

Bedale Church of England Primary School

Firby Road, Bedale, North Yorkshire, DL8 2AT

Inspection dates 13 - 14 September 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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Bedale Primary School is a good and improving school. This is because since the last inspection, leadership at all levels has been strengthened and there is a shared vision and a strong sense of teamwork.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points and reach standards that are at least in line with age-related expectations. Progress is now accelerating and an increasing proportion of pupils are reaching above average standards, especially in reading, by the time they leave school at the end of Year 6.
- The quality of teaching is good and, during this inspection, some examples of outstanding teaching were seen.
- In the best lessons, pupils display high levels of independence and the sharp use of available assessment information means that tasks they are given build carefully on prior learning.
- Pupils feel safe, behave well and enjoy coming to school, as demonstrated by their above average levels of attendance.
- School leaders, including governors, have a positive impact on change because they have an accurate view of school strengths and priorities for the future. There is a clear focus on improving the quality of teaching.
- Home-school links are strong and parents express overwhelmingly positive views about the care and quality of education at Bedale.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In some lessons, questioning by teachers is not as sharp and challenging as it could be and some opportunities for pupils to share their work and ideas are missed. This limits teachers' ability to check understanding and adjust teaching.
- Attainment of the more-able pupils in mathematics and writing is not as high as the standards seen in reading.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 18 lessons including two observed jointly with the headteacher.
- In addition, meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and school staff.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents. These included the school's pupil progress tracking data, planning and monitoring documentation, self-evaluation summary, performance management information, the school development plan, the safeguarding and equality policies and minutes of the governing body meetings, and behaviour and attendance records.
- Also, inspectors took account of the 73 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and others completed by staff. They also talked with parents and pupils about the school's work.

Inspection team

Alan Sergison	Lead Inspector
Martin Pye	Additional Inspector
Rosemary Batty	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Bedale Church of England Primary School is larger than the average-sized school serving the community of Bedale and the surrounding area.
- Pupils attend from a wide area, including those from service families.
- Almost all pupils come from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with the average. The proportion of pupils at school action is well below the average and the proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational need is slightly above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium is below the national average.
- The school has Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulty provision on site. These pupils are not on the school roll and do not attend lessons in the main school.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which sets the government's minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- Among the school's awards are the Healthy School Award, Basic Skills Quality Mark, Artsmark, Activemark, Eco Award and Committed to ICT Award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - sharpening teachers' questioning skills in all lessons so they can regularly check pupils' understanding and fine tune teaching to meet needs with precision
 - giving pupils more time and opportunity to share and discuss their work and ideas in all lessons
 - sharing the very best practice in supporting pupils to develop greater independence in their learning.
- Accelerate progress for the more-able pupils, particularly in writing and mathematics, so that by the time they leave the school attainment in these subjects is more in line with the higher standards achieved in reading by:
 - making the best use of the existing assessment information so that pupils are always given tasks that challenge and extend their thinking in every lesson.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children start school with skills that are broadly in line with those expected for their age although a significant number have early literacy skills that are below age-related expectations.
- Pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress. They have plenty of opportunity to share, discuss, investigate and explore. Well-structured systematic phonics sessions help pupils to become capable readers. By the time they start Year 1, attainment is similar to that of most pupils nationally.
- Across Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils continue to make good progress. This is confirmed by current school data and in lessons observed during the inspection. By the time they reach the end of Year 6, pupils in all groups, are achieving at least in line with age-related expectations. Overall, attainment is rising and is above average in reading. Pupils use and apply their reading, writing and mathematical skills across the curriculum and events such as the 'Maths Thinking Day' give them chance to apply their knowledge and skills in fun and meaningful ways.
- The proportion of pupils making expected progress is above the proportion found nationally and the proportion of pupils making better than expected progress is rising. The more-able pupils achieve higher standards in reading than they do in writing and mathematics, where they could make more progress.
- Progress in the past across the school has been in line with average expectations but, recently, progress has accelerated and evidence seen in lessons and books during the inspection confirms that achievement is good because of the faster rates of progress now being seen. However, the use of assessment information to ensure that the more-able pupils are provided with sufficient challenge in every lesson is not yet sharp enough.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress from their starting points and achieve well.

The quality of teaching is good

- Inspection findings confirm the views of parents and the school's own self-evaluation that teaching is good.
- The close monitoring, modelling and sharing of the best teaching practice ensures consistency and a strong impact on pupils' rates of progress. The quality of teaching is sometimes outstanding. In the very best lessons, teachers engage pupils in assessing and improving their own work, encouraging them to make full use of their independent learning skills. Not all teachers promote these skills as strongly however, which results in pupils making overall good and not outstanding progress.
- In the best lessons, teachers ensure pace and rigour and pupils display high levels of independence because of clear, high expectations and well established routines. Teaching assistants provide good support for target groups of pupils and, as a result, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress.
- In the most successful lessons, teachers' questioning skills are finely honed and are used well to deepen understanding. This was very evident in a successful Key Stage 2 literacy lesson when the teacher used pupils' replies to build on their knowledge and understanding and to extend their vocabulary. In these most successful lessons, teachers made very good use of talking pairs, allowing pupils to discuss and clarify their understanding and to involve them more in self-assessment. In the less successful lessons, challenge and opportunities to develop pupils as more independent learners are not always evident and learning is less effective.
- In all classes, teachers' marking of pupils' work is good and helps pupils to understand what they need to do next in order to improve their work. Lessons are planned carefully. Senior leaders have re-structured teaching teams so that teachers now plan together, enabling them to share skills and expertise. This has had a very positive impact on provision for pupils and ensures consistency.
- Social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of pupils is good. Pupils respect the views of others and clearly feel safe to respond openly to challenging teacher's questions. This was clearly demonstrated in confident oral responses by pupils in successful French lessons observed.
- Parents have a very positive view of the quality of teaching in the school. This also reflects the findings of the inspection. Pupils share this view and say that they enjoy their learning. As one pupil said, 'We are very lucky at this school as we get to know and do so many things.'

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The standard of behaviour at Bedale School is good and all children state that they feel safe. Scrutiny of behavioural logs and the good behaviour seen during this inspection indicates that this is typical and confirms the view expressed by the vast majority of parents, who stated that they feel pupils are well cared for.
- Pupils say that they are happy at school and they enjoy their learning. This is confirmed by the above average levels of attendance. Pupils are punctual, ready and eager to learn. Lessons start promptly. The very good relationships evident between adults and pupils have a very positive impact on social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. For example, older pupils

have opportunities to support younger pupils to help them settle in and to look after their welfare. This was evident at lunchtimes, with the older and younger pupils sharing dining facilities.

- Pupils feel that bullying does not occur at school and are confident that any incidents would be managed swiftly and appropriately. The behaviour policy is well structured and pupils are aware of the staged approach to sanctions for inappropriate behaviour. Pupils are well informed of the dangers of cyber-bullying and the steps taken to take to avoid it.
- Pupils manage their own behaviour well and support each other, for example, through the playground 'Friendship Stop'. They are confident that older pupils or adults will always provide help whenever it is needed. They are given the opportunity to take responsibility through the school council and the posts of head boy and head girl.
- Pupils are polite and courteous and display a strong sense of empathy. All pupils play happily together and willingly support each other during lessons if required. Pupils feel that everyone's efforts are noticed and valued. A sense of caring and togetherness permeates every aspect of school life. This fits well with the school motto 'Learning and Caring Together'.

The leadership and management are good

- Strong leadership from senior leaders and the systematic monitoring of teaching with clear feedback to teachers has been instrumental in improving teaching and pupils' performance, although a few shortcomings remain. The progress that pupils are making is checked regularly and teachers are held to account for this and, where necessary, actions to improve performance are taken.
- School development planning and the performance management cycle link closely with accurate school self-evaluation. All are involved in deciding how to move the school forward and this ensures a sense of common purpose and commitment to providing the highest quality of learning opportunities for pupils. Middle leaders, including those in the behaviour unit, have a clear view of strengths and weaknesses in their area.
- The curriculum is organised successfully with a good focus on developing pupils' basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. It is designed well to meet the needs of pupils in mixed-age classes, although the needs of the more -able pupils are not always fully met. Teachers work well together in teaching teams to ensure continuity and consistency of provision.
- There are exciting opportunities for writing beyond literacy lessons. A visit to 'The Forbidden Corner' for example, stimulated pupils' creative writing. These activities motivate pupils well and a good range of extra-curricular activities further enhance the curriculum.
- Systems for promoting equality and tackling discrimination are good. Bedale is an inclusive school. Teachers' attention to the needs of every pupil is good, and sensitive pastoral care contributes significantly to pupils' personal growth. One parent commented, 'The staff at the school are very helpful and help the children in any way they can. Most of the children are polite at the school and are always happy.'
- A range of educational visits and visitors to school enrich learning. For example, pupils recently benefited from a visit to school by an author and an educational visit to Codbeck to undertake a river study. Older pupils have the opportunity to participate in a residential outdoor learning experience.

■ Procedures for the safeguarding of pupils meet statutory requirements and all staff receive appropriate training.

■ The local authority provides 'light touch' support for this good school.

■ **The governance of the school :**

- Has recently been re-structured so that there is now a clear focus on key priorities. Individual governors and committees now take special interest in particular aspects of the school's work. Through performance management procedures, they hold senior leaders, including those in the Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulty provision, to account, with an appropriate balance of challenge and support.
- Has effective systems in place for receiving and evaluating information about the school's work and governors make regular visits to the school.
- Areas for improvement identified at the time of the last inspection have been successfully addressed.

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	121479
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	402032
Type of school	All-through
School category	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	286
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair	Mr. M. Ellis
Headteacher	Mrs. A. Sowden
Date of previous school inspection	3 February 2010
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