although spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, the school is aware that there are too few opportunities through which pupils can gain a meaningful understanding and appreciation of communities beyond their own locality.

Local authority advice and support and the opportunities drawn from working with a partner school have generated renewed purpose and direction for the school. All who are involved in its work are strongly committed to its continued success.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attainment in mathematics by enabling pupils to apply their mathematics skills more widely, across the curriculum, for problem solving and investigation.

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- Provide more opportunities for pupils to understand and appreciate the contribution to society made by communities from beyond the locality of the school. ğ

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils learn well in the classroom because they are attentive and keen to do their best. Despite the age differences within classes, pupils work productively together. They are confident enough, during discussion, to ask their teacher for clarification or share their own views and this is helpful to everyone in the class. Pupils settle quickly to activities and enjoy the challenges of new work. They assess their own progress frequently, thereby gaining a good understanding of where they have been successful and of what they need to do next.

Pupils read well and their writing has improved because these aspects have been given high priority in the past. This resulted in some exceptional Year 6 performances in English in 2010. School assessments and inspection evidence indicate attainment in Year 6 is average overall. The school is aware of the need to provide opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical investigation and problem-solving skills across the curriculum in order to help raise pupils' attainment. Within both key stages, the school has targeted additional support, where needed, very effectively and, with consistently good teaching, has improved progress for all pupils so that all are on track to achieve well from their starting points.

Pupils enjoy school. They behave well and are generally well mannered and polite. Relationships are good in school, but pupils' understanding about wider multicultural issues is, at best, satisfactory. Their understanding of what it means to maintain a healthy lifestyle is good. Pupils are active in sports and in their garden, where they produce vegetables for the school kitchen. They are keen to take on additional responsibilities. Older pupils fulfil an important social role during lunchtime by taking care of younger pupils at the dining table. Some have organised and run their own after-school puppet club. The small cohort sizes mean that all pupils constitute the school 'discussion group' in which everyone has a voice. Pupils demonstrate how enterprising they are through their work in the community. For example, they contributed ideas to the Village Plan, which brought about some improvements to a local playground. Their involvement in the usual round of seasonal celebrations in the church gives them a high profile in the community, in addition to the sale of vegetables which they do not need for themselves. Pupils' above-average attendance, good personal qualities and aptitude for showing initiative is good preparation for their future economic security.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

Teachers plan lessons well and take account of the different ages and abilities in their classes by ensuring that all are challenged at an appropriate level. This was clear in a mathematics lesson, for example, where the youngest learned about right-angles and how to identify them, while the eldest used protractors to measure and draw angles of varying sizes. As a consequence of teachers' high expectations, pupils are diligent and present their work well. Occasionally, the beginning of a lesson lacks urgency because resources are not prepared well enough in advance so time and pace are affected. Good use is made of electronic whiteboards to add clarity to explanations and keep pupils on their toes. Relationships in lessons are positive and supportive. Pupils know what is expected of them and are encouraged to work independently. Sensitive and well-focused support from teaching assistants makes a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and progress. Teachers use formal assessments well to set targets and check progress. Marking is good and pupils find it helpful in measuring their day-to-day progress.

The school has worked successfully to improve the curriculum. There are good, enriching opportunities for pupils to nurture their individual skills and interests and broaden their horizons. There is a good range of writing across the curriculum to be seen and, by sharing expertise with the partner school, staff are beginning to tackle cross-curricular work in mathematics. Pupils' learning in the performing arts, mathematics and science benefit from productive links with a local high school. Residential visits and events

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undertaken in conjunction with other schools are a good contribution to pupils' personal development and enjoyment of learning.

Improved provision in the quality of care, guidance and support has had a notable impact on pupils' personal development and achievement. Attendance has risen continuously to above average. Potentially vulnerable pupils progress well alongside others because of effective work with agencies to enhance provision for specific academic and social needs. Relationships with parents and carers are good and there is unanimous agreement among them that their children are well cared for in school. Arrangements for pupils joining and leaving the school are supportive and parents and carers are kept well informed about their children's progress.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## **How effective are leadership and management?**

Leaders have steered the school skilfully through a period of development. They have built on the opportunities that the change in the school's status has brought about by utilising existing strengths successfully and providing well-focused professional development. The resulting understanding among staff of their roles and accountability with regard to improvement has raised expectations and generated a collective drive for further success. Rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning over the past three years, as well as some astute appointments, has improved the all-round quality of provision.

The governing body is very committed to the school's future success and provides strong support, sometimes by taking an active part in monitoring the school's provision. Recent changes within the governing body, however, have lessened the rigour of its challenge and the effectiveness with which it currently holds the school to account. Nevertheless, statutory duties are fulfilled efficiently and safeguarding procedures are robust. Systems for checking the suitability of adults to work in school are good. Staff and pupils are fully aware of their responsibilities and potential areas of risk are monitored regularly to ensure systems and procedures are effective.

The school challenges discrimination in all its forms, works effectively to close attainment gaps and ensures equality of opportunity for every pupil. Leaders acknowledge that the promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. Whilst the school has a high profile within the local area and tentative links with schools farther afield, these are patchy and have limited impact on pupils understanding and appreciation of issues which affect communities world-wide.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The recent change in the leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved provision effectively. Children make good progress from their starting points. Those in the Reception Year, the first to learn under the new leadership, are on track to achieve their early learning goals and exceed them in some areas. For example, a Reception Year child showed some advanced mathematical development when explaining how a cube could be stretched to make a rectangular prism and how a cylinder can be sliced into circles. Teachers plan the curriculum well to cater for individual needs. Nursery-age children have a say in what they want to learn. Their interest in animals led to exciting role-play which took them on an imaginary trip to the African jungle.

Good use is made of outside areas where children can explore and develop skills independently. Some outstanding provision was seen when Nursery-age children built on what they had learned in the classroom by going on a 'treasure hunt' to find shapes hidden amongst the outside equipment. This was also an opportunity for some children to initiate their own play by building a 'hot air balloon' from cardboard boxes and continuing their flight to Africa. Provision for children's welfare is given high priority. There is a welcoming ethos and first-class relationships with parents and carers ensure that they are very much involved in the process of their children's learning and development.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

A minority of parents and carers returned questionnaires. The responses were overwhelmingly favourable. A small number commented on how well pupils settle into school and how well they are supported. There were almost no concerns. Those which did arise were investigated by the inspector and discussed with school leaders.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Hilda's Ampleforth Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received 13 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 29 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	9	69	4	31	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	9	69	4	31	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	7	54	6	46	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	8	62	5	38	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	10	77	3	23	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	8	62	5	38	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	8	62	5	38	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	6	46	7	54	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	6	46	7	54	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	6	46	5	38	1	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	6	46	7	54	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	6	46	6	46	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	9	69	4	31	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## 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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.

**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.**



25 March 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Hilda's Ampleforth Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, York, YO62 4DG**

Thank you for making me so welcome when I came to inspect your school recently. I enjoyed talking to you and was impressed by your politeness and good manners. Also, I noticed your good behaviour and that you get on well together. Most importantly, your attendance is above average, so well done for that and do keep it up!

St Hilda's is a good school. It has improved well since it was last inspected. You make good progress, but the standards you reach in mathematics could be higher. Your teachers work hard to make sure lessons are enjoyable and that you all get the challenges you need. The adults in school take good care of you and this helps you to enjoy school and achieve well.

Of course, even though your school is good, everyone, including you I think, would like to see it become even better. To help that to happen, I have asked your school leaders to do two things. The first is to raise standards in mathematics by giving you more opportunities to use your skills for investigation and problem solving in different subjects. The second thing is to help you to have a better understanding of how communities around the world live their lives and what you can learn from them. Keep on working as hard as you do and enjoying school.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Johnson

Lead inspector

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