

East Cowton Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121488
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	380253
Inspection dates	26–27 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Andrew Clark

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	40
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Caroline Turner
Headteacher	Julia Campbell
Date of previous school inspection	12 July 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector visited nine lessons and parts of lessons led by three teachers. The inspector held meetings with representatives of the governing body, the staff and a group of pupils. The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including essential policies, the school improvement plan, information about children's progress and attainment data. The inspector analysed 15 completed questionnaires from parents and carers, as well as questionnaires completed by staff.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. He looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The progress all groups of pupils make throughout the school in mathematics.
- The progress pupils make in reading and writing from the start of Year1 to the end of Year2 (Key Stage 1).
- The involvement of pupils in managing and improving their own learning.
- The effectiveness of the governing body in holding the school to account.

Information about the school

East Cowton CE Primary is much smaller than other primary schools. Currently, all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The school has achieved several awards, including Healthy Schools status, Active Mark, Inclusion Quality Mark and a Global Dimension Award.

The teaching staff have been appointed to the school since the last inspection. The headteacher returned from maternity leave in September 2011 at the start of the term during which the inspection took place.

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. The energy and clarity of vision of the headteacher, with effective support from staff and the governing body, ensures pupils of all abilities are eager to learn and achieve well. The outstanding care, guidance and support and excellent partnership with parents and carers contribute well to pupils' exemplary behaviour and high levels of attendance. The school has rigorous procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of its work and for staff's professional development. As a result, the school has developed well since it was last inspected and there is a good capacity to sustain improvement.

The school is successful in helping groups of pupils of all abilities, including those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable and the more-able, to make good progress and reach challenging targets. Pupils' attainment is above average in English and mathematics by time they leave school in Year 6. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe from harm. They are extremely friendly and considerate towards each other and have a good understanding of right and wrong. They are reflective and thoughtful and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have an excellent knowledge of how to live a healthy lifestyle and take full advantage of many challenging physical activities. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and local community. For example, the school council has been involved in staff interviews and organising fund-raising events.

Teaching is good and, occasionally, outstanding. Relationships are excellent and teachers make lessons exciting through the stimulating use of information and communication technology (ICT), games and puzzles. Generally, lessons are brisk and challenging. Very occasionally, the work during lessons is not matched closely enough all pupils' learning needs consistently. In those lessons, pupils do not always make the best progress they could. Teachers make good use of marking to identify areas for improvement. However, a few opportunities are missed to involve pupils enough in assessing and improving their own work and, therefore, extend their understanding of what is expected of them. The lively and imaginative curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their basic skills through interesting themes. Teachers know their pupils extremely well and track their progress very carefully. Sharply focused support ensures that pupils facing challenging circumstances and at risk of falling behind also make good progress. Parents and carers are extremely proud of the school. A typical example of their views is 'East

Cowton is a fantastic school. I am very proud of it. It is a well organised, friendly and amazing school.'

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' progress and teaching by:
 - ensuring consistently that pupils' learning needs are met accurately throughout the lesson
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to assess, manage and improve their own work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils take pride in their work and present it well. They enjoy learning and are ambitious to achieve well. Pupils read fluently and accurately. Writing is also strong and pupils of all abilities write with imagination and care for a wide range of purposes. They enjoy working independently and with others and make good use of different sources of reference, such as ICT and dictionaries. They combine their skills in writing, mathematics and ICT effectively to produce exciting research topics on 'Human Rights' and 'Ancient Greece', for example. Increasingly, pupils apply their good calculation skills in practical problem-solving situations such as, calculating the prices and profits for items in the healthy tuck shop and village fete. All those skills contribute well to the good progress pupils of all abilities make and equip them well for their future learning.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills levels which are generally typical for their age. Pupils of all abilities make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics through Key Stages 1 and 2. Attainment is above average in Year 6. All groups of pupils build well on their individual starting points at all stages of their education. That is reflected in good trends in the results of national tests and assessments. Very occasionally, pupils do not make the best progress they could when they are not occupied fully at all points of the lesson with work that best matches their needs. More-able pupils make good progress and rise to the challenge of very clear targets. Pupils with special educational needs and or/disabilities make good progress developing both their basic skills and very positive attitudes to learning. The well-planned curriculum ensures that both boys and girls achieve well in a wide range of subjects and there are many good examples of high-quality work in art, design and technology, history and music throughout school.

Pupils work and play in harmony. Older pupils take good care of younger ones. Behaviour is excellent in the classrooms and outside. Pupils show kindness and consideration towards each other and are attentive to adults and other children. They say they feel safe and provide detailed explanations to support their understanding. Pupils have an in-depth understanding of what constitutes a healthy meal and are extremely well-versed on how to avoid the dangers of alcohol and drugs. They take full advantage of the many sporting clubs and activities to improve their physical capabilities. Pupils are competitive and successful. For example, they reach high standards in swimming. Pupils have a good knowledge of and

involvement in the school and its immediate community and benefit from the school's strong partnership with parents and carers. They take their responsibilities such as house captains and school councillors very seriously. They are involved actively in creating school rules such as those for the new lunch time 'Family Service' arrangements. Pupils are thoughtful and appreciate the many opportunities for prayer and reflection. Enjoyment is very evident in the school and it is not surprising that levels of attendance are high.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers and teaching assistants work very closely together to ensure pupils of all abilities make good progress. Team work is a strength of the teaching. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to outstanding and is good overall. Detailed lesson planning and preparation of resources ensure that lessons run smoothly. Teachers often challenge pupils to think deeply and solve problems and carry out investigations by targeting their questions carefully. In most lessons, expectations are high and pupils strive hard to meet them. That is particularly evident in the high-quality well-presented written work. Lessons are regularly brought to life through the use of ICT, role-play, competitions and games. Teachers and support staff are prompt to offer guidance in lessons to correct any misunderstanding. For most of the time, teachers match work accurately to pupils' abilities. However, on a few occasions, teachers do not make the best use of pupils' time in lessons by ensuring that the pupils are consistently engaged in tasks which are matched closely to their abilities. Very occasionally, they do not make certain that pupils get straight down to their work and are as productive as they could be. Teachers make good use of marking and 'target ladders' in English and mathematics to help pupils improve their own work and reach challenging targets. However, they miss some opportunities for pupils to assess how well they are doing and contribute fully to improving their own work.

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

A range of well-planned topics such as those on the local history and Global Awareness makes learning practical and meaningful to all groups of pupils. The school is increasingly developing strong links between subjects, giving pupils good opportunities to apply their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in enjoyable and challenging ways. Very occasionally, the tasks set are too structured and do not give pupils enough opportunity to apply and manage their own learning.

A very good range of extra-curricular activities, sometimes in partnership with other schools or sporting organisations, enriches pupils' personal and physical development. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is very well planned, as are opportunities for those with a gift or a talent. Pupils have good opportunities to learn another language and participate in musical events. A highlight for many pupils and members of the community is the high-quality stage performances in the village hall. The close links with the church and visits to other places of worship such as a Sikh temple contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The school has excellent systems to support pupils who may be vulnerable due to their circumstances. Enthusiastic and well-trained staff maintain meticulous records of pupils' personal development and academic progress, ensuring that their needs are met very well. This work is extremely successful in breaking down significant barriers to learning. A very good partnership with specialist support agencies is established and the school has been involved successfully in projects to develop all pupils' communication skills. The success of the exemplary procedures to ensure pupils' welfare can be seen in the pupils' outstanding behaviour and high levels of attendance. Meticulous monitoring ensures parents and carers receive a wide range of information on their children's progress, as well as frequent and useful guidance on ways to support their children's learning, including making good and safe use of the Internet.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The drive and passion of the headteacher have created an ethos where every member of staff is valued and has an effective role in self-evaluation and school improvement. Monitoring of teaching leads to sharply focused and well-planned professional development, with only a small amount of weaker aspects needing to be resolved. The thoroughness and enthusiasm of all staff to share good practice is embedded in all aspects of its work. That, combined with effective monitoring of pupils' progress, is a hallmark of the school's effectiveness. Staff are supported well by an effective and active governing body. The governing body is well informed and has audited its own effectiveness carefully. As a result of these strengths, the school has maintained a good direction of improvement, despite several staff changes. Self-evaluation is supported by effective systems to gather and act on the views of

pupils, parents and carers and involve them very well in decision-making and school improvement. That has had a significant impact on the quality of the accommodation and the sustainability of good staffing levels and their effective deployment.

The school has a good understanding of its immediate context and is involved in a number of local projects and initiatives. It is developing links with communities in other parts of the world. As a result, the promotion of community cohesion is good overall. The commitment of parents and carers to the life of the school is excellent. They have every confidence in the management of the school and as a result, give time, energy and resources to its development. They make an outstanding contribution to pupils’ learning through their involvement in a wide range of school activities and the use of homework.

The school promotes equality of opportunities successfully. Although occasionally progress varies in lessons, there is no overall difference in progress of the different groups of pupils and both pupils and staff take steps to avoid any discrimination. Robust policies and well-managed record-keeping contribute to good-quality procedures for safeguarding. The school provides rigorous financial management and ensures that it gives good value for money.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start school with skills levels which are, generally, typical for their age. Children of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress. That is a direct result of the good leadership by the Early Years Foundation Stage leader, who has become increasingly well-established in her role over the last three years. Good induction systems support children and settle them into the Early Years Foundation Stage quickly. The school has established many opportunities to visit and work alongside the different pre-school providers that children attend prior to starting school. Excellent links with parents and carers contribute to the smooth start children make. Effective systems are in place to monitor progress and to share information with parents and carers. Children feel safe and are supported by robust welfare arrangements. The quality of teaching and use of assessment are good. A good balance between adult-led activities and those that

children choose for themselves contributes well to all areas of learning. Activities are often exciting and meaningful. For example, children have opportunities for first-hand investigations making good use of the natural areas in the excellent outside areas. However, very occasionally, opportunities are missed to reinforce learning in early communication and number skills through other activities and to deepen their learning through purposeful questioning. Children and staff make good use of a wide range of ICT resources to develop basic skills and learn more about the world around them. Fun and imaginative programmes help children make progress in early reading and writing. As a result of those experiences, children enjoy themselves and are prepared well for their next stage of education.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	2
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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Over a third of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Those that did so are wholly supportive of the school. They commented particularly on the warm, caring ethos and the stimulating learning opportunities. They feel that staff are helpful and approachable and that the school is led well. They feel their children are prepared very well for the next stage of their learning. 'It is a fantastic school. My child is very happy, learning amazingly and growing in confidence before our eyes' is very typical of their views. The inspection report reflects these opinions because it found that all areas of the school's work are at least good and some are outstanding.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at East Cowton Church of England 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 15 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 40 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	12	80	2	13	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	12	80	2	13	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	10	67	5	33	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	9	60	5	33	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	11	73	3	20	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	10	67	5	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	11	73	4	27	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)	10	67	3	20	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	9	60	5	33	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	67	4	27	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	8	53	7	47	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	11	73	3	20	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	13	87	2	13	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and 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.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



28 September 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of East Cowton Church of England Primary School,
Northallerton, DL7 0BD**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school this week. I enjoyed talking to you and seeing you in your lessons and at playtimes. These are some of the things I found out about your school.

- You go to a good school.
- The headteacher, staff and the governing body work very hard to make your school the best it can be.
- You make good progress through school and you reach standards which are above average.
- The school takes outstanding care of you and your behaviour and attendance are excellent.
- You have an outstanding understanding of how to keep fit and healthy and love the many opportunities for sports and games.
- You enjoy your lessons and teachers give you practical and fun things to learn about. Occasionally, the work does not match your needs throughout the lesson.
- Your parents and carers are extremely proud of you and your school.
- You are not always involved in checking how well you are doing and taking steps to make your work even better.

To help you make even better progress in your work, I have asked your headteacher and the governing body to improve the last two points. You can help by always trying your best and continuing to enjoy school.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Clark
Lead Inspector

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