

Pickhill Church of England Primary School

The Green, Pickhill, Thirsk, North Yorkshire, YO7 4JL

Inspection dates 10–11 September 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils' achievement is good. Pupils make good progress. Standards have risen in Year 2 and Year 6. Children in the Reception class make good progress.
- Teaching is good. It has improved rapidly and continues to do so.
- Pupils are questioned well and encouraged to develop their answers.
- Pupils know clearly what they need to do to improve their work and are given time to act upon that advice.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They care extremely well for one another and say they feel very safe. Attendance is above average.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- The school offers highly sensitive care and support and provides extremely well for pupils' well-developed spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness and their understanding of British values.
- The headteacher and the governing body have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and relative weaknesses. They have clear systems to check how well the school is doing.
- The headteacher and governors have put plans in place which have resulted in improved teaching and ensured pupils make good progress. There has been a particularly successful focus on improving pupils' writing.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, work in mathematics is not well planned to meet the needs of all groups and ages of pupils in the class for pupils in Reception, Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to develop their skills in computing in other subjects.
- New plans to improve pupils' mathematical skills and to offer them more opportunities to use their skills in problem-solving activities have not yet had time to raise standards further.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector held meetings with staff, groups of pupils and the Chair and other members of the Governing Body. The inspector also spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector looked at a range of evidence including the school's improvement plan; the school's data relating to pupils' progress; the work in pupils' books and the school's documentation relating to safeguarding. The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in an assembly and during lunchtimes and breaktimes.
- The inspector observed teaching and learning in four lessons taught by three teachers and a sports coach. He listened to groups of pupils in Years 1 and 2 read. In addition, the inspector made a number of short visits to lessons, accompanied by the headteacher.
- The inspector conducted four lesson observations jointly with the headteacher. He also observed the headteacher reporting back to the teachers on her findings regarding the quality of teaching, learning and pupils' achievement.
- The inspector took into account the 23 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). The inspector also spoke to a group of parents.
- Five staff completed questionnaires and the responses were analysed.

Inspection team

Gordon Potter, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is very much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- All pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well-below average. No pupil who is eligible has taken the national tests for seven and eleven year olds in the past three years. There are too few pupils currently in school to comment upon their achievement without identifying them. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- There are currently very few pupils in school who are supported at school action, and none supported at school action plus nor with a statement of special educational needs, including in the Early Years provision. There have been too few pupils in recent years to comment upon their achievement without identifying them.
- There are morning, lunch-time and after-school clubs run by school staff, parents and external coaches.
- There are two classes: Reception, Year 1 and 2; Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. The headteacher teaches in the class for pupils in Years 3, 4 5 and 6 on a 0.6 basis. The 0.4 teacher who is also the leader for mathematics took up post in September 2014.
- The government's current floor standards do not apply to this school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve the quality of teaching in mathematics especially in Key Stage 1 so that it is consistently good or better, to further raise standards and rates of pupils' progress, by:
 - sharing the good practice that exists in school of how work for mathematics is planned at the correct level of challenge for all groups and ages of pupils
 - improving pupils' skills in mathematics, especially their mental recall, knowledge of times tables and the way they apply their mathematical skills in problem solving activities.
- Offer pupils more opportunities to apply their skills in computing in other subjects.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a very clear view of the school's strengths and the areas where it needs to improve further. She has acted determinedly and skilfully to improve school effectiveness. She has improved the quality of teaching and raised pupils' achievement through improving teachers' understanding of how to measure progress and through highly effective ongoing training for all teachers.
- As a result, the school is a caring, safe and vibrant environment which allows good learning to take place and which enables teachers and pupils to thrive and give of their best.
- She has established strong teamwork and high morale and all teachers welcome taking on responsibilities and the accountability for their own classes. Indeed, the newly appointed mathematics leader has already revised the mathematics curriculum and put plans in place to address areas of relative weakness in mathematics.
- Salary progression has been used well to improve teaching and raise standards because teachers are very clear that they will only be rewarded when their pupils have done as well as, or better than, they should have done.
- The school's plans for the future have appropriate areas for development and clear procedures to check their impact regularly. Targets for pupils' progress and attainment in these plans and in the targets set for teachers' performance are specific and rigorous. These targets have helped pupils make good progress in mathematics and outstanding progress in writing.
- The headteacher regularly checks the quality of teaching. She understands what constitutes good teaching and judges it accurately. She is extremely clear in her feedback to teachers, who respect and welcome her advice.
- The primary school sports funding has been used effectively to develop links with other small schools, to use coaches and teachers' own skills to develop expertise in teaching physical education and to introduce new sports such as basketball. Pupils say they enjoy their lessons. These are contributing well to pupils' physical development and well-being.
- While the school focuses on developing pupils' basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics, it also provides many interesting opportunities for pupils to broaden their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness and their understanding of British values through, for example, the study of art, history and science and through a range of educational visits. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to solve problems in mathematics or to develop their skills in computing in other subjects.
- The school welcomes the support and advice it receives from the local authority and from its education partner. This has helped to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' progress.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors offer robust challenge and strong support to the school. The Chair of the Governing Body is very knowledgeable and is well supported by other governors who understand the school because they have clear areas of responsibility which they regularly check through a programme of school visits. They have clear systems to closely check plans for the future, the quality of teaching, the achievement of pupils and the curriculum.
 - They understand the arrangements to check on teachers' performance and any rewards for good teaching and take great care over appointing staff. The budget is extremely well managed. Although there have been very few disadvantaged pupils in the school eligible for pupil premium funding, governors are knowledgeable about how this funding should be spent. They keep a good eye on the way in which the primary physical education and sports funding is spent and ensure that it has a good impact on pupils' health. They ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities for safeguarding. All staff have been cleared as suitable to work with children and are trained appropriately to keep pupils safe and free from harm.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils say that behaviour is good in their lessons, around school, during assemblies and in the dinner hall. Attention in lessons wanes when the work they are asked to do is completed quickly and they have to wait for new activities. Occasionally, they are slow to act upon instructions and talk over their teachers.
- The school's records show that instances of poor behaviour are extremely rare. There have been no permanent exclusions. Pupils say that they used to have a 'traffic light system' to help them behave well

but they do not need it anymore.

- Pupils show clear respect for one another, are extremely polite to adults and keen to talk about their school and their work. Pupils show maturity and enjoy taking on responsibilities as 'digital leaders' helping others understand how to stay safe on line. Older pupils act as servers at dinner time and help all pupils eat sensibly together.
- Pupils develop social skills through the many opportunities to learn together in the classroom and school clubs. They particularly enjoy singing together and are very proud that they won the national Blythswood Care challenge which develops team-building, research and enterprise skills.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Parents and pupils are certain that pupils are extremely safe and happy in school. There are rigorous procedures to ensure that this is indeed the case with all adults offering highly effective and sensitive care to pupils.
- Pupils feel extremely safe. They are very aware of different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying and homophobic name-calling. They say that there is no bullying. They look after one another well and are able to solve any problems between themselves or by asking their friends or adults to help them.
- Attendance is above average. The school has clear systems to check attendance and encourage pupils and parents to see the importance of coming to school.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is good over time in reading, writing and mathematics in all classes and for all groups of pupils. Activities are often exciting and engage pupils well. For example, pupils in Year 3, 4, 5 and 6 were engaged by their reading of tales about King Arthur and were eager to answer questions about events and characters and develop their own ideas about how to travel back through time.
- Work in pupils' books shows their ability to write at length with accurate spelling and punctuation and the ability to develop their ideas. Good marking helps them to understand how to make their work even better and they are given time to act upon this advice. Likewise, work in pupils' books in Year 2, shows their ability to write confidently about the events of their summer holidays. There is evidence that pupils are making excellent progress in their writing.
- In mathematics in Key Stage 2, work is well planned so that all groups of pupils are challenged with work that is well-suited to their age and ability and stretches them to try harder tasks.
- However, pupils' progress in mathematics is good rather than outstanding. New plans to improve pupils' mental recall and knowledge of times tables have not yet had time to raise standards or rates of progress. Pupils have too few opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in real-life problem-solving activities. Occasionally in the class for Reception children and Key Stage 1 pupils, work is not planned to ensure that all groups of pupils are engaged in challenging activities all the time.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Standards at the end of Year 2 have improved and in 2013 were above average. Unpublished data indicate that standards at the end of Year 2 in 2014 were also above average. Teaching in Key Stage 1 has improved and this has ensured that pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2. As a result, pupils currently in Year 2 are on track to achieve standards which are above those expected for their age.
- Standards have risen at the end of Year 6. In 2013 they were above average. Pupils made good progress in Key Stage 2 in reading and writing. In mathematics, they made the progress expected of them. Good teaching helped them overcome a legacy of underachievement.
- Unpublished data indicate that standards at the end of Year 6 in 2014 were above average and pupils had made good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Evidence in pupils' books and the school's data about pupils' progress show that pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to attain standards that are above those expected for their age. Indeed pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 have attainment which is above the expectations for their age. They are making excellent progress in reading and writing.
- Phonics teaching (the sounds that letters make) is good overall. As a result, almost all pupils have a clear awareness of letters and the sounds they make and understand how this helps them to read words which are new to them. There is a consistent focus on reading across the school. Pupils of all ages speak enthusiastically about the books and authors they enjoy when reading in school and at home.
- While progress in mathematics is good, it is less rapid than in English. This is because new plans to improve pupils' skills of mental recall and knowledge of their times tables have not yet had time to raise

standards or rates of progress further.

- In 2013 and 2014, the most able pupils achieved above average standards and made good progress. The most able pupils in Year 6, and across the school, are now making rapid progress because they are usually given work that 'stretches' them to do their best to help them attain standards that are above the expectations for their age.
- The school is very clearly focused on identifying any pupils who are at risk of falling behind and concentrates on ensuring that all pupils make at least good progress. This clearly shows the school's commitment to promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination. There have been no disadvantaged pupils to take national tests for the last three years and currently there are no pupils with special educational needs in the school.

The early years provision

is good

- The abilities of different year groups vary in this very small school. In the Reception class, in 2014, children made good progress from starting points that were typically those expected for their age. As a result, most pupils had a good level of development as they entered Year 1.
- There is good teaching of phonics and there are many opportunities for children to write.
- Children make good progress when they are learning with their teacher or teaching assistant. They are questioned well and receive clear explanations about their learning, for example, when counting blocks or learning to tell the time.
- Children settle quickly into the Reception class because there are clear procedures to involve them and their parents before they start school. They quickly learn the routines of the Reception setting and are ready to learn. Their involvement in school assemblies and learning, playing and eating with older pupils helps them to feel very safe very quickly. These also contribute to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness and understanding of how to stay healthy. Adults ensure that requirements regarding children's safety are met.
- The leadership and management of the early years provision have improved and are now good. There are clear procedures to assess children's skills and progress and to involve parents in their children's learning. Typically work is well planned by the teacher and teaching assistant to meet the learning needs of all groups of children. This is especially the case in developing reading and writing skills. Learning is less successful in mathematics, especially when children are engaged in activities that are not led by adults. Occasionally it is not clear what children are meant to be learning and consequently progress slows.

WHAT INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS MEAN

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	121510
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	442259

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	32
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Penny Robson
Headteacher	Christine Gabbott
Date of previous school inspection	29 January 2013
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