

Gunnerside Methodist Primary School

Gunnerside, Richmond, North Yorkshire, DL11 6LE

Inspection dates 18 December 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher's highly successful drive and clear-sighted leadership have had a substantial impact since the previous inspection. Her ambition is shared by all staff. The astutely led governing body has an accurate view of the school's performance and of just how successful the school can be.
- Good and occasionally outstanding teaching inspires and excites pupils' thinking and keeps them engrossed. Accurately targeted help in the classroom by support staff contributes well to learning. In individual cases support is exceptionally effective.
- Well led teaching enables pupils to succeed and achieve well, including those eligible for extra government funding, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy the happy, friendly, family atmosphere. Their great enthusiasm and high levels of cooperation in lessons reflect their outstanding behaviour, which is evident throughout the school day. Their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development supports pupils' personal progress really well.
- All pupils are extremely well cared for and looked after. They are well informed about how to keep themselves safe and avoid risk and danger. Strong relationships with almost all parents help to boost their children's progress and achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress is not yet rapid and sustained. In a few lessons, approaches do not inspire and excite pupils' thinking enough. As a result, pupils' progress during the lesson can be a little uneven.
- Occasionally, opportunities are missed to enable pupils to practise their reading, writing and number skills in all subjects.
- Although activities are normally well matched to pupils' age, abilities and needs, questioning does not always relentlessly probe their thinking and understanding.
- Sometimes pupils are unclear about how they can improve the quality of their work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed five lessons of which three were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector made a number of short visits to lessons and walks around both school sites to check the quality of what is provided for pupils.
- The inspector held discussions with: pupils; parents; members of the governing body; school staff, including senior leaders and those with responsibilities such as the leadership of subjects and the local authority educational development adviser.
- The inspector took account of the five responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). The inspector observed the school's work and examined a range of documentation including the school's own records of pupils' current progress, records from the observation of lessons and checking of pupils' work and the school's improvement planning. Records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding were also considered.

Inspection team

Clive Petts, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Gunnerside Methodist is much smaller than the average sized primary school and is federated with Reeth Community Primary School six miles away. Both schools share the same headteacher and governing body. Each morning after registration, some pupils travel to the other school for their lessons. This year, pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 and, by parental choice, one pupil in Year 2 are educated at Gunnerside.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding (which is provided to support the learning of pupils who are entitled to free school meals, in the care of the local authority or the children of members of the armed forces) is a quarter of the national average.
- The proportion of pupils whose learning needs receive the level of support known as school action is below the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is close to twice the average.
- Almost all pupils are White British. A significantly lower than average proportion of pupils is from minority ethnic groups. None are at an early stage of learning to speak English.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set out the government's minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of teaching that is at least good or outstanding by:
 - adopting across the whole school the most stimulating and imaginative approaches to teaching and learning to increase the rates of pupils' progress
 - ensuring teachers use information on how well pupils are learning to ask probing questions to check what pupils know and understand
 - increasing the range of opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects
 - ensuring that teachers' written feedback in their marking makes it clear to pupils exactly what they need to do to improve.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Nursery with a range of skills typical for their age, although the small cohorts do vary a great deal. They are eager to learn and quickly develop excellent levels of self-control and independence. This results in rapid progress developing early communication skills, especially when investigating the world around them.
- Although progress is not as rapid in Reception and Year 1 and 2, pupils achieve well. Their progress in developing early reading and writing skills is speeding up because the teaching of letter and sound relationships is increasingly more effective. By the end of Year 6, standards in English and mathematics are typically above average. The checks made on lessons, pupils' work and school information show that their good progress and achievement lead to almost all pupils exceeding what is expected of them, with an increasing proportion on course to reach the highest levels.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make at least good progress. In individual cases, progress is rapid and achievement is high. This is because thorough staff scrutiny accurately pinpoints pupils' needs and tasks are thoughtfully shaped to ensure their knowledge and understanding is relentlessly challenged. As one parent candidly concluded, 'Kindness without mollicoddling'.
- Increasingly, inspired approaches in joining subjects together and using themes which capture pupils' interest bring learning to life in practical ways. For example, the Forest Schools initiative enables staff to provoke pupils' thinking using positive outdoor experiences, such as when constructing a stable for baby Jesus. This process also helps to spark the imagination of pupils more effectively in their longer pieces of writing.
- Improving teaching of early reading and writing maintains a firm focus on the essential skills of linking sounds and letters and joining words together to construct a sentence. Reading skills of younger pupils are average and improving steadily. Older pupils really enjoy their reading and confidently and eagerly talk about their reasons for choosing a particular author's style or theme. Standards in reading at the end of Year 6 are above average.

The quality of teaching is good

- The good and occasionally inspiring and imaginative teaching ensures pupils of all ages and starting points learn well. All staff set high expectations to get the best out of all pupils. Consequently, the happy, friendly atmosphere in school is characterised by high levels of mutual trust and respect between staff and pupils.
- The use of pupil partner-talking and debating, problem-solving activities and a variety of visits and visitors add to the breadth of interesting activities. These features support their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well. Highly committed staff enjoy excellent relationships with pupils and encourage them continuously. Their support is effective, because it is carefully matched to their individual needs.
- Pupils' progress is rapid when:
 - tasks are set that stretch and constantly challenge pupils' thinking
 - imaginative approaches, including the highly skilled use of new technology, are thoughtfully adapted to accurately match individual needs
 - lesson activities constantly build carefully upon pupils' earlier learning
 - helpful and accurate marking ensures pupils know exactly how well they have done.
- When progress is a little less rapid and variable:
 - not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to apply their basic skills in all subjects

- approaches are less stimulating and tasks are sometimes too drawn out
 - teacher's questioning is insufficiently probing and testing
 - written advice in pupils' books does not provide direct, clear steps to help them to improve.
- In the Nursery, children are provided with an excellent range of experiences to explore and investigate, such as when constructing a collage with a range of coloured opaque and transparent materials. As their confidence rapidly increases, children are exceptionally well steered and encouraged when finding things out for themselves. Parents enjoy excellent relationships with staff and are increasingly actively involved in their children's learning. This is reflected in their positive comments in the home–school diaries.
 - The use of pupil premium funding increases the richness of pupils' learning, adding to the quality and range of first-hand experiences. This includes providing extra classroom support and additional activities such as swimming. The school makes effective use of new technology linking classrooms together across the two sites to enable all pupils to share the same high-quality experiences, for example, by celebrating pupils' achievements during a morning assembly.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The high quality of care for pupils, the challenging though sensitive staff approaches and clear boundaries for conduct make certain all pupils feel happy, safe and secure. Pupils appreciate the help and support they receive from staff which helps them to develop tolerance, patience and respect for each other. They take enormous pride in the achievements of their school.
- The outstanding behaviour of pupils, including those whose circumstances might make them vulnerable, is evident in the excellent levels of cooperation in lessons and around school. Consideration for each other and kindness typify their relationships. Consequently, the school has a very harmonious atmosphere. Almost all parents comment positively about the responsible attitudes of pupils of all ages.
- Conversations with pupils reveal that they have a very good understanding of what constitutes bullying. They report that any form of disruption is unheard of and instances of harassment in any form are very isolated and promptly resolved by observant staff. During break and lunchtimes, pupils are well supervised and safety-conscious attitudes are encouraged by staff.
- The school works hard to ensure attendance is uninterrupted, particularly during the winter months. Attendance is above average and punctuality excellent. Pupils look out for each other and thrive on the responsibilities they are given in the day-to-day running of the school. Excellent use is made of specialist support agencies and partner schools to support individual pupils, especially those with complex needs.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher leads the school with passion and quiet determination. Together, senior leaders continuously move the school forward, building upon its strengths. The high levels of staff support add to this momentum of unbroken improvement. As a result, the school serves the needs of the community exceptionally well.
- Systems to check pupils' achievements are thorough and detailed. Increasingly reflective and self-critical approaches make certain that any weaknesses in the quality of lessons are promptly identified and quickly addressed. Consequently, the school's view of its performance is accurate.
- The whole staff are a tightly-knit team, who demonstrate good leadership in their areas of responsibility. Staff are increasingly confident in tailoring approaches and activities in lessons that are ever more demanding and maintain a sharp focus on raising pupils' achievement.
- The frequent and effective checking of the quality of lessons, including classroom support, is

detailed and perceptive. Training programmes are adapted thoughtfully to increase the skills of staff. Extremely effective support and guidance are provided for the newly qualified. Staff performance targets are carefully linked to the rate of pupils' progress and their levels of achievement with appropriate rewards for raising standards.

- The good and continually improving curriculum is sharply focused upon creating exciting approaches to capture interest in lessons. Pupils respond extremely positively to the opportunities given to them to choose their lesson themes, such as when they adopted the theme of aliens. Yet, occasionally, opportunities are missed to encourage pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects to further boost achievement.
- Staff are totally committed to ensuring all pupils are treated equally and can achieve success. The provision for those disabled and pupils with special educational needs successfully integrates pupils in all aspects of school life. Effective use is made of specialist support agencies, working in close partnership with staff and families, to ensure any barriers to faster progress are eliminated.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements, with much best practice reinforcing the high quality of care and support for pupils.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The hard working governing body supports, challenges and holds the school to account in equal measure. Its high aspirations for the school are reflected in the highly successful unifying of the two schools into a single operating unit. It demonstrates a detailed grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and maintains a sharp focus on improving the quality of teaching to help raise achievement further. For example, governors make certain performance management targets reflect the school's improvement priorities. They are aware from progress information that minor variations in the quality of teaching remain. When required to, the governing body has adopted pragmatic and sensitive approaches to decision making. Controls to maintain financial stability are effective. This includes the checking of the impact of pupil premium funding. The governing body works very successfully with the local authority that, after a period of intensive support while the federation was being formed, now provides light touch support and specialist training for staff and governors.

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	121542
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	406035

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	8
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Karen Miles
Headteacher	Linda Cork
Date of previous school inspection	6 October 2012
Telephone number	01748 884308
Fax number	-
Email address	admin@rg-schools.org.uk

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