

Ralph Butterfield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121299
Local authority	York
Inspection number	380203
Inspection dates	21–22 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Derek Pattinson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	301
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Whiteley
Headteacher	Angela Mitchell
Date of previous school inspection	3 May 2007
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 18 lessons, taught by 11 teachers and held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils. They looked at the school development plan, a recent report to the governing body from a School Improvement Partner, the most recent headteacher's report to the governing body, the most recent data on attainment and progress, safeguarding policies and records, assessment information, the latest attendance figures and pupils' work in all classes. The 74 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were analysed, as were those completed by staff and pupils.

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

- The extent to which teaching and learning are consistently good as pupils move through the school.
- The impact of the school's re-developed curriculum on pupils' learning, attitudes and motivation.
- The extent to which pupils know how well they are doing and what they must do to further improve.
- How effectively leaders, managers and the governing body drive improvement and evaluate the school's work.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average-sized primary school. The percentages of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language are much smaller than is typical nationally. The proportions of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and who are known to be eligible for free school meals are well below the national averages. The school holds the Basic Skills Quality Mark, National Healthy School status, the Active Mark, the Arts Mark, an 'Investors in People' Award and an Extended Schools' Partnership Award.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Determined and dedicated leadership by the headteacher, supported effectively by her senior leaders, has driven the school to its position of outstanding effectiveness. Since the previous inspection, there has been an unwavering focus on seeking the highest possible outcomes for pupils. This has been secured through an exceptionally rigorous approach to analysing pupils' performance data, the implementation of robust tracking systems and the very high profile given to professional development. As a result, pupils' attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 has remained high compared to national levels for the past five years. The school's self-evaluation is extremely accurate. Issues from the previous inspection have been addressed very successfully. Some exceptional performance, along with the very successful pursuit of equality of opportunity for all pupils, provides clear evidence of the school's outstanding capacity for sustained improvement. Safeguarding arrangements are met fully and have a high profile in the school's work. Governance is good because the governing body is increasingly involved and effective in holding the school to account for what it achieves.

The outstanding care, guidance and support teachers and other adults who work in school provide for pupils are strengths which are appreciated by parents and carers, who hold the school in very high regard. They are rightly impressed by 'the high expectations of work and behaviour' and 'the emphasis on each child as an individual'. Pupils greatly enjoy school, which helps to explain their high levels of attendance. Their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development underpins the school's work. As a result, the school is a cohesive and harmonious community. Relationships among pupils and with staff are excellent. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary, which contributes to their good learning, including the learning of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils have excellent knowledge of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. They feel very safe and secure and know who to turn to if they need help.

Children enter the Reception classes with skills that are broadly typical for their age. They get off to a flying start because of the high quality leadership and provision. Consequently, pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are above average when they enter Year 1. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 and 2 is good overall, with many strong features. However, a few lessons are only satisfactory and teaching does not ensure that pupils always know how to improve and have opportunities in all lessons to evaluate how challenging they found the work. Nevertheless, pupils

benefit enormously from a very coherent curriculum which increasingly creates meaningful links between subjects to add relevance and excitement to pupils' learning. The school makes very good use of external partnerships which make a significant contribution to pupils' learning and personal development.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By December 2012 ensure all teaching is at least good and increase the proportion of outstanding lessons by:
 - injecting greater pace into some lessons so that pupils have enough time to work independently
 - checking that work given to pupils is always at the right level.
- Ensure that pupils always know how to improve and have opportunities in all lessons to evaluate how challenging they found the work by:
 - checking that pupils always have targets and clear steps to success
 - ensuring that marking always helps pupils to move forward
 - giving them opportunities in all lessons to share what they have learnt.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Most pupils arrive at school eager to work and learn because they enjoy being with the teachers and are stimulated by the exciting curriculum. They concentrate very well on their tasks because they are keen to improve and are invariably quick to volunteer answers to questions. Behaviour is excellent, underpinning their work and play and pupils listen carefully to other adults and each other. As a result, pupils have very good attitudes to learning, especially when activities engage and excite them. For example, when teachers use short time frames to aid focus so they are 'working against the clock', such as when Year 6 pupils identified correctly punctuated complex sentences and pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 calculated percentages of numbers. Pupils work together very constructively, often engaging in lively discussion to consider solutions to problems. They use information and communication technology (ICT) to support their learning both in the classroom and through the regular use of the ICT suite. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress as they move through Years 1 to 6. As a result, their attainment is high when they leave the school and this has been the pattern for a number of years. This represents outstanding achievement from starting points which are close to what is expected when they start in the Reception classes. Projections from very good quality tracking for Year 6, both this year and next, indicate that attainment is on track to remain high.

Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in the high level of attendance. They readily comment about 'the really friendly place' and how teachers 'make boring lessons fun'. They steadily make friends, learn to respect the rights of others and live in harmony. They are very aware of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. Their understanding is enhanced through the many well-attended sports clubs which extol the virtues of regular exercise, their consideration of issues which relate to their

emotional well-being, and the high numbers who make healthy lunch choices. Pupils have an excellent understanding about what constitutes unsafe situations, including around water, fire, dangers posed by traffic and the internet. They say there is always someone to turn to if they have a problem. They have a strong voice in school through the work of the school council, eco group and playground leaders, and the raising of money for different charities helps them develop an awareness of citizenship. Pupils take part in community events such as the annual scarecrow festival. However, the school is rightly seeking to extend community links to give pupils greater involvement. Assemblies provide opportunities for pupils to celebrate effort and achievement, reinforce moral values, enhance their self-esteem and build confidence. Their enjoyment of learning, knowledge of right and wrong and the many opportunities for them to work with others, help to explain their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils’ high level of attainment, along with the very strong emphasis given to pupils’ personal development, helps to equip them very well for the next stage of their learning.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	1
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	
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
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	1
Taking into account:	1
Pupils’ attendance ¹	
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Strengths in teaching significantly outweigh areas for development. Lessons are typified by warm relationships, much use of encouragement and praise and effective control strategies, which provide a successful platform for effective learning. Good planning ensures most work is matched to pupils’ varying needs although occasionally this is not the case. Sometimes pupils do not have the opportunity to share what they have learnt. Resources are used well to engage pupils’ interest and extend their learning. Support staff are deployed sensitively and effectively aid pupils’ progress. Challenging questioning often provokes discussion and enables teachers to check pupils’ understanding and adjust tasks. However, in a few lessons, teachers talk for too long, slowing the pace of learning and leaving too little time for pupils to practise their skills and apply their knowledge independently. Occasionally, pupils do not know their targets or have clear steps to success in lessons to help them check on their own progress. Marking is usually helpful but some opportunities are missed to help pupils move forward with their learning.

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

The curriculum has improved significantly since the previous inspection. It now provides memorable experiences and rich opportunities for linking subjects together in meaningful ways. This adds interest, excitement and relevance to pupils’ learning while also making a considerable contribution to their personal development. Very well planned and organised themes and projects, such as a recent playground project, in which the development of important skills, including enterprise skills, is high profile bring learning to life. Also, in the topic on ‘Tudor times’ pupils in Years 5 and 6 learnt about Tudor cooking, instruments, music, weaponry and medicine, designed Tudor buildings and contrasted Tudor lifestyles with their own. Other pupils are interested to learn about ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics as part of a history focus. Music and art are strong features, with the works of famous artists such as David Hockney recreated and celebrated. ICT is used very well by teachers and pupils to support and extend learning. Visits, visitors and a wide range of well-attended after-school activities, many of which involve external partnerships, broaden their horizons.

Providing the best possible care, guidance and support is at the heart of the school’s work. Every pupil and their circumstances are known very well by all staff, who give considerable time to pupils’ care and support using the school’s embedded approaches, systems and structures. For example, the school tracks very carefully pupils’ social and emotional development so that staff can intervene when needed. It creates strong partnerships with outside agencies which help to ensure that pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable and those with specific gifts and talents have the support they need to make good progress both academically and socially. Pupils are prepared well for transition to different stages of their education, ensuring a smooth and seamless move. The promotion of attendance has a high profile.

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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

A key feature of the headteacher’s highly effective leadership is a very clear focus on securing the highest possible outcomes for pupils. She is well supported by hard working senior leaders. The experienced team is constantly seeking to drive up pupils’ progress further to help realise the school’s vision that ‘excellence can bring great success.’ It uses sophisticated systems to monitor and evaluate both provision and outcomes. For example, systems to track pupils’ academic progress are thorough and used very well to ensure pupils’ excellent achievement. These systems immediately highlight any difficulties pupils may be having and pinpoints priorities for improvement so that pupils can be quickly supported. High quality leadership is evident through the quality and comprehensive nature of documentation, such as that supplied to the governing body by the headteacher, the rigour by which the right priorities for school improvement are pursued and the emphasis given to

professional development. Key staff are increasingly held accountable for pupils' attainment and progress. For example, subject leaders know what works well and what needs doing because arrangements to monitor provision, attainment and progress are regular, varied and robust. Lesson observations rightly focus on how pupils learn rather than on how teachers teach. However, their full impact to eliminate satisfactory teaching and improve the quality further has yet to be realised.

Highly successful partnerships with a variety of external agencies and groups have significantly benefited pupils, such as by increasing learning, improving behaviour and developing understanding of global issues. The school has established first-rate links with parents and carers who are overwhelmingly supportive, as shown by their 100 per cent attendance on parents' evenings. Equal opportunities are strongly embedded in the school's way of life; leaders and others place very strong emphasis on meeting the needs of pupils identified as gifted and talented, as well as those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Discrimination is not tolerated and pupils are taught very well about how to treat others with respect. Good arrangements to safeguard pupils, such as through the active involvement of a governor who checks that all policies and procedures are rigorously monitored, mean that parents and carers have every confidence in the school to keep their children safe. The school acts promptly on any issue brought to its attention. It makes a good contribution to community cohesion and, as a result, pupils gain a thorough understanding of people of differing social, religious and ethnic backgrounds. The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development because it has a variety of approaches to help it obtain pertinent information to enable it to closely monitor its work.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
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	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage is very successful in laying down secure foundations for children's learning. As a result children in both Reception classes get off to a flying start to their school lives. The outstanding outcomes for children reflect the excellent provision and outstanding leadership. Consequently, they achieve at levels above what are typically achieved by children of their age when they enter Year 1. Parents and carers rightly hold very positive views about the

vibrant, stimulating, exciting and safe environment for these very young children. Children’s skills on entry are mostly in line with expectations for their age. Very good induction arrangements ensure that they settle quickly. Relationships between adults and children are warm and friendly and teamwork is very strong. As a result, children are happy, feel very safe, behave very well, and are keen to learn. They make at least good and often very good progress from their starting points because of the often excellent teaching, outstanding leadership, very high levels of care and the exciting range of innovative activities that adults plan for them. For example, under the skilled leadership of the class teacher, children develop simple counting skills sitting on an imaginary bus while singing a version of ‘The Wheels on the Bus’ and, through the use of a hand puppet, develop speaking and thinking skills as part of a ‘pretend’ picnic. Thorough assessment arrangements inform planning and ensure that tasks, both inside and outside, are matched very well to children’s needs. Teachers’ excellent knowledge of children is demonstrated in their learning journeys which show clear progress over time. Exciting displays such as ‘blast off’ rockets and chalk pictures of fireworks stimulate imagination, help enthuse children with a love of learning and encourage them to talk about their surroundings. They also celebrate children’s efforts, such as their first attempts at independent writing.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	1
Taking into account:	1
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are very positive about the way their children are educated and nurtured in school. Negative responses were very few with no trends emerging. All parents and carers who responded agreed that their children are happy in school, that the school keeps their children safe and that the teaching is good. Almost all parents and carers agreed that the school helps their children to have a healthy lifestyle and believe that the school is led and managed effectively. Inspectors endorse these positive views. A very small number of parents and carers felt that the school does not deal with unacceptable behaviour effectively or that the school does not take account of parents’ suggestions and concerns. Inspectors discussed these issues with the school and investigated thoroughly. Their findings are in the report.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ralph Butterfield 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 inspection team received 74 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 301 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	46	62	27	36	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	49	66	25	34	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	31	42	41	55	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	42	57	28	38	4	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	45	61	29	39	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	35	47	36	49	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	38	51	35	47	1	1	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)	27	36	40	54	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	34	46	36	49	3	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	36	36	49	4	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	35	40	54	3	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	31	42	39	53	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	44	59	29	39	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.



23 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ralph Butterfield Primary School, York, YO32 3LS

Thank you for your very friendly welcome and for sharing your views on the school by talking to the inspectors and returning the pupils' questionnaires. We thoroughly enjoyed our visit. You told us that you go to a good school. We are pleased to tell you that Ralph Butterfield is an outstanding school. These are some of the reasons why we came to our decision.

- You are always ready to take on responsibilities and you play a big part in making sure that your achievement is excellent.
- The care, guidance and support the school provides is outstanding, thanks to the hard work of your leaders and teachers.
- You enjoy your lessons and behave very well.
- You feel very safe in school and know lots about keeping healthy.
- Your attendance is much better than in most other schools.
- The curriculum is outstanding and there are many exciting things for you to do.
- Teaching is good. Your teachers work hard to make lessons interesting.
- The headteacher knows very well how to make your school even better.

To ensure that you make even faster progress by the time you leave, we are asking your headteacher, teachers and governors of the school to:

- change the satisfactory lessons into good ones and make the good ones even better by making sure that teachers give you enough time to work on your own and check that the work you do always challenges you
- make sure that you know your targets, you have steps to success in lessons to help you learn, your teachers' marking always helps you to improve and that you are given time to share what you have learnt in lessons.

Well done everyone! I wish you all the very best and hope you continue to try hard and enjoy your learning.

Yours sincerely

Derek Pattinson
Lead inspector

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