

Heworth Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121605
Local authority	York
Inspection number	380281
Inspection dates	20–21 March 2012
Lead inspector	Christine Millett

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	145
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Judith Mannion
Headteacher	Simon Biddlestone
Date of previous school inspection	14 November 2006
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Introduction

Inspection team

Christine Millett

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed teaching and learning in 12 lessons or parts of lessons given by seven members of staff, and held meetings with groups of pupils, parents and carers, two members of the governing body and members of staff. She observed the school's work, and looked at work in pupils' books, school policies and plans, data tracking pupils' progress and records on safeguarding, health and safety and attendance. The inspector took account of the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). The inspector considered the 53 questionnaires completed by parents and carers as well as those from pupils and staff.

Information about the school

Heworth is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The overwhelming majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A very small number is from minority ethnic groups. Almost all pupils' first language is English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average as is the number of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. A significant number of pupils arrive and leave at different times during the school year. The school has achieved a number of awards including Healthy School status, Activemark, Artsmark (gold) and Sing Up! (gold). The school meets the government's current floor standard which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. Since the previous inspection there have been a number of staff changes including the appointment of a new headteacher. The school operates a before- and after-school club for its pupils.

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

- Heworth is a good school. Pupils achieve well in a safe, nurturing environment where they have confidence that adults will take care of them. The school’s strong family ethos permeates school life and is a significant factor in enhancing pupils’ outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Overall effectiveness is good rather than outstanding because while teaching is good, some satisfactory features prevent it from being outstanding.
- Children are provided with a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Reading at the end of Key Stage 1 is above average. By the end of Year 6 overall attainment is above average representing good achievement. Data are well used to monitor pupils’ progress. They show pupils making better than expected levels of progress. Intervention strategies enable disabled pupils and those with special educational needs to make similar levels of progress as those of their peers.
- The quality of teaching is good overall. Pupils make the best progress where pace is brisk. Teachers provide good feedback during lessons. Marking in English is thorough and informative, that in mathematics less so. Very little reference is made to the quality of presentation. A good curriculum provides many first-hand learning experiences.
- Pupils feel safe. Behaviour in and around school is good. However, occasionally pupils are slow to respond to teachers’ instructions. Pupils of all backgrounds show respect for, and interest in, other cultures and customs. Attendance is above average.
- Leaders and managers, including members of the governing body, monitor the work of the school and plan effectively. Their leadership of teaching and management of performance is good. School self-evaluation is accurate. As a result, the priorities in the school development-plan focus on the most important areas for improvement. Parents and carers hold the school in high regard.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning to the highest levels by:
 - ensuring that a brisk pace of learning is maintained throughout lessons
 - raising pupils' expectations of what they can achieve in a lesson
 - stressing the importance of good handwriting and careful presentation of work
 - insisting upon a rapid response to instructions.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils achieve well during their time in school and the vast majority of parents and carers agree. Pupils benefit from consistency in the quality of teaching through the school and therefore their progress is good overall.

Children make a good start in the Reception class and make good progress in relation to their starting points. They go on enter Year 1 with abilities broadly in line with the national average, except in writing which is below average. As a result of good teaching, pupils continue to build well on these skills as they move through the school. Consequently, by the end of Key Stage 1 attainment in reading is above average and writing has caught up with national averages. Overall attainment and attainment in reading are above average by the end of Year 6.

Improving levels of progress were confirmed both from the work seen as well as in the data in the rigorous tracking system. In lessons, pupils can supply well-thought-out, detailed responses to often quite searching questions. For example, in a Years 3/4 English lesson, pupils used very descriptive language to describe their thoughts and feelings in response to a story about whales. Pupils work well independently or in pairs. However, occasionally they are slow to respond to instructions from their teachers. This is not the case in lessons when the pace of learning is brisk and where teachers successfully and consistently convey their high expectations to pupils. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and pupils new to English are well-supported and as a result are making similar good progress to that of their peers and learn well. A group of parents spoke to the inspector of the good progress their children have made as a direct result of the high level of care they have received.

Quality of teaching

Parents and carers were overwhelmingly positive about the quality of teaching in school. They believe their child is well-taught, and rightly so. Teaching is effective because of the positive, caring relationships between all adults and pupils. These also contribute to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teaching assistants form good relationships with teachers and pupils. They ensure that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs as well as other potentially vulnerable pupils are included in lessons and are fully engaged. Staff are adept at asking questions which promote thinking skills, reasoning and the use of appropriate vocabulary. This also has a very positive impact upon pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Reading is promoted well

across the school and pupils have many opportunities to practise their reading skills. Starting in the Early Years Foundation Stage children are developing their knowledge of phonics (linking sounds and letters) in a systematic way. This includes not only learning new sounds but practising writing them as well. Good progress in reading continues throughout the school.

Work is marked regularly and there is evidence of good practice particularly in the marking of extended pieces of writing. This gives pupils a clear understanding of what they have achieved and they are provided with guidance on how to improve their work. However, guidance on the presentation of work is often overlooked and there is not yet evidence of a consistent whole-school approach to the teaching of handwriting. Opportunities for self- and peer-assessment effectively help pupils to improve their written work as do their responses to teachers' marking.

Teachers' good subject knowledge underpins a well-planned curriculum that impacts well upon pupils' achievement and attitudes to learning. In some lessons when teaching and progress are satisfactory pupils' expectations about how much they could achieve are not high enough. However, in the best lessons, teachers set up well-thought-out learning opportunities to develop pupils' skills and understanding. This was seen in a Years 5/6 mathematics lesson where pupils were using the keypad of a mobile phone to explore number patterns. This successfully focused pupils' attention and the practical activities provided opportunities for pupils to demonstrate, extend and apply their knowledge of multiples of three to what they were learning.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Parents and carers are rightly pleased with pupils' behaviour and attitudes to school. A comment made by one parent was typical of those received: 'The school is particularly good at looking after the children and making them feel included.' Pupils and staff also say that pupils behave well in the playground and around school. The inspection findings echo these views. This is a very harmonious community where all pupils work and play well together. Well-ordered systems at lunchtime and playtime ensure these are enjoyable times. Pupils develop a maturity and confidence in their own abilities and are courteous and friendly. Pupils told the inspectors that they consider the school a happy and safe place to be. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage learn to take responsibility. This spills over into lessons where they take some responsibility for managing their own learning, often sustaining concentration well when working and playing individually and in small groups. By Years 5 and 6, pupils have developed good team skills. The school council has worked on bids for grants for school projects and 'playtime singers' engage others in songs and action rhymes in the playground.

Pupils' well-established understanding of right and wrong is developed strongly through the curriculum and the caring philosophy of the school. This has ensured good behaviour and relationships over time. Parents and carers told inspectors how much their children enjoy their time in this school. Poor behaviour is rare because pupils receive good support from all adults and are helped to learn and adjust to situations. Pupils enjoy the playground and say they feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe. Pupils understand the different types of bullying. They say instances are very rare and have confidence in adults to deal with any incidents which may occur. Many feel able to sort things out for themselves. Pupils have a good understanding as to what constitutes a safe and unsafe situation. The curriculum

equips them for life through age-appropriate life skills such as those experienced on residential visits.

Leadership and management

The new headteacher leads by example, and has developed an effective team whose members implement his vision with determination and commitment. The success of the school in accelerating progress is the result of a cohesive team which is led and managed well. Staff are united in their efforts to build on their success and accelerate achievement for all. Good practice is shared across the school and a range of effective professional development strategies ensures that pupils' achievement continues to improve. Astute leadership and management has tackled weaknesses in teaching, gaps in the curriculum and implemented an effective tracking system. Staff training has been effective and the impact upon pupils' achievement is positive. These good developments show the school is well-prepared to sustain further improvement.

The curriculum meets the needs of the mixed-age classes well. It is broad and balanced and includes an extensive range of enrichment activities such as music, drama, sport and art. It is in the process of being strengthened further to provide meaningful cross-curricular links and topics to which pupils can bring their own ideas and suggestions. A wide range of visits and visitors brings learning to life. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils demonstrate very strong social and moral awareness, supporting many charities and showing empathy for those less fortunate than themselves. There are links with children in other countries and themed weeks such as 'Diversity Week' raise pupils' awareness of other lifestyles and cultures.

The governing body is informed very well and is active in providing both challenge and support. Management systems are effective and the school runs smoothly. The school successfully ensures that discrimination in any form is not tolerated and promotes equality in pupils' opportunities for success well. Safeguarding requirements are met and systems and procedures for child protection are in place. The school engages well with parents and carers and plays an important part in the community.

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 up 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.



22 March 2012

Dear Pupils/Students

Inspection of Heworth Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, York YO31 0AA

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when I visited your school recently. I thoroughly enjoyed my time with you and particularly liked having the opportunity to talk to you and to see you in lessons and at play. I also enjoyed listening to some of you read. Here are some of the things I found out.

- You get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and are making good progress during your time in school.
- Teaching is good and you attain above average standards by the time you leave school.
- You told me that you enjoy school and feel safe and secure.
- You think that behaviour is usually good, and I agree. I found that you behave well in and around the school and know how to stay safe.
- You have good relationships with your teachers and you get on well with each other.
- The headteacher, other adults and the governing body are working hard to make the school as good as possible for you.

In order to help you do even better in your learning I have asked the headteacher and your teachers to do the following things:

- make sure that lessons move quickly
- make sure that you complete as much work as possible in lessons
- stress upon you the importance of good handwriting and careful presentation of work
- insist that you follow instructions straight away.

All of you can help the school by continuing to try your best in lessons, coming to school regularly and always behaving well. I wish you all the best in the future.

Yours sincerely

Christine Millett
Lead inspector

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