

Whitby, Airy Hill Community Primary School

Waterstead Lane, Whitby, North Yorkshire YO21 1PZ

Inspection dates	27–28 April 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Airy Hill Community Primary School has improved substantially since the previous inspection.
- Effective action by senior leaders and governors, with advice from the local authority, has ensured that teaching has improved and pupils' progress has accelerated.
- National test results in Year 6 have risen sharply to just above average and reflect the good progress that pupils make.
- Good teaching ensures that pupils in all year groups are currently learning quickly and making good progress.
- A comprehensive programme of assistance for pupils with special educational needs and disability ensures that they progress well too.
- An accurate assessment system enables leaders to check the progress of all groups of pupils and provide support when targets are not met.
- Pupils' attendance is average. They conduct themselves well, cooperate with, and respect, the adults who work with them and are keen to learn.
- Parents and pupils are very positive about the quality of education that the school provides, particularly in terms of teaching and the many activities that are available.
- Good arrangements for ensuring pupils' health, safety and welfare mean that they benefit from plenty of personal support when necessary.
- Teaching assistants play an important part in the progress that many pupils make, especially those who are less confident or of lower ability.
- Well-managed and effective early years provision where children behave and develop well enables them to make a very positive start to their education at the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching, although consistently good, is not outstanding because teachers do not routinely notice if individual pupils are off task or require help. Higher-ability pupils are not always fully stretched.
- Marking of lower-ability pupils' work does not identify enough important spelling mistakes.
- In Years 1 and 2, staff changes have affected continuity of pupils' progress over time.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the current consistently good teaching to outstanding by:
 - ensuring that teachers and their assistants detect more quickly pupils who are not working or those who need help
 - provide suitable work designed to fully stretch more-able pupils in all year groups
 - ensure that the marking of lower-ability pupils' work always provides them with sufficient support to help them to improve the spelling of important words or key technical vocabulary.
- Produce and rigorously monitor a plan for ensuring that pupils currently in Years 1 and 2 have fewer changes of class teacher than in the last year.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher and his senior team provide the school with strong and effective leadership. With guidance from the local authority they have transformed the school into one where teaching and achievement are good.
- Staff morale is excellent. Members of staff at all levels are proud to be connected with the school because they know that it has improved quickly and that it now offers education of good quality. One teacher said, 'I love working at the school. There is a fantastic atmosphere and lots of support.'
- The school has effective ways of checking how it is doing and for setting targets for continuous improvement. Leaders monitor development plans robustly and ensure that intended improvements actually materialise according to the intended timescale.
- Middle managers have improved their skills substantially since the previous inspection. As a consequence, the planning of the subjects of the national curriculum is good. There is emerging evidence of some quite innovative and outstanding practice, for example in science, music, and design and technology.
- The very effective ways that leaders at all levels check on the progress that pupils make mean that they detect quickly if there are any groups who are slipping behind and provide extra support to enable them to catch up. The school uses its pupil premium funding well to provide effective extra help for disadvantaged pupils when they need it.
- Good leadership of teaching through regular observation of lessons and professional advice for teachers and classroom assistants has ensured that pupils' progress has accelerated and that the gap in performance between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school has virtually closed. Younger and less experienced teachers say that they get plenty of support and really value the advice they receive from their more senior colleagues.
- There are, however, still aspects of teaching that can be improved further to enable pupils to make rapid rather than good overall progress, particularly in relation to further stretching the most able.
- Performance management arrangements are good and pay is firmly linked to responsibilities, discharge of duties and the progress that pupils make.
- Good promotion of equal opportunities means that disadvantaged pupils do virtually as well as other pupils in national tests in Year 6 and that the school provides extra support for families that need it. The good programme of support for pupils with special educational needs and disability enables this group to progress as well as other pupils in the school.
- Very effective provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptionally well embedded into the wide-ranging curriculum that meets pupils' needs well. Photographic evidence and excellent displays around the school celebrate the success of visits and cross-curricular themes in developing pupils' understanding of the world and its people. Teachers provide plenty of opportunity for pupils to investigate the diversity of cultures and religious faiths that make up modern Britain.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic about the wide range of extra-curricular activities that the school provides. The employment of professional coaches through good use of the primary schools sports funding enables them to try many different sporting activities. The employment of professional expertise enables all pupils to learn to play an instrument.
- The online parental questionnaire indicates a high level of satisfaction with the quality of education that the school provides. However, there is some parental concern about the number of changes of teacher that have been necessary in Years 1 and 2. Parents say they would be reassured by greater stability.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - has improved substantially since the previous inspection. Governors are really enthusiastic about the school. They support through links with subjects and probe and challenge if they think that more can be done for the pupils. They know why the school has improved because they have first-hand experience of the way that it operates on a daily basis. Like the school leaders, they know what still needs to be done because they keep themselves fully informed.
 - ensures that performance management arrangements are effective and that salary progressions are fully merited. Governors understand how the school spends its pupil premium funding and can point to the success it has had in raising the attainment of disadvantaged pupils.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are effective because there are good systems in place, which members of staff implement consistently. School leaders constantly promote a culture of safety and safeguarding. If staff have any concerns about pupils' safety or welfare they always discuss them with parents.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **is good**

- Teaching has improved substantially since the previous inspection when it was deemed to require improvement. It is now consistently good. Teachers have good subject knowledge, plan lessons well, incorporate the use of a good range of interesting resources and ensure that most pupils make at least good progress.
- Much improved Year 6 national test results in 2015 compared with previous years indicate that the quality of teaching has improved over time since the last inspection.
- Teaching assistants really do make a difference because they understand the subjects that the pupils are studying and provide good-quality help, especially for lower-ability pupils, those who lack confidence and those with special educational needs and disability. Through perceptive questioning they get pupils to think and work out answers for themselves.
- There are many examples where teachers provide higher-ability pupils with more challenging work which enables them to make good progress too. However, there are also instances where teachers are not stretching the most-able pupils sufficiently. For example, in some lessons higher-ability pupils do the same work as other pupils, finish it quickly and then have to wait for the teacher to provide them with further tasks. Some of the younger high-ability pupils have the same worksheets as other pupils and insufficient space for their extended writing, which limits the quality of their work.
- Typically, teachers manage their pupils well, explain tasks clearly and maintain a good sense of purpose in their classrooms. Most pupils have all the help that they need and learn relatively quickly. Good questioning of pupils checks whether they have understood and helps them to think about ways of improving their work. Occasionally, however, teachers or classroom assistants do not notice that individual pupils are not making any progress at all because they are busy concentrating on others in the room.
- Since the previous inspection, the teaching of phonics has improved considerably. Consequently, pupils in Years 1 and 2 are now reaching higher standards in reading and learning much more quickly than they were previously. Good teaching of reading, writing and mathematics enables pupils to make good progress in these subjects as they move from Reception to Year 6. Teachers insist that pupils set their work out neatly and usually mark it well to enable them to take steps to improve. There are, however, still instances where work of lower-ability pupils is ticked while incorrect spelling of considerable numbers of common or technical words is not identified. This means that they are not learning to spell basic words quickly enough.
- There are elements of outstanding classroom practice. For example, the support provided for many pupils in science enables them to write up experiments to a high standard while expert music teaching encourages pupils to learn to play instruments rapidly. The teaching of design and technology is also often of a high standard and enables pupils to design and make a range of interesting items such as clay pots, spaceships and model cars.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare **is good**

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils become more confident and mature as they move from Reception to Year 6. They feel that teachers and their assistants are always on hand to assist when they need extra help. Most concentrate well in class and display good attitudes to learning.
- The good range of extra-curricular activities, especially sporting, musical and visits, enables pupils to develop additional skills and interests which all help to increase confidence and broaden horizons.
- Effective levels of supervision when pupils are outside or moving around the school mean that they are kept safe. Pupils themselves say that they feel perfectly safe in school and that bullying is very rare. They are confident that if it should occur then the adults in school would deal with it effectively. Pupils have a very good idea about how to keep themselves safe from a wide range of potential perils, including the misuse of drugs, alcohol and the internet.
- By the time they transfer to secondary education, almost all pupils are ready for work in Year 7 because they have reached expected levels of competence in English and mathematics and can maintain concentration in the classroom.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. It has improved considerably since the previous inspection.
- The school runs smoothly, with high expectations of pupils' conduct. There is no evidence of poor or disruptive behaviour in lessons or when pupils are outside or having lunch. Pupils themselves say that

behaviour in school is good and that teachers manage their classes well so they can always get on with their work without distraction.

- Good behaviour has a very positive effect on the progress that pupils make in lessons. Pupils are attentive and cooperate well with the adults who work with them. It is clear that the behaviour observed during the inspection is typical of the normal operation of the school.
- Incident logs show that over the recent past there have been very few instances of poor conduct. Where these have occurred they have always been followed up robustly, with the involvement of parents and senior staff to ensure that there is no repetition.
- Older pupils are keen to help younger ones and sometimes assist staff in the early years setting. Pupils take a pride in the quality of their work and their appearance. Their attendance is average. Most pupils arrive at school on time in the morning but there are still a few who do not. Persistent absence is running at average levels but the school is taking ever more effective action to eliminate it.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils' attainment has risen substantially since the previous inspection. National test results in Year 6 in 2015 rose compared with those of 2014 to just above average overall. Compared with the national picture, an average proportion made expected progress from Year 2 in mathematics and writing while an above-average proportion made expected progress in reading.
- Proportions of pupils making more than expected progress were average in writing but below average in mathematics and reading. This means that the school's results compared favourably with the national picture except for the performance of some higher-ability pupils, more of whom should have made more than expected progress.
- Since the last set of national test results, attainment has risen further. Average rather than below-average proportions of pupils are now making more than expected progress in reading and mathematics and more are doing so in writing. The performance of higher-ability pupils is improving.
- Children join Reception with stages of development that are below those typically expected for their ages. They make good progress overall in response to good teaching to reach above-average levels of attainment by the end of Year 6.
- Most groups of pupils in the school are currently making good overall progress, especially with reading, writing and mathematics. Where progress had slipped last year in Year 1, there is plenty of current evidence to show that these pupils, now in Year 2, have at least caught up to where one would expect them to be. Where teaching really stretches higher-ability pupils they do well and make very quick advances in their learning, but this is still not always the case.
- Pupils with disability and those with special educational needs make good progress, especially with reading and writing, because the school quickly and precisely identifies the type of help they require. Records show that most are making good progress, often in response to bespoke programmes provided by skilled specialist teachers.
- Pupils' work is extensive and easy to follow because it is set out in a logical fashion. Work in science, history, and design and technology enables pupils to use and develop their skills in writing for a range of audiences. By Year 6 they know how to use computers to write documents and generate graphs and charts. Pupils' work in design and technology is much better than average. Pupils develop design skills well and learn quickly how to successfully construct items such as torches out of drinks bottles, computer-controlled models and models of Mayan headdresses and temples.

Early years provision

is good

- All groups of children in Reception achieve well, including those with special educational needs and disability because provision is geared very closely to the stages of development of individual children.
- The school uses its funding for disadvantaged children well to enable them to catch up with others. For example, those who are well behind with their speaking skills very frequently benefit from individual tuition from a teacher or a skilled classroom assistant to enable them to catch up.
- Children soon get used to the expectations of teachers and their assistants and behave well. They progress quickly in response to good teaching and the opportunity to choose from a very wide range of activities both inside the classroom and in the outdoor area.
- On entry to Reception, children's stages of development are often well behind those expected for their ages. They make good progress and so above-average proportions join Year 1 with a good level of development across the early years profile.

- Children relate very well to the adults who work with them, and they trust them. They are happy in school and enjoy the activities that the staff prepare for them. For example, children dressed as princesses were very keen to explain that they were going to write to the Queen. Occasionally, however, teachers and their assistants do not notice that a few children are not actively engaged in doing anything.
- Effective leadership and management of the early years setting means that the quality of provision for all groups of children continues to improve. A good balance between adult-led activities and those that children choose for themselves enables them to thrive and develop skills quickly.
- A secure assessment programme charts children's progress across all aspects of the early years profile and quickly identifies any who need extra help. 'Learning journey' records including children's work and photographic evidence show clearly how much progress children have made. Often next steps in learning are identified but there is insufficient consistency in the way they are followed up to ensure that the child has actually moved forward as intended.
- The early years setting has a strong and effective partnership with parents, who are very happy about the quality of education their children receive. Parents feel that they can raise any concerns with members of staff easily when they bring their children to school and collect them.

School details

Unique reference number	121345
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10011980

This inspection 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	196
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tom Cooper
Headteacher	Jim Lidgley
Telephone number	01947 602 688
Website	www.airyhillprimary.com
Email address	admin@airyhill.n-yorks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	29–30 January 2014

Information about this school

- Airy Hill is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British.
- There are few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and disability is below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those supported through pupil premium, is average. The pupil premium funding is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children looked after by the local authority.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been several changes of staff at senior leadership level.
- Over the last few terms, Years 1 and 2 have had several changes of class teacher.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' performance in the national tests in Year 6.
- The school has plans to convert to academy status in the future.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons, including four jointly with senior leaders, and looked at a wide range of pupils' written work, especially in Years 2 and 6. They also looked at written work produced by pupils with special educational needs and disability, and listened to groups of pupils from Years 1 and 6 reading aloud.
- They held meetings with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, the special needs coordinator, groups of pupils, a group of parents, representatives of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school's review of its performance, development planning, classroom observation records, safeguarding procedures, incident logs and records of pupils' attainment and progress.
- They took account of 38 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), eight free-text messages from parents and 20 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

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