



Becket Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109123
LEA North Somerset
Inspection number 278132
Inspection dates 3 May 2006 to 4 May 2006
Reporting inspector Martin Kerly AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Tavistock Road
School category	Community		Weston-super-Mare
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		BS22 6DH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01934 516052
Number on roll	221	Fax number	01934 517412
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Edwina Daffney Dunkley
Date of previous inspection	6 March 2000	Headteacher	Mr Robert Gibbons

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 3 May 2006 - 4 May 2006	Inspection number 278132
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

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.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Becket is an average sized primary school where numbers have declined steadily in recent years. Most classes have pupils from more than one year group. A private pre-school setting opened in September 2005 in spare accommodation on site. A relatively high proportion of the pupils come from families experiencing some social and economic deprivation. Almost all pupils are White British. The children's attainment on entry is below that normally found and the proportion with learning difficulties is greater than the national average.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

After the last inspection the school experienced a period of uncertainty and turbulence within the leadership team which led to a decline. The school is now improving and providing a satisfactory education. It gives satisfactory value for money. Because the school's systems for checking performance are inadequate, its judgement about its own effectiveness as good is too generous.

In Reception children make good progress as a result of good teaching. However, because children arrive with low levels of attainment, by the end of the year relatively few have reached the expected learning goals for their age. In Years 1 to 6, as a result of satisfactory teaching, pupils make satisfactory progress but by the end of Year 6 standards remain below the national average, particularly in writing where they are well below and where some pupils do not make enough progress. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and make sure pupils understand what it is they are learning. However, in some lessons, especially in English, similar work is set for all pupils, regardless of their ability, slowing the progress of more able pupils and of those with learning difficulties unless they have an adult working alongside them. Pupils behave well and their personal development is satisfactory. They are supported and well cared for. However, the current system for guiding them by monitoring their academic progress and setting and sharing of individual targets is inadequate.

The headteacher has provided good leadership in addressing some significant weaknesses. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is good. Overall leadership is satisfactory but there are weaknesses. There is a lack of clarity about the roles among members of the leadership team, and monitoring of the school's performance is not sufficiently rigorous. Governors fulfil their roles satisfactorily. The recent rapid progress demonstrates that despite limited progress since the last inspection the school is now securely placed to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Produce and implement a clear action plan to show how the school intends to raise standards in writing.
- Ensure teachers use assessment information more effectively to match work to the needs of all pupils, particularly the higher attainers.
- Establish more rigorous and systematic monitoring and evaluation of school performance directly related to standards achieved by pupils.
- Clarify and strengthen the leadership roles of individuals within the senior leadership team.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

After a period of decline, standards are now improving. By the end of Year 6 standards are below the national average, particularly in writing where they are well below, but given many pupils' relatively low starting points, achievement is satisfactory. The

school now sets reasonably challenging targets which most pupils are likely to achieve. This follows a period when targets were too low and were exceeded by many pupils.

Many children enter Reception with limited language and mathematical skills and social and emotional development. Children progress well in Reception as a result of carefully presented experiences. Nevertheless, by the end of the year many do not reach the nationally expected goals for learning, especially in language, literacy and mathematical development.

In Years 1 to 6 progress is satisfactory for most pupils and for a few it is good. However, a minority of pupils of all abilities, but especially those who have the potential to attain high standards, do not make enough progress in writing. This is because work set does not often match the needs of different groups and pupils are not asked to write enough in other subjects. Progress in mathematics is stronger with most pupils reaching the nationally expected standards by the end of Year 6.

Achievement by pupils with learning difficulties is satisfactory. A few pupils with significant special needs make excellent progress as a result of carefully planned programmes directly related to their needs. Those with moderate learning difficulties make good progress when supported by an adult but their progress slows when there is no designated support and when activities are not carefully matched to their needs.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development and well-being has recently improved significantly and is now satisfactory with some good features. Pupils behave well and parents recognise this as a big improvement on recent years. This is a result of the successful introduction of whole-school initiatives which have had a positive impact on pupils' attitudes and raised their self-esteem, for example, including their parents in displayed photographs of pupils having received reward certificates in assembly.

Relationships are positive; most pupils are polite and show respect for each other. They enjoy school. Broadly average rates of attendance are maintained by the school's constant commitment to promoting attendance. Pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development is satisfactory. This represents an improvement in cultural development which was previously unsatisfactory. Their moral development is good and they have a good awareness of their rights and responsibilities. Pupils are developing an awareness of the importance of healthy lifestyles but need constant encouragement to practise what they know to be beneficial. Members of the school council are proud of the actions they have taken. Older pupils take seriously their role as mediators and 'squaddies' supporting the Becket Buddies at lunchtimes. Pupils are developing satisfactory study skills, including information and communication skills needed for their future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the Reception class teaching is good with a good balance between activities chosen by the children and those directed by adults. Adults work effectively as a team providing a stimulating range of experiences both indoors and outdoors as they make increasing use of the recently secured outdoor area. Assessments are perceptive and used well to plan future experiences.

Teaching in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. Teachers manage their pupils' behaviour well and establish an effective learning ethos in almost all lessons. Planning increasingly includes clear learning intentions and these are shared with pupils helping them to understand what it is they are learning. Pupils respond well when activities are matched accurately to different groups' needs and when they are stimulating and relevant, for example, in a Year 1 lesson when controlling robotic toys on a bear hunt, and in a Year 5 and 6 lesson when reflecting on how to present the moral issues depicted in a media presentation on the fur trade.

Assessment and marking of pupils' work is improving. However, in too many lessons, particularly English, teachers are not making the best use of assessments to match the work accurately to the needs of different groups and years within the same class. Often all pupils are given similar work. This slows the pace and rate of progress, with some higher attaining pupils not fully extended and pupils with learning difficulties struggling to participate, unless they have the support of a learning assistant. Pupils in most classes have curriculum targets but many are unclear about them and teachers are not referring to them sufficiently during lessons.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum has improved and is now satisfactory. Most of the issues identified in the last inspection have been addressed. However, two aspects remain outstanding. These are the provision for writing, which does not extend fully across different subjects and provision for the most able pupils. In Reception the curriculum is good, fulfilling all requirements.

A good aspect of the curriculum in Years 1 to 6 is the creative arts work, strengthened by such experiences as the African Arts week when good activities linked several areas of the curriculum helping to make learning fun.

Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported, especially when working alongside the learning mentor and learning support assistants. A new personal, social and health education programme is being introduced this term filling a previous gap in sex education and drug awareness. There are a number of clubs which, together with visitors and outings, satisfactorily extend the pupils' experiences.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Overall, care, guidance and support given to pupils are satisfactory with some good elements. The staff have a good knowledge of pupils' social and emotional needs and good support is very carefully targeted to those pupils with greatest need. Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported when receiving the attention of a specific adult. Although pupils' personal development is well monitored, the monitoring of their academic progress and the setting and sharing of targets is inadequate. Currently, setting targets makes limited impact on raising achievement.

A new perimeter fence has enhanced safety. Pupils reported feeling safe in school. They are confident about approaching a member of staff if they have a problem. This view is endorsed by parents. Child protection, health and safety and first aid procedures are in place with further training planned.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

After a period of uncertainty and change, leadership and management have improved significantly in the last two years and are now satisfactory although weaknesses remain. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school which is communicated clearly to the wider school community. He has provided good leadership in responding to the immediate weaknesses present on his arrival. He has successfully restored confidence in the school, with significant improvements in behaviour, pupils' experiences and staff morale.

The recently established senior leadership team is developing its role but there is a lack of clarity about what exactly some members of the team need to be doing. The Foundation Stage is well led and the English subject leader provides a good role model for colleagues. The school development plan identifies appropriate priorities for improvement. However, it does not have enough detail about what needs to be done to raise standards in writing for example.

The headteacher has introduced a range of practices to check on the performance of the school such as observations of lessons and checks on pupils' books. At the moment these checks on performance are not systematically focused or being measured rigorously against how well pupils are doing. Consequently the school's view of its strengths and weaknesses is more optimistic than is warranted. Recent improvements in the collation of performance data strengthen the school's capacity to improve, but some confusion remains between year and class groups when trying to interpret this data.

Governors fulfil their responsibilities satisfactorily and support the school with commitment. They are well informed about the work of the school but are reluctant to provide the challenge needed from time to time to hold the school to account.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
--	-----------------------	--------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for making us feel welcome on our recent visit to your school. We enjoyed talking with you and seeing some of your work.

We are pleased to say there are a number of things that are good about your school but there are also some things that need to get better. Here are some of the most important things that we found to be good:

- Children in the Reception class quickly settle into the school and do well in their work because they are given lots of interesting activities.
- Children throughout the school behave well and understand how important it is to be responsible towards one another.
- All the staff look after you well and those of you who experience problems are supported well.
- Your headteacher has worked hard to improve the school since he arrived.

We have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to work on these things:

- Set up a clear plan to help you all improve your writing skills.
- Make sure teachers always give you work that is not too hard or too easy.
- Carefully check up on how well the school is doing so they can make any changes needed.
- Make sure the senior teachers all know exactly how they can help to make things better.