

Arkengarthdale Church of England Primary School

Arkengarthdale, Richmond, North Yorkshire, DL11 6EN

Inspection dates 25 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils' achievement is good. Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are rising across school.
- Teaching is good overall. Pupils are clear about what they are to learn and have time to get on with tasks. Pupils' understanding is checked as they work.
- Pupils are given many interesting opportunities to see the links between subjects and to develop their skills in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching assistants are highly skilled at teaching pupils and supporting them in their learning.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils say it has improved greatly in the past two years. Around school, behaviour is excellent.
- Pupils care very well for one another and say they feel extremely safe.
- Attendance is above average.
- The school offers sensitive care and support and provides very effectively for pupils' well-developed spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.
- Leadership is good overall. The headteacher offers highly effective leadership.
- The headteacher and the governing body have an extremely clear understanding of the school's strengths and the few areas where improvement is needed.
- In a relatively short space of time, leaders have improved teaching, pupils' achievement and behaviour. They know exactly what needs to be done to make the school better still.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils are not always given time to answer questions fully or extend their thinking.
- Sometimes, work is not planned to help different groups of pupils to learn as well as they should.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was conducted in one day by two inspectors.
- Inspectors held meetings with staff, groups of pupils and the Chair of the Governing Body as well as five other governors. The inspectors also met with the school's local authority education development adviser.
- They 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.
- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in seven lessons taught by two teachers. They listened to groups of pupils in Years 1 and 2 read.
- The inspectors conducted three lesson observations jointly with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher. The inspectors also observed the headteacher and deputy headteacher reporting back to the teachers on their findings regarding the quality of teaching, learning and pupils' achievement in the lesson.
- Too few parents had responded to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) for their opinions to be published. However, inspectors spoke to parents informally and received one letter from parents.

Inspection team

Gordon Potter, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jonathan Chicken

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 known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well-below average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after by the local authority.)
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is well-above average.
- There are currently no pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- There are lunch-time and after-school clubs which are managed by the governing body and run by school staff, governors and external coaches.
- The school has had too few pupils in its last three Year 6 classes for them to be measured meaningfully against the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- There are two classes: one for pupils in Reception, Years 1 and 2, the other for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6. There are no pupils currently in Year 3.
- The teacher of the Reception and Key Stage 1 class has been unavoidably absent from school throughout the current school year. As a result, all leaders, teachers and teaching assistants are new to the school since July 2012.
- The headteacher is the executive headteacher of this school and Richmond Methodist School with which the school has a Collaboration Agreement. The headteacher and other senior leaders from Richmond spend time each week in Arkengarthdale. In their absence – and during the absence of the KS1 teacher – there is an Interim Leadership Plan which involves all staff and governors in the management of the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is outstanding, to further raise standards and rates of pupils' progress, by:
 - improving teachers' skills in asking questions so that pupils are given time to explain and extend their ideas
 - ensuring that teachers always plan work that helps the different groups of pupils to work hard and learn as well as they should.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- The abilities of different year groups vary in this very small school. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, in the past two years, children have made the progress expected of them from starting points that are typically slightly above those expected for their age. As a result, most pupils are ready for their learning in Key Stage 1.
- In recent years, standards at the end of Year 2 have been generally slightly above average and pupils made expected progress in Key Stage 1. In 2013 there were no pupils in the Year 2 class.
- Work in pupils' books and the school's records indicate that pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 are now making good progress as a result of the good teaching of reading, writing and mathematics that they receive. Pupils currently in Year 2 are on track to achieve standards which are above average for their age.
- In the recent past, pupils in Key Stage 2 typically made uneven progress from their starting points at the end of Year 2 and reached standards by the end of Year 6 that were usually slightly above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2013, standards at the end of Year 6 dipped to average in reading and below average in mathematics and writing, reflecting pupils' weaker progress in past years across Key Stage 2. Nevertheless, the school's records and pupils' work books show that good teaching helped pupils to make good progress during Year 6.
- As a result of good teaching, pupils are now making faster progress across Key Stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. This good teaching is helping pupils to catch up quickly on some learning lost in earlier years.
- Indeed, standards are rising across school, but are yet to be fully reflected in the national tests at the end of Year 6. Pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to attain standards that are slightly above those expected for their age. Nevertheless, pupils' achievement from their differing starting points is good.
- In 2013, the most-able pupils achieved above average standards, but too few made more than the progress expected of them. The most-able pupils in Year 6, and across school, are now making faster progress because they are usually given work that 'stretches' them to do their best to help them attain the higher levels.
- No pupils who were known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding have taken the national assessments at the end of Year 2 or Year 6 in the past three years.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because of the highly effective teaching and support that they receive from teachers and teaching assistants.
- 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.
- Inspection evidence shows that pupils make good progress in learning how to read. There is good teaching of how to link sounds and letters and so pupils are able to tackle unfamiliar words. 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.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is good overall. Interesting activities, including drama strategies and role-play, help pupils to see the links between subjects. Teachers are very skilful at explaining what pupils are to learn. Pupils are encouraged to talk through ideas and plan carefully and work together. Teaching assistants are also very skilled at teaching and supporting pupils in their learning.
- For example, the teacher in the class for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 used pupils' enthusiasm and enjoyment of the topic they are studying as a stimulus for writing. Pupils were given time to talk

together and gather ideas for their writing; it was absolutely clear to the pupils what skills they had to develop and how they would know they had been successful.

- Throughout the school, regular opportunities for pupils to write at length in English, and in other subjects, are helping all groups of pupils to make good progress in developing their writing skills.
- In both classes, there is good teaching of mathematics. In a mathematics lesson for pupils in Reception and Years 1 and 2, for example, pupils understood different ways to sort and record information. Interesting activities engaged the pupils. Learning was checked as pupils got on with their tasks. As a result, pupils make good progress in enhancing their mathematics skills.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and it is made clear to pupils how well they are learning. Pupils are given simple and clear targets which help them understand how they can improve their work.
- Teaching and learning are good, rather than outstanding, because pupils are not always given enough time to answer questions fully and explain their thinking. Sometimes the work set does not get the very best out of different groups of pupils, work is too hard for some pupils and too easy for others.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils, staff and parents say that behaviour has improved significantly in the last two years. This is because the headteacher set clear expectations for how pupils should behave in lessons and around school. There are clear rules which pupils have helped to draw up and teachers consistently apply a fair system of rewards and sanctions.
- Indeed, good behaviour was evident in lessons during the inspection. In lessons where pupils were fully engaged in their work, their behaviour was outstanding. Even when work is sometimes too easy or too hard, pupils try extremely hard to succeed. Their behaviour in the playground and in the dinner hall was also excellent.
- Any minor misbehaviour, such as calling out answers over the top of their friends and the teacher, is quickly and effectively dealt with by their teachers. The needs of a very small number of pupils who have significant behavioural problems are managed very well by the school. As a result, learning is not interrupted. There have been no exclusions.
- Pupils show maturity and enjoy taking on responsibilities well. They are very polite and very eager to talk about their school. They respect one another, look after one another, work and play well together. They develop social skills well through involvement in the lunch-time and after-school clubs.
- The elected school council helps to draw up school rules. It offers ideas to improve the playground and raise money for charities. The eco-council is helping to develop the school garden areas. Allied to the care they show one another, these contributions to the life of the school ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is developed well.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Parents and pupils are certain that pupils are safe and happy in school. There are highly effective procedures to ensure that this is indeed the case, with all adults offering sensitive care to pupils.
- As a result, pupils feel extremely safe. They are very aware of different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying and name-calling. They say that there is very little bullying and they are able to solve problems between themselves or by asking older pupils to help them. The school's records show that instances of bullying have decreased significantly in the past two years and confirm pupils' views that instances are now very rare.
- Attendance is above average. This is because pupils enjoy learning as a result of the many interesting topics they study. They are very proud of their school and take care to ensure that their work is well-presented and their handwriting neat.

The leadership and management are good

- In a relatively short space of time, the headteacher has had a significant impact on improving the school. He offers highly effective leadership, has very high aspirations and expectations for his staff and pupils. As a result, there is a welcoming, calm, safe and purposeful environment in school which enables teachers and pupils to thrive and give of their best.
- He is extremely well supported by the deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher who have played a major part in the school's improvement. They have an extremely clear understanding of the school's strengths and the areas where it still needs to improve further.
- Leadership across this very small school is good. All leaders are very capable and manage the school well in the absence of the headteacher. While teachers are new to the school, they willingly take on responsibilities for different aspects of the curriculum and for developments in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The training of teachers is well managed through links with the headteacher's other school, through in-school training and the involvement of the local authority. It is effectively organised and has been successful in improving teaching and the curriculum. As a result, the rates at which pupils make progress have improved. Standards are rising across school.
- Leadership and management are good, rather than outstanding, because although improving, pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching are not yet outstanding.
- The headteacher has clear expertise in using data to measure pupils' progress. The school improvement plan has appropriate areas for development and clear processes to check that it is having an impact.
- Performance management targets for teachers are now rigorous and closely aligned to pupils' achievement. However, these targets have not yet had time to ensure that pupils make outstanding, rather than good, progress over time across the school in all subjects.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher regularly monitor the quality of teaching and they clearly understand what constitutes good teaching and judge it accurately. They are extremely clear in their feedback to teachers who respect and welcome their advice and act upon it. As a result, teaching across the school has improved and continues to do so.
- Funding to support the learning of the very few pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium has been used wisely to provide additional resources to support and develop their basic skills. It is also used to offer pupils cultural opportunities through visits and additional activities at lunchtime or after school.
- The new primary school sport funding has been used effectively to introduce a new sports club and to enable the children to take part in wider inter-school sport.
- While no physical education lessons were seen during the inspection, pupils say they enjoy their lessons and teachers welcome the chance to develop their skills alongside the coaches. 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 opportunities for pupils to see the links between subjects. It offers many opportunities for pupils to write and apply their mathematical skills across different subjects. It builds on pupils' enjoyment of history, art, and music and contributes strongly to their well-developed spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.
- The school welcomes the support and advice it receives from the local authority and its education development advisers who have helped the school to improve teaching. It also welcomes the clear advice it has received in personnel and legal issues.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - In the past two years the governing body has offered highly effective support and rigorous challenge to the school. It has made a telling contribution to the school's improvement particularly through the Collaborative Agreement which has improved leadership. The Chair offers robust leadership and all governors are very knowledgeable about the school. They have clear systems to monitor the achievement of pupils, the quality of teaching and the curriculum and teachers' performance management. They receive clear information about how the pupil premium funding and the new primary school sport funding are allocated and are

very knowledgeable about their impact. They ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities for safeguarding. All staff have been vetted and are trained appropriately to keep pupils safe and free from harm. The budget in this very small school is managed extremely well. As a result, teaching, pupils' achievement, behaviour and leadership are good.

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	121476
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	431354

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	31
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Charles Cody
Headteacher	Mark Allison
Date of previous school inspection	4 June 2009
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