

Ainderby Steeple Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121471
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	395726
Inspection dates	20–21 June 2012
Lead inspector	Lindsay Hall

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	85
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Adrian Dixon
Headteacher	Fiona Sharp
Date of previous school inspection	13 December 2007
School address	Station Lane Morton-on-Swale Northallerton DL7 9QR
Telephone number	01609 773519
Fax number	01609 773519
Email address	office@ainderbysteepleschool.org



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



© Crown copyright 2012

Introduction

Inspection team

Lindsay Hall

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed teaching and learning in eight lessons or part-lessons, taught by four teachers over a period of just less than four hours. Four of the lessons were observed jointly with senior staff. Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and pupils. The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation including the tracking of pupils' progress, minutes of the governing body meetings, procedures relating to safeguarding and children's welfare, and the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans. The inspector also listened to pupils read in Year 2 and Year 6. She analysed 44 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, together with those completed by staff and returned by pupils.

Information about the school

Ainderby Steeple Primary is smaller than the average-sized primary school. More than half of the children come from Northallerton and surrounding villages. Almost all children are of White British origin and very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The percentage supported at school action plus or by a statement of special educational needs is average. There are four classes, some of which contain pupils from more than one year group.

In 2011 the school did not meet the current floor standard, which sets the government's minimum expectations for attainment and progress. (This is explained later in the report.) The acting headteacher, who joined the school at the start of the year, is supporting the school on a job-share basis with the permanent headteacher during her period of maternity leave.

The school has a number of awards including Sports Activemark and Healthy School 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 where pupils achieve well. It is not yet outstanding overall because the quality of teaching is not high enough to ensure that all pupils make the consistently rapid progress of which they are capable. There is also inconsistency in the quality of marking and pupils are not always told how to improve their work.
- While there are variations in attainment with very small cohorts, most pupils make good progress from their starting points and achieve well. Attainment is usually above average. Following a dip in 2011 current pupils are attaining above-average standards. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make a good start, particularly in developing language and in personal and social development. Progress in early writing and calculation lags behind because of insufficient focus on these aspects.
- Effective teaching ensures that pupils make good progress over time. There are examples of outstanding practice but a minority of teaching is satisfactory. In the satisfactory lessons the more able pupils are not challenged sufficiently. Written work is of a good quality in literacy lessons but there is not enough opportunity to write at length in subjects other than English.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils are good. The school has maintained above-average attendance levels since the previous inspection. This reflects how much pupils enjoy school. They respond to high expectations in school, have good attitudes to learning and are extremely courteous to each other and to adults. The buddying system helps support younger pupils, while giving older pupils a strong sense of responsibility.
- The school is well led and managed. The headteacher, staff and governors work as a cohesive team to bring about improvement in teaching and pupils' achievement. However, the role of middle leaders is underdeveloped in analysing assessment information and they do not have a full overview of performance in their areas of responsibility.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and accelerate the rate at which pupils progress by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve and providing high levels of challenge, especially for more-able pupils
 - ensuring that marking consistently shows pupils what they need to do to improve their work and achieve their learning targets
 - giving more opportunities for extended writing across the curriculum.
- Accelerate children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage by providing daily independent, structured opportunities to promote their early writing and number skills.
- Ensure that middle leaders are effective by refining their skills in analysing and using assessment information to challenge teaching and raise attainment.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Children enter the Reception class with the skills expected for their age. They settle quickly in this very welcoming environment and make good progress, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. This establishes excellent dispositions to learning which stand them in good stead in later years. Activities are supported well by adults, who engage children and make sure that they enjoy their learning. There is a strong emphasis given to developing speaking and listening skills and independent play. Daily sessions to learn letters and their sounds (phonics) are helping them make good progress in early reading. However, progress in writing and calculation is not as rapid because children are not given sufficient opportunity to practise these daily through structured activities.

Owing to the small size of year groups, attainment compared to national averages can vary considerably year on year. Although there was a dip in performance in 2011, pupils in all other years make good progress in both key stages and attainment is usually above national averages in mathematics and sometimes well above the national average in English. The work in pupils' books, observations in lessons and data that track pupils' attainment show that pupils are making good progress from their starting points, with some making outstanding progress. This confirms that attainment of current pupils is again above average and exceeding the government's floor standard. For example, Year 6 pupils demonstrated above-average attainment when doing advanced work, drawing reflections of 3D shapes and discussing their findings. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because their needs are clearly identified. They receive a high level of support from skilled teaching assistants and a well-focused, extensive range of intervention programmes are used. In their questionnaires almost all parents and carers agreed that their children make good progress and that the school is meeting their particular needs. Inspection evidence shows that this confidence is justified.

Reading is taught well throughout the school, so that pupils become fluent and confident readers. They are enthusiastic about reading and most read independently at home. By the

end of Year 2 most pupils display above-average levels of fluency and read expressively. They can decode complex vocabulary because of their secure skills in phonics. By Year 6 reading skills are usually above average. The high quantity of writing in literacy books contains good use of paragraphs, punctuation and adventurous vocabulary. However, pupils are not always given enough opportunity to write at length in subjects other than English and the quality of writing seen was not of the same consistently high quality.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is good, characterised by teachers' good subject knowledge and the effective use of appropriate learning resources and technology to interest and engage pupils. Behaviour is managed effectively and relationships between adults and pupils are positive. In the best lessons teachers have high expectations and motivate the pupils well, providing them with work that is well matched to their level of ability. In an English lesson younger pupils were keen to come up with ideas for features of a 'good book' review and they made good progress. Across the school, teachers use high-quality questioning, probing to find out what pupils understand and encouraging them to explain their thinking to their 'talk partners'. Pupils are confident speakers, keen to engage in discussion and share their thoughts. Teachers plan work that will appeal to pupils. Older pupils worked with sustained enthusiasm when asked to produce computer-generated reports about the arrival of the Olympic flame that they had witnessed the previous day. A teacher's good choice of activities and a stimulating visual resource engaged pupils in an imaginative learning experience, promoting the use of expressive vocabulary for a diary entry. Almost all parents and carers agree that their children are taught well and that there are good standards of behaviour in lessons. The inspector agrees. As one parent wrote, 'My son has made fantastic progress since joining Ainderby Steeple Primary. His education and social skills have developed so well.'

The teaching of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is good. Teaching assistants are well deployed and contribute effectively to lessons. However, occasionally, teachers' planning does not focus sufficiently on the needs of more-able pupils and their expectations are not high enough; at such times pupils' rate of progress drops. Teaching makes an effective contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teachers help pupils to learn about faiths and cultures different from their own through the religious education curriculum and a wide range of activities, such as the topic on Fair Trade and the recent whole-school topic on the 2012 Olympics and Jubilee. However, teachers sometimes miss opportunities for pupils to do extended pieces of writing to practise and develop their writing skills for different audiences and purposes in meaningful contexts across the curriculum. Although all pupils' work is regularly marked, teachers' comments do not always explain what they need to do to improve their work in order to help them achieve their learning targets.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils are proud of their school, have a positive attitude and value learning, all of which contribute to the good progress they make. There have been no exclusions in recent years and records of incidents indicate that behaviour is typically good over time. The school values and ethos are promoted well. Pupils are friendly, respectful and courteous both in and around the school and there is a strong family atmosphere where pupils support and care for each other. As one parent wrote, 'The children are taught to show respect for others and for the teachers and adults who care for them.' Pupils enjoy the well-planned

assemblies and, if they are aware that one of their friends has a problem or is ill, they include them in their prayers during collective worship. Year 6 pupils relish the opportunity to 'buddy' the Reception infants and sit with them in assembly and play with them at playtimes. They sign a formal contract to confirm this responsibility and, during the inspection, Year 5 pupils were excited at writing to the parents and carers of the new Reception infants introducing themselves. School councillors, the green team and junior road safety officers are very active and take their responsibilities seriously. School librarians help to run the after-school library club once a week.

Pupils enjoy school and their questionnaire responses and discussions confirm they feel safe and well cared for. Attendance is above average and very few are late to school. Parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire all agree that their children feel safe. Pupils have a good understanding of the different types of bullying, including name-calling, prejudice-based bullying and cyber-bullying, and are adamant that it does not occur at Ainderby Steeple. They were confident that, if they were worried about something, they could speak to an adult, who would listen to them and help them sort it out. Through the curriculum they have a good awareness of safety and how to avoid unnecessary risks.

Leadership and management

The headteacher provides good leadership and the school is well led and managed. It has a clear sense of purpose and direction which is shared well by all staff and the governing body. The members of the governing body are knowledgeable and fully involved in the school, making frequent visits and helping to monitor all aspects of the school. They have a good overview of the strengths and the priorities for development and are challenging, holding the school to account. Following the dip in attainment in 2011 the school carefully analysed the reasons. In this small cohort there was an unusually high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and, also, of those who joined the school very late with low prior attainment. However, the school is not complacent and rigorously monitors teaching and tracks progress, and above-average attainment has been maintained. The school is therefore well placed to sustain improvement.

All staff who responded to the inspection questionnaire were positive about all aspects of the school. As one wrote, 'The progress of children is at the heart of every teacher at this school! They are always assessing and reflecting what can be done better to improve outcomes for pupils.' Staff are positive about opportunities for their professional development and the support they receive, especially working with the local cluster of schools, where they benefit greatly from the opportunities to meet and work with other colleagues. However, middle leaders recognise they need to develop their skills at using and analysing whole-school assessment information to have a fuller overview of their areas of responsibility.

There is a strong focus on keeping pupils safe and the school meets the latest government requirements on safeguarding. Promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination are at the heart of the school's work. Each child is valued as a precious gift and the school nurtures pupils' self-confidence very well. There is a strong partnership between the school and parents and carers, who almost unanimously agree that they are kept well informed. The broad and balanced curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It meets statutory requirements and, for the most part, is developing pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills successfully.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
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.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
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.



22 June 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Ainderby Steeple Church of England Primary School,
Northallerton, DL7 9QR**

Thank you for making me welcome when I visited your school. I enjoyed looking at the work you do and talking with you, listening to some of you read and reading the questionnaires some of you completed. Your school provides you with a good education. There are many things I admired about your school and these are a few of them.

- Your behaviour is good and you all get on very well together.
- Your teaching is good and lessons are made enjoyable.
- You enjoy coming to school and make good progress throughout the school.
- The headteacher provides good leadership and ensures that all aspects of the school are well led and managed.
- You are very well cared for in school.

Your headteacher and teachers are always looking for ways to improve and I have asked them to:

- make sure more lessons are as good as the best ones so you can make even faster progress, giving some of you more challenging work
- make sure that when teachers mark your work you are always told how to improve it, so you can reach your learning targets
- encourage you to do extended pieces of writing in topic work
- give children in the Reception class more daily opportunities to develop their early writing and calculation skills
- help some teachers use and analyse assessment information more, so they can check that everyone is making the best progress in their work.

All of you can help the school to move forward by continuing to work hard and by helping your teachers. I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Lindsay Hall
Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.**