

Balby Central Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106732
Local Authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	356013
Inspection dates	26–27 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Andrew Clark

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	428
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Ian Scotting
Headteacher	Mr Pete McGuigan
Date of previous school inspection	23 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 18 lessons and observed 15 teachers. The inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including policies, the school improvement plan and pupils' progress and attainment data. The inspection team analysed 209 completed questionnaires from parents and carers, as well as questionnaires completed by pupils and staff.

- The progress the more-able pupils make in English and mathematics.
- The learning skills and attitudes vulnerable and less-able pupils develop.
- The extent to which teachers have high expectations for all their pupils.
- The promotion of pupils' literacy and other skills through all subjects.
- The contribution staff with leadership responsibilities make to school improvement.

Information about the school

This is a larger-than-average-sized primary school. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also above average. The school has a breakfast club managed by the governing body. The school has a Leading Parent Partnership Award and has achieved Healthy School status.

The headteacher took up his post the term before the inspection. The deputy headteacher is also new to the school since the last inspection. She was on maternity leave at the time of the inspection and there was an acting deputy headteacher.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. Its caring ethos ensures that pupils' personal development is positive and their behaviour is good. The new but experienced headteacher provides a clear direction for the school. The senior leadership team is developing in its role although procedures to monitor and improve teaching and learning are not fully established. The governing body knows the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make satisfactory progress overall. Nevertheless, self-evaluation is largely accurate and has contributed directly to improvements, for example, in aspects of the curriculum and pupils' personal development. As a result, the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve. 'Since being at this school my child has come on with all her school work and the staff are supportive and encouraging.' This is typical of the views of parents and carers.

Pupils leave Year 6 with attainment that is average overall. Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and the use of assessment means that pupils' learning skills are not always as well developed as they could be and a minority of pupils do not always reach their full potential. Pupils are friendly, kind and tolerant towards others. They enjoy school. Pupils have a good commitment to a healthy lifestyle through regular exercise and participation in physical activities. They feel safe and well cared for. Their attendance is average. Pupils contribute to the life of the school through the school council and as playground buddies.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Relationships are good and teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. They expect pupils to present their work with care. However, there are inconsistencies across the school, including the Early Years Foundation Stage. For example, the work set for pupils is not always matched closely enough to individual needs. The curriculum is increasingly planned to make meaningful links between subjects although this is not fully embedded. The good use of the learning mentor and other support staff contributes to the effective support given to pupils' emotional and social development, particularly those in vulnerable circumstances.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to at least good in order to hasten pupils' progress by:
 - ensuring lessons are creative and practical in order to develop pupils' decision-making, investigative and independent learning skills
 - making all work closely matched to the assessed needs of all pupils.

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- Improve the progress children make in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - ensuring activities, both indoors and out, challenge all learners and provide opportunities to extend key learning skills
 - improving the quality and regularity of adults' intervention and dialogue with children in all activities.
- Ensure the procedures for monitoring, evaluating and improving the school are fully and effectively implemented, paying particular attention to the quality of teaching and use of assessment.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Children start the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which are generally below those typically expected for their age. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly average by the time pupils leave in Year 6. There is a steady trend of improvement which is reflected in the outcomes of Year 2 and Year 6 national tests and assessments. Pupils enjoy school and achieve satisfactorily. In lessons, all groups of pupils, including the more able, make satisfactory progress in developing learning skills. Their ability to plan and organise their own work, in the lessons observed, is sometimes limited because they do not get enough opportunity to practise this. Pupils are curious about their world; however, their investigative and research skills are underdeveloped. They take a pride in writing neatly and largely spell words accurately. Pupils are polite, tolerant and thoughtful towards others and, as a result, lessons run smoothly. Their commitment to being healthy is reflected in the good take-up of the breakfast club and school lunches. They participate in many sporting clubs and activities. Pupils are proud to be school councillors and 'playground buddies' and are involved in charity fund-raising activities. However, they do not often take leadership roles and initiate and organise their own activities. Pupils develop an understanding of the inequalities of life linked to poverty and deprivation through topics on the world around them through interesting themes such as 'Chocolate'.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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?

Although the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, good and very occasionally outstanding lessons were observed. Teachers set clear expectations for pupils' behaviour. In the best lessons, teachers generate excitement and interest through setting practical tasks which require pupils to solve problems and apply their skills and knowledge creatively. In these lessons, teachers share clear and precise objectives for pupils to achieve which are closely matched to their needs. However, in the less effective lessons, teachers tend to over-direct pupils and give them too little opportunity to develop and apply their own investigative and problem-solving skills. The tasks are not matched closely enough to the needs of individual pupils with an emphasis on an end product rather than learning skills along the way. Very occasionally, teachers stick too closely to their plans and do not respond quickly enough to the progress some pupils have made in the lesson.

The curriculum is being increasingly well-designed to broaden pupils' experiences and make learning more relevant and exciting. This is not fully established in all subjects to promote high levels of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The school takes good care of all pupils. Good record keeping and monitoring contribute to the safe working environment. The school has effective systems to support the more vulnerable pupils and their families through the work the learning mentor, special needs coordinator and good links with medical and other services. These are effective in breaking down barriers to learning. The school provides a good range of information on pupils' progress and gives

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parents and carers regular and useful guidance on ways to support their children's future learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Since his appointment, the new headteacher has led the senior staff in a thorough and detailed initial evaluation of the school's outcomes and provision. Challenging and realistic targets have been set for improving the school as well as the creation of new staff teams and procedures to fulfil them. Staff morale is high as a result. However, these developments are still becoming established and have not fully eradicated the relative weaknesses identified, particularly in the quality of teaching and use of assessment. The governing body is involved in the life of the school enabling it to provide appropriate challenge and support to the leadership. The school works in close partnership with parents and carers and the local community. The Leading Partnership award has strengthened parents' and carers' involvement in children's learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage but has yet to develop as effectively throughout the school. The school is extending links with schools and communities in other parts of the world and community cohesion is satisfactory overall. The school challenges discrimination; however, the inconsistent progress pupils make in establishing good learning skills means that equality of opportunity is satisfactory overall. Robust policies and accurate record-keeping contribute well to good procedures for safeguarding.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start school with skills which are generally below those typical for their age. They are particularly low for communication and literacy. Children of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make satisfactory progress overall. By the time they start Year 1, attainment is still below but closer to average. There are good induction systems to support children and to quickly settle them in to the Nursery class. Good links with parents and carers contribute to the smooth start children make. These support the good progress children make in aspects of their personal and social development. Children feel safe and are supported by robust welfare arrangements. There are fun and imaginative programmes to help children make progress in early reading and writing. There is a generally appropriate balance between adult-led activities and those that children can choose for themselves, which contributes to their personal development. The quality of teaching and use of assessment is satisfactory. The 'plan, do, review' sessions help children make decisions and take responsibilities. However, activities children choose for themselves do not always have a clear and challenging purpose, especially in promoting literacy skills. The activities are most effective when adults intervene by engaging children in interesting and relevant dialogue. However, this does not occur consistently. The outdoor space is underused to develop all areas of learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader and her staff know the strengths and weaknesses of provision and are taking appropriate steps to monitor provision and its impact on outcomes. As a result the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactorily placed to continue to improve.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Almost a half of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire, which is above average. Of these, the vast majority are positive in their responses. Parents and carers are particularly pleased with their children's enjoyment of school, the way the school helps parents and carers to support their children's learning and how well the school helps their children to have a healthy lifestyle. A small minority of parents and carers feel that the pupils do not always make the best progress they can and that they are not always fully informed about how well their children are doing. The inspection team followed up on these concerns and concluded that pupils' progress is satisfactory as is the information parents and carers receive about how well their children are doing.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Balby Central 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 209 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 428 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	137	66	66	32	6	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	144	69	63	30	2	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	100	48	88	42	20	10	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	99	47	82	39	24	11	1	0
The teaching is good at this school	117	56	74	35	15	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	108	52	82	39	15	7	1	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	101	48	96	46	6	3	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)	96	46	83	40	13	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	108	52	84	40	11	5	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	93	44	94	45	15	7	1	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	86	41	105	50	11	5	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	119	57	74	35	9	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	120	57	74	35	12	6	1	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 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 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.

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.



28 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Balby Central Primary School, Doncaster, DN4 0LL

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your school. We very much enjoyed talking to you. These are some of the things we found out about your school, which provides you with a satisfactory education.

- You feel safe and appreciate the good care that all adults show to you.
- Your behaviour is good and you are kind and thoughtful to each other.
- You told us that you enjoy the clubs and sporting events that you take part in and you know how to live healthily.
- You are rightly proud of the support you have given to children at home and in other countries through your fund-raising.
- You enjoy the different topics you study.
- The standard of your work is average overall but some of you could make even better progress.

To help your school become even better, we have asked your headteacher and the governing body to:

- make sure that all lessons, in all classes, are as good as they can be and that your work is always challenging to you
- to help staff to keep a closer eye on how well you are getting on with your work.

You can help by enjoying learning and working hard.

Yours sincerely

Mr Andrew Clark

Lead inspector

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