

Bottesford Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117780
Local Authority	North Lincolnshire
Inspection number	358194
Inspection dates	17–18 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Rosemary Eaton

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Kerry Nilsson
Headteacher	Miss Rachel Tinker
Date of previous school inspection	13 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 10 lessons taught by seven teachers and held meetings with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents including safeguarding policies and records, samples of pupils' work, and assessment information. The 67 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were analysed, as were those completed by staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- The effectiveness with which teaching promotes writing skills.
- The degree of challenge lessons pose to higher attaining pupils and whether this is sufficient to enable them to consistently make fast enough progress.
- The quality and frequency of opportunities for pupils to apply literacy and numeracy skills during lessons in other subjects.
- Whether outdoor learning opportunities for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are as effective as those indoors.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average size infant school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. A smaller than average proportion has special educational needs and/or disabilities. Most pupils are of White British backgrounds and very few speak English as an additional language. The school has achieved Healthy School status and gained the Activemark.

There have been changes in leadership since the previous inspection and the school has had an acting headteacher since September 2010. The Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body took up their positions a few weeks prior to the inspection. The privately managed breakfast and after-school clubs did not form part of this inspection.

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

Changes in its leadership have not allowed this good school's effectiveness to decline. Instead, staff teamwork, a sustained focus on raising attainment, and consistently high expectations for all aspects of its work have contributed to improved performance in a number of areas. For example, opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills were previously in need of development but are now amongst particularly effective features of the good curriculum. Strongly supported by her deputy headteacher, the headteacher ensures that priorities are pinpointed following rigorous and accurate self-evaluation. All those with leadership responsibilities identify how their own work can contribute to achieving whole-school targets, thus helping to confirm the school's good capacity to continue to improve.

When they join the Reception Year, children's skills are generally within the range expected for their age. By the end of Year 2, attainment is above average, particularly in reading and mathematics. Pupils are full of ideas for writing and are carefully taught the skills they need. However, their extended writing is not always a true reflection of what they are capable of achieving. Overall, pupils make good progress year-on-year because they are taught well and have positive attitudes to learning. Additionally, attendance is high. This means that pupils do not miss lessons or an opportunity to take on one of the many responsibilities that lead them to make a remarkable contribution to the school and wider community. Pupils acquire an excellent understanding of the benefits of healthy living and urge others to adopt habits like taking regular exercise. The daily dance routines planned and led by each class are followed enthusiastically by the whole school. Children in the Reception Year benefit from regular sessions in the fresh air, through well-planned activities outdoors. Because of the limitations of the buildings they are not free to choose to learn in the outdoor classroom, which limits their independence.

Pupils are happy, confident and well-rounded individuals. The school works hard and successfully to provide them with any specialist support they may need through its exceedingly strong partnerships with a host of agencies. In their efforts to provide as well as possible for every child, staff go out of their way to develop extensive links with providers and members of the community, for example, to enhance the curriculum for sport or pupils' awareness of other cultures.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in writing by:
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to talk together in order to develop their ideas before writing them down

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- marking pupils' written work so they are aware of exactly how to improve their work and checking that advice given is followed
- ensuring that pupils consistently apply skills such as handwriting and spelling when writing independently.
- Ensure that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have more opportunities to choose to learn outdoors.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

By remarking, 'Hard work and giving and taking ideas make you a good learner' pupils describe accurately some of the characteristics of learning in this school. Pupils are keen to be independent, frequently needing no prompting to focus on their activities. They relish a challenge and are often excited about their learning, particularly in mathematics. Friendly and caring relationships between pupils mean that they cooperate well, listen attentively to each other and take turns. During a literacy lesson, pairs of pupils in Years 1 and 2 talked purposefully together about the story the teacher had read, developing their ability to structure questions and answers in readiness for their written work. Pupils do not always make full use of their writing skills. For example, when writing independently, they sometimes forget rules of punctuation that they have learnt and so their work fails to reach a higher level.

Attainment varies somewhat from year to year, depending on pupils' starting points. For example, there was a dip in 2010 with smaller proportions than usual reaching the higher Level 3 in reading, writing and mathematics. The school's assessment information provides a strong indication that the current Year 2 pupils are likely to attain above average results by the end of the year. The progress made by individuals and various groups of pupils is tracked carefully. No significant differences are revealed. For example, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities progress well as do the small numbers from minority ethnic groups.

Pupils behave well during lessons and assemblies and move around the school in a very orderly manner. They are lively children and play is occasionally boisterous, leading some pupils to be critical of the behaviour of others. However, bullying is rare and pupils are confident that teachers quickly 'sort out' any misbehaviour. Pupils feel safe and have each chosen an adult in school to whom they can talk if they have any concerns. They are extremely keen to help others, eagerly and conscientiously taking on responsibilities. For example, they act as 'playground pals', play leaders, or classroom monitors. Because the school council consults with pupils in each class, all are able to contribute to making decisions such as the choice of play resources. Designing and displaying road safety posters, planting bulbs in the locality, entertaining elderly neighbours and supporting a variety of charities are some of the myriad ways in which pupils contribute to the wider community. Pupils' knowledge of healthy eating has improved greatly since the previous inspection owing to initiatives, such as growing fruit and vegetables in the school garden. Their readiness for the next stage in their education is good, despite some weakness in writing.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

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	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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

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

How effective is the provision?

When pupils are working independently, teachers and teaching assistants frequently move amongst them and check on learning, offering additional support or challenge to individuals. Plenty of praise and encouragement, and lessons which often involve motivating practical activities help to ensure interest and good behaviour. From time to time, teachers miss opportunities for pairs or small groups of pupils to talk about their ideas and use speaking and listening skills to support their writing. Teachers use their assessments of pupils' learning well to match activities to the varied needs within each class, for example, the higher attainers or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Marking varies in usefulness. In the best instances, teachers make precise recommendations, such as which particular letters need to be formed more carefully, and then create opportunities for pupils to follow up these points for improvement. When comments are more general, for example, 'Neater writing please', and there is no check that pupils have taken heed of them, progress in writing is less evident.

A revised curriculum is in the final stages of implementation but it is already clear it provides rich opportunities for pupils to practise important skills in varied contexts. For example, they write reports, annotate designs, and present data using charts and information and communication technology. Future developments are planned, including involving pupils more in decisions about what they will learn and making greater use of outdoor learning. There are excellent examples of enrichment activities, such as visits.

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Pupils comment that 'on trips you get to do things you don't do at home'. Partnerships extend opportunities significantly, enabling pupils to take part in activities such as dance or benefit from professional football coaching. Clubs, for example, cooking, are open to pupils of all ages and are extremely popular.

The arrangements for pastoral support are frequently specific to the needs of individual pupils whilst promoting the well-being of all. Specialist support is sought in order to develop staff skills so approaches, for example, to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are consistent throughout the school day. All pupils are motivated well by the 'star' rewards system. Those who find it hard to control their emotions are managed sensitively through individual plans that set targets and reward success. Consequently, behaviour and learning improve. Leaders quickly and decisively make improvements to practice in response, for instance, to pupils' request for more supervision on the playground at lunchtime.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher rapidly established a keen awareness of the school's strengths and where more improvement is necessary. She ensures that all staff share her ambition and are involved in establishing how the school moves forward. Monitoring activities are extensive and systematic. For example, with the literacy coordinator, the headteacher has examined every child's work in order to ascertain exactly why writing is a comparatively weaker aspect of learning. Subject leadership is developing well: the next planned stage being for each coordinator to spend time in every classroom to build up their awareness of teaching and learning throughout the school. Under the very strong and informed leadership of the new Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body, governance is starting to improve rapidly. For example, responsibilities have already been reorganised in order to make the best use of each governor's expertise and the time they can commit to their role. Leaders are aware of the potential for different groups to be disadvantaged and work hard to ensure equal opportunities for all. For instance, a group of teaching assistants are trained to deliver programmes to any pupils in the early stages of learning to speak English. Consequently, these pupils achieve as well as others with similar starting points. As part of its determined efforts to promote community cohesion, the school has secured before- and after-school clubs, which are offered additionally to pupils from the neighbouring junior school. A current focus is to extend links with the global community in order to develop pupils' understanding of world cultures. The school ensures that safeguarding requirements are met and follows recommended good practice. For example, pupils learn how to keep safe when using the internet.

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

These are the grades for 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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
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 make good progress during the Reception Year so they usually begin Year 1 having achieved and sometimes exceeded the expectations for their age. Writing is a weakness when they join the Reception class and at the end of the year their skills remain less well developed than those in other areas. Accordingly, staff provide clear guidance for children, encouraging them to develop good habits such as holding pencils correctly, and are increasingly providing motivating activities to stimulate writing. Creativity, enjoyment and independence are fostered effectively through interesting tasks, such as the need to rescue Teddy from a tree. Indoors, activities are easy for children to access independently. However, the nature of the building and the way in which it is organised mean that children cannot choose freely to learn outdoors, and activities have to be dismantled at intervals during the day. Leaders have identified this as a key priority for the school. Staff are adept at identifying and filling gaps in children's learning. They encourage children to express their interests and thus take their learning in directions that engage them. For example, children's enthusiasm for a television programme prompted staff to provide resources for a '60 minute makeover' of part of the classroom. Staff work closely together as a team to assess and record children's progress. Parents and carers are welcomed as partners and so support this process by recording learning that takes place at home.

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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 of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire were entirely positive and these views are reflected in the inspection findings. Parents and carers typically described the school's friendly and approachable staff. Just a few negative comments were received. As far as possible, the inspectors looked carefully at these concerns but were unable to endorse these particular views. For example, the school's procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities include consultation with parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bottesford Infant 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 67 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 208 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	45	67	20	30	1	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	43	64	24	36	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	28	42	36	54	3	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	35	52	27	40	3	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	34	51	29	43	3	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	33	49	30	45	3	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	39	40	60	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	40	27	40	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	30	45	33	49	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	30	37	55	2	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	33	30	45	4	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	31	46	32	48	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	36	54	27	40	3	4	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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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.



19 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bottesford Infant School, Scunthorpe, DN16 3PB

Thank you for giving the inspectors such a warm and polite welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you and seeing your work. We were impressed to see how well you led 'wake up and shake up'. You and your parents and carers told us how much you like your school. We judge it to be a good school. Here are some of the best things about it.

- You learn well and make good progress, because teaching is good at your school.
- You feel safe and are looked after well.
- You come to school as often as you can.
- You know a great deal about how to stay healthy and try hard to be as fit as possible.
- You do a huge amount to help other people in school, in the local area, and by giving to charities.
- The school makes sure that you have lots of interesting things to do in lessons, during clubs, and when you go on trips.
- The school's leaders have lots of ideas for making the school an even better place for learning and having fun.

We have asked the school to do two things.

- Help you to improve your writing.
- Find ways for the children in the Reception class to choose when to go outside to learn.

You can help by taking your teachers' advice when they mark your books and remembering to always write as well as you can. We send our best wishes to each of you.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Rosemary Eaton

Lead inspector

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