

Bishopthorpe Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121440
Local authority	York
Inspection number	380239
Inspection dates	13–14 June 2012
Lead inspector	Kathryn Gethin HMI

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	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	180
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Emily Rice
Headteacher	Rebecca White
Date of previous school inspection	12 March 2009
School address	Sim Balk Lane Bishopthorpe York YO23 2QQ
Telephone number	01904 707506
Fax number	Not applicable
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Introduction

Inspection team

Kathryn Gethin

Her Majesty's Inspector

Denis Pittman

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed sixteen lessons or parts of lessons taught by eight teachers. Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative from the local authority, senior leaders, and pupils. The inspector listened to pupils read and scrutinised examples of pupils' written work, as well as a range of school documentation including safeguarding, tracking and assessment data, minutes of governing body meetings and the school improvement plan. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, and looked at the 82 parental questionnaires received.

Information about the school

Bishopthorpe is an average-sized infant school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special education needs is below average. There is very little pupil mobility. The school has achieved the Activemark, Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Gold Artsmark and Healthy School Status. Since the last inspection a new deputy headteacher, with specific responsibility for the Early Years Foundation Stage, has been appointed and the staffing structure has been re-organised.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good and improving school. It is not yet outstanding because teaching and progress vary and the current structure in the Early Years Foundation Stage reduces the opportunities for child-initiated activities.
- Children enter the Reception Year with skill levels broadly in line with those expected for their age group. They make good progress through the school and by the time they leave at the end of Year 2, they attain standards above national expectations.
- Teaching is consistently good and pupils make good progress in most lessons. Relationships between the teachers and pupils are good and teachers ensure that pupils are clear about what they are learning. However, at times pupils spend too long listening to adults instead of applying their basic skills.
- Most pupils, including children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, behave very well in and out of lessons. They have good attitudes to learning and are considerate of others' needs. They enjoy coming to school and say that they feel safe.
- The headteacher's ambitious vision for school improvement is shared by all staff and governors. The leadership of teaching is good and teaching staff have risen magnificently to the challenge following the re-organisation of teaching within the school. Management of performance is improving and staff are more accountable for raising achievement. The curriculum provides a variety of imaginative experiences to develop pupils' enjoyment of learning.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage to enable children to further develop their knowledge, skills and understanding by increasing the

opportunities for independent learning through child-initiated activities both indoors and outdoors.

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress further, by providing more opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in practical situations, particularly in mathematics.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are broadly typical for their age. They make good progress in the nurturing environment and recent assessments show that they move into Year 1 securely within expected levels. Children were observed confidently blending and segmenting sounds, with several reaching beyond this and making a good attempt at more tricky words. There is currently an emphasis on adult-directed activities and not enough opportunities for children to learn independently and make choices across all areas of learning both in the classroom and in the outdoor area throughout the day.

Across the school children show an enjoyment in books and are confident as they handle books well and take pleasure from looking at the pictures. More confident pupils read fluently, demonstrate good intonation and are comfortable with challenging texts. As one pupil stated, 'I like reading and doing my words'.

Pupils' overall rate of progress gains momentum as they move through the school. Pupils' current work, teacher assessments from 2011 and the school's own data show that attainment at the end of Year 2 is above the national average for reading, writing and mathematics. The school's focus on writing has been a notable success, with attainment being at its highest in this subject for the last five years. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similarly good progress as a result of the very detailed programmes of support put in place for them. Good progress was also seen in lessons. This was evident in a Year 2 mathematics lesson where effective use was made of practical resources to help pupils identify shapes as prisms. Similarly in a science lesson, pupils showed high levels of confidence as they worked collaboratively, sharing ideas as to what constitutes a good diet. Occasionally, when teaching is less effective the rate of progress slows as pupils become restless and are not engaged with their learning. There are no significant gaps in the performance between different groups of pupils.

Almost all parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are pleased with the progress their children make in school. The inspectors agree that this view is accurate. A parent comments that their child is 'enthused about the school topics and want to carry on learning all the time'.

Quality of teaching

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, staff have a good understanding of the needs of children of this age. However, the current timetabling of activities limits the opportunities for children to learn independently. In the construction area, a group of boys assisted one another to construct a dinosaur; this was proudly shown in the sharing assembly. Not to be outdone, the girls were able to show how good they are at construction with a train made from magnets. Children count confidently forwards and backwards from one to twenty when using action rhymes and are able to explain clearly what is meant by 'estimation'. However, they had less success when applying this knowledge in number games. The outdoor area is used imaginatively with hidden insects and reptiles in the small garden, a newly-established wildlife garden and opportunities for role play in the train station.

In Key Stage 1 the better lessons engage pupils' interests and allow sufficient time for them to apply their knowledge. In Year 1, pupils had great fun acting out the role of Victorian children with a wealth of resources to support them. Teachers are skilled in developing pupils' thinking through effective questioning and pupils rose to the challenge in a Year 2 lesson when asked to explain the relationship between two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. Also in Year 2, pupils had great fun and worked very well together, sharing ideas on characteristics for a storyboard. Where teaching is less strong, pupils spend too much time listening rather than being involved in activities, there is an over use of work sheets and not enough time is available for pupils to apply their practical skills.

Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution and work well alongside the teachers making regular observations to inform assessment. The teaching of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is good. Excellent individualised support is provided by skilled staff. As a result, these pupils make good progress as they move through the school.

Teachers adapt the curriculum well to ensure that pupils make good progress in all subjects. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted through the arts and the outdoor area. Pupils' representations of aboriginal art and Antony Gormley's clay figures are of high quality and prominently displayed within school. The expertise of staff skilled in 'forest school' training has enhanced the emotional and social skills of pupils through positive outdoor experiences.

In their questionnaire responses, all parents and carers agreed that their children were taught well. A very few parents and carers commented that they would appreciate more information on the actual progress their child was making and how to help them at home.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils say that behaviour in school is good and they are very clear how to sort any problems, such as name calling and of who to turn to for support. They enjoy taking responsibility for others and wear their 'playground pal' tabard with pride. They are able to explain clearly the importance of the friendship stop where they would look to see if anyone 'needed a friend' to play with at break time. Teaching staff act as

good role models and are respectful to pupils. Pupils comment on how teachers say 'please and thank you' to them and say the teachers are, 'very very nice'.

Pupils behave very well in lessons and respond immediately when teachers indicate the need to listen. They know when to listen to each other and wait patiently for their turn when answering questions. Space is at a premium within the school with the corridors in use for classes. Pupils recognise this and move around the school in a calm and orderly manner and swiftly take their place in the school sharing assembly without fuss. Pupils are kind and thoughtful towards each other and take pleasure in celebrating the good work of others. A small number of parents and carers expressed the view that there have been times when behaviour was not managed effectively both in the classroom and in the playground. However, it was also noted that this was at the start of the year and had improved. The inspectors found that behaviour is typically good around school.

The school is a safe and secure environment. Risk assessments are in place and the site manager ensures that any identified hazards are dealt with immediately. The school grounds offer an exciting environment for pupils to play and learn in. They are able to slide with confidence down the grass mound, explore in the wildlife area and learn when to recognise nettles and that it is best to avoid them. Pupils say that they feel safe within the school, are confident on how to report incidents and understand the danger associated with roads. There are no recorded incidents of bullying or exclusions. Attendance is consistently above the national average and most pupils arrive at school on time.

Leadership and management

The success of the school is underpinned by good leadership. Since the last inspection, the staff team has been re-structured. A new deputy headteacher has been appointed with responsibility for the Early Years Foundation Stage; staff have moved classes and age groups and taken on subject responsibility. Staff have risen admirably to these challenges and what seemed initially daunting has resulted in a rise in motivation and a true sense of involvement within the school. There is a strong sense of purpose and expectations are high. The headteacher acknowledges that this is still 'work in progress' as senior leaders adjust to these new roles.

Effective monitoring of teaching has led to good professional development and has improved the quality of teaching, particularly in promoting pupils' writing skills. Data from observations is used well to inform planning. A newly installed electronic system further supports how information from pupil assessment is tracked. This will help the school to identify the rate of progress made by specific pupils and groups of pupils. The governing body is fully supportive of the school and is a visible presence within school. It is kept well informed and is active in contributing to school improvement.

The curriculum is good and meets the needs of pupils well. It successfully promotes the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and is further enriched by an emphasis on music, art and literature. Pupils extend their knowledge of diverse cultures through multi-cultural dance days, theatre groups and ethnic musicians as well as visits to a range of places of interest. Pupils enjoy participating in extra-curricular activities such as, French, break dancing and football.

The school promotes equality of opportunity well and all pupils are exceptionally well cared for and supported. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs participate fully in the life of the school and achieve as well as their peers in reading and writing. Safeguarding is a high priority for the school and procedures are good. Appropriate systems are in place and training is up to date. The school's record over the last five years shows that the capacity to improve is good.

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).

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.



15 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bishopthorpe Infant School, York, YO23 2QQ

Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming and helping the inspectors when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed talking to you in lessons, in the playground and when we listened to some of you read. I would also like to thank your parents and carers for returning our questionnaire. It was a delight to see you in your Victorian costumes and you now realise how very different school was for children in that era. I really enjoyed reading Barnaby Bear's journal; you look after him well and he has a lot of exciting adventures when he is with you. I would have liked to have heard your finished storyboard, as some of those characters seemed quite scary! These are some of the best things we found out about your school.

- Bishopthorpe is a good school.
- You make good progress and standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average.
- You said that you enjoy school, are happy there and feel safe.
- Your behaviour is good and you are kind to each other.
- The curriculum provides interesting activities, including some exciting visits.
- The headteacher, staff and governors lead the school well and are determined to make it even better.

We have asked your headteacher and the governing body to look at two important things. We think they could make sure more of your lessons are like the best ones we saw when you were very involved in your learning. We have also asked that for those of you in the Reception class that you have more opportunity to choose your activities.

Thank you once again for helping me and keep trying hard.

Yours sincerely

Kathryn Gethin
Her Majesty's Inspector

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