

# Birstwith Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121550
<b>Local authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	380265
<b>Inspection dates</b>	29–30 May 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Alan Lemon

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	81
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Michelle Ingham
<b>Headteacher</b>	Elizabeth Bedford
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 January 2009
<b>School address</b>	Wreaks Road Birstwith Harrogate HG3 2NJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01423 770554
<b>Fax number</b>	01423 772690
<b>Email address</b>	admin@birstwith.n-yorks.sch.uk

---



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



© Crown copyright 2012

## Introduction

Inspection team

Alan Lemon

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Teaching and learning were observed in eight lessons involving five teachers. Meetings were held with a group of pupils, staff and a representative of the governing body. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at school documentation including its self-evaluation, data on pupils' progress, the improvement plan and policies for safeguarding pupils. Thirty-eight questionnaires completed by parents and carers were scrutinised along with questionnaires from pupils and staff.

## Information about the school

The school serves a rural community. It is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and very few are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average. The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

With the exception of Year 4, pupils are arranged in mixed-year classes of Reception Year and Year 1, Years 2 and 3 and Years 5 and 6. The school has a collaborative arrangement with another small local primary school. The headteacher is in charge of both schools while both retain separate governing bodies. The school has the Investors in People Award, Healthy School status, the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Inclusion Quality Mark, Active Mark and the Football Foundation Award

A breakfast and after-school club based in the school is independently managed. Consequently, it was not 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

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key Findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding, mainly because the leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage is not sufficiently focused on ensuring that all of the provision required for Reception Year children is effectively established. The monitoring and evaluation of this phase has not been sufficiently rigorous.
- Pupils' learning and progress are good, leading to pupils achieving well and attaining well-above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Pupils enjoy learning and are quick to acquire the effective means to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding. Children in Reception Year make good progress in literacy and numeracy. They do not progress as quickly in their physical and creative development or in their knowledge and understanding of the world.
- Teaching is good because teachers' performance is managed effectively and they are committed to improving their practice to the extent of some teaching being outstanding. Teachers plan lessons carefully. They make learning a lively experience for pupils and ensure work is challenging.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. The attitudes to learning of the great majority of pupils are exemplary as they are very keen to learn and work on their own and as small groups very effectively. Pupils set high standards for themselves in regard to how they behave and show positive regard for others. Pupils feel very safe in school and contribute significantly towards each other's well-being.
- The headteacher and the governing body set high expectations. The management of performance is well-planned and effective. Senior leaders give a strong lead to the improvement of teaching and the curriculum, which is sharply focused on Key Stages 1 and 2 but less so on the Early Years Foundation Stage. The governing body and staff ensure the school's distinctive

ethos, beliefs and values are very effectively promoted, leading to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the leadership and management of Early Years Foundation Stage so that:
  - the curriculum, planning for free flow of learning between the classroom and outside in particular, is developed to give children effective opportunities for making at least good progress in all areas of learning
  - provision is rigorously monitored and evaluated to ensure children make at least good progress.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

In most classes, learning and progress are consistently good. The very large majority of parents and carers are rightly pleased with their children's good progress. Pupils' starting points vary from year to year but on entry into Reception Year they are usually above the level expected for their age. By the end of Key Stage 1 attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is, and has been for several years, above average. It rises to well-above average by the end of Key Stage 2. Historically, standards in reading and mathematics have been higher than in writing. Improvement in the provision for writing since the school's previous inspection has narrowed the gap for boys in particular and they are well represented at levels above those expected in writing. Topics across the curriculum ensure pupils have many opportunities to write for a wide variety of purposes and different audiences. In Years 2 and 3, pupils investigated and compiled presentations on animal facts. As in much of writing across the school, this work is meticulous in its presentation and clarity of expression. Pupils take great care with spelling and punctuation.

Throughout the school, pupils develop their reading skills effectively. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' good knowledge of letters and sounds enables them to read accurately and confidently tackle difficult words. Reading is enjoyed by most, in school and at home, and many have developed interests in a wide variety of subjects. Pupils' enthusiasm for learning ensures progress in mathematics is good. As in writing, the curriculum is innovative and by providing enjoyable work pupils get well engaged in problem solving. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 were thoroughly challenged by the task of making accurate large-scale drawings in chalk on the playground. They applied their knowledge of the properties of two-dimensional shapes and their skills with rulers and protractors effectively to complete a series of exercises. The progress of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs benefits from the same close scrutiny as the progress of all other pupils. The support through close adult attention and additional interventions for these pupils is sharply focused on systematically building on their prior learning. Realistic targets aimed at small steps of progress ensure pupils learn at an effective rate.

Children in Reception Year make good progress in communication, language and literacy, and in problem solving, reasoning and number. Working often alongside Year 1 pupils helps stimulate and support learning and progress. However, the rate of children's progress is only satisfactory in their physical and creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world because these areas of learning are not as well promoted.

Pupils come to school keen to learn and they enjoy lessons. They are quick to settle and sustain good attention in lessons. From an early stage pupils develop the skills to learn independently and work cooperatively. Pupils are confident and use initiative effectively. Very rarely are they inattentive and not engaged well in learning, although this was occasionally the case with some of the youngest pupils.

### **Quality of teaching**

Teaching is skilled and this ensures lessons are well planned. Lessons are sharply focused on challenging pupils and build systematically on their prior attainment. Teaching benefits considerably from teachers' and teaching assistants' high level of expertise. This promotes good learning and progress and results in some lessons of outstanding quality because they have very brisk pace and sustained challenge. Adults know pupils very well from close monitoring of their learning and progress. Pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are planned for and given specific help with their work resulting in them being well engaged in learning. The great majority of parents and carers believe the school is meeting their children's particular needs and that they are being taught well.

Teaching is lively and the excellent relationships between adults and pupils provide the very positive conditions for pupils to contribute confidently and tackle challenging work. Pupils are keenly interested by their work and quickly engage in learning. Teaching strongly reflects the school's distinctive ethos and values which very effectively inform pupils' attitude to learning and behaviour. Their exemplary regard for each other prompts them to work together constructively and be encouraging and helpful.

Lesson activities are carefully chosen and promote good learning. Objectives and intended outcomes are clear and effectively shared with pupils. In some lessons, teachers skilfully explain tasks, ensuring pupils are enabled to work independently and use initiative, and this is a strong feature of the outstanding lessons. In Year 4, pupils were quick to grasp what was needed in wording questions that would function in a branching database to filter specific facts from a body of information. This led to outstanding progress in this lesson. Teachers have good resources available, information and communication technology in particular, which they use well to support learning. Time is managed well and gives good scope for pupils to evaluate their learning at the end of lessons. This provided an excellent opportunity for Year 5 and 6 pupils to discuss their difficulties in drawing exact two-dimensional shapes. They had to recall and explain their knowledge of angles and the properties of shapes, which really helped them consolidate their knowledge.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils have very positive attitudes and make an exceptional contribution to their own learning. Most parents agree that behaviour is at least good. In lessons, pupils engage fully with their work and focus on completing it as well as they can. Pupils respond very well to the school's high expectations and take it upon themselves to work hard and behave well. They believe behaviour is of a very high standard in lessons and around the school. The school's distinctive ethos, underpinned by strongly held beliefs and values, has a very beneficial impact on pupils' demeanour and outlook. The excellent relationship with adults and the school's close attention to supporting each pupil's well-being give added incentive to high quality behaviour, respect and regard for others. This is very well expressed in pupils' commitment to taking an interest in and helping others, which extends to pupils in schools in Africa and Bangladesh. Through the year they raise considerable amounts of money for many good causes some of which they have nominated themselves. Pupils feel very safe and in school they are free from harassment and bullying. Such incidents are extremely rare. Scrutiny of behavioural records and discussions show that behaviour is outstanding over time too. Pupils are extremely knowledgeable about the different forms of bullying and alert to the risks to their safety, their use of the internet in particular. They have the necessary self-confidence and assurance to raise concerns should they arise. Teachers and other adults manage behaviour very well and this is done by most with consistency.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher sets high standards for staff and pupils and is resolute in ensuring the school meets the aim of pupils developing to their full potential and keeping them safe. The arrangements established for safeguarding pupils are very effective. The governing body provides strong support and challenge to leaders' ambitions and sets high expectations for building further on the school's successes. The morale of staff is high and they gain strength from cohesive teamwork. This contributes significantly to good leadership and has enabled the headteacher to make a successful transition to leading in two schools.

Pupils' performance is systematically tracked and rigorously analysed, ensuring none fall behind and most achieve challenging targets. The close attention to individual needs underlines the high priority to equality seen clearly in the school's work as is intolerance of any form of discrimination. The regular observation of teaching leads to improvement and teachers' on-going professional development is directed effectively by the school's performance management procedures. For all these reasons, the school's capacity for sustained improvement is strong.

Curriculum improvement in Key Stages 1 and 2 has benefited from the strong leadership of subject coordinators. A great deal has been achieved in developing interesting and enjoyable activities. Pupils find whole-school topics such as 'myths and legends' stimulating, leading them to produce their best work. The weeks devoted to mathematics or art are also popular with pupils. Literacy and numeracy are woven well into work across the curriculum.

There has not been the same sharp focus on the Early Years Foundation Stage. It has a satisfactory balance between adult-led activities and those that children choose for themselves. There is good attention to developing numeracy and literacy skills but physical and creative development, knowledge and understanding of the world, which benefits more from learning in the outside environment, are underrepresented. The outside area is some distance from the classroom, which makes it difficult to plan the free flow of learning between the classroom and outside. Provision is not rigorously monitored and evaluated to ensure children make at least good progress.

The curriculum makes an outstanding contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Well-planned daily assemblies reinforce values and beliefs and pupils sometimes take a useful lead in this. Pupils develop their knowledge and respect for many different cultures, their religions and art in particular.



## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



31 May 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Birstwith Church of England Primary School, Harrogate, HG3 2NJ**

Thank you all for your very warm welcome when I visited your school and a special thanks to the group of pupils I met and to those who agreed to read to me.

Your school is a good school and these are some of its strongest features.

- Your achievement by the time you leave school is good. You are all making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics and these are well-above average by the end of Year 6. Reception Year children make good progress in literacy and numeracy but slower progress in other important areas of their learning.
- Teaching is good. Lessons are lively and your work is challenging. You make it very clear in what you say and how you behave in lessons that you enjoy your work and know you are making good progress.
- Your behaviour and attitude to learning are outstanding. You are keen to behave as well as you can and you encourage others to do the same.
- The headteacher and staff work hard and ensure the school succeeds in giving you a good education and that it goes on to improve even more. Much has already been done to make your work and activities in lessons and elsewhere exciting and enjoyable. The school's beliefs and values are promoted strongly leading to your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development being outstanding.

I have asked the headteacher to give closer attention to and make sure that Reception Year children are given every opportunity to make good progress in all of their areas of learning. You can help the school continue to improve by working hard and keeping up your excellent behaviour. I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Alan Lemon  
Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234**, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).