



Bowburn Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114088
LEA Durham
Inspection number 279308
Inspection dates 30 November 2005 to 1 December 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs Rosemary Rodger

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Wylam Street
School category	Community		Bowburn
Age range of pupils	3 to 7		Durham, County Durham
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0191 3770606
Number on roll	122	Fax number	0191 3770606
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Heather Kelly
Date of previous inspection	1 June 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Irene Cochrane

Age group 3 to 7	Inspection dates 30 November 2005 - 1 December 2005	Inspection number 279308
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors

Description of the school

This is a small infant school with a part-time nursery. The area served by the school experiences some degree of social and economic disadvantage that is reflected in the above average proportion of pupils having a free school meal. Fourteen pupils are from minority ethnic cultures including five pupils in the early stages of learning English; they are supported by the local authority's support service. An average number of pupils have learning difficulties and/ or disabilities. The school had Beacon status for four years up to 2004. It achieved a Healthy school award and a review of the Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2005.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school that provides excellent value for money. The school has a more modest view of its effectiveness, and undervalues itself. Standards are high and achievement is excellent. Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Care, guidance and support are exemplary. Teaching and learning are excellent due to the skill and high expectations of all staff. Staff know the pupils extremely well and meet their individual needs to a very high level. All pupils, irrespective of their race or learning difficulty or disability are equally well provided for: this is a very inclusive school. The quality of the curriculum is good and effectively enriched by visitors and visits. The Foundation Stage provision has some good features, but has already been identified by the school as an area for improvement. Leadership and management are excellent: the school is in the very capable hands of the acting headteacher for this term. The governors support the school admirably. High standards, excellent achievement and outstanding teaching have been maintained since the previous inspection. The school has the capacity to improve.

not applicable

What the school should do to improve further

- There are no issues for the school to improve that they are not already dealing with.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

The inspection team disagree with the school's evaluation that standards are well above average and achievement is good; Standards are exceptionally high and achievement is outstanding. Children start nursery with well below average standards in all areas of learning, apart from personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy in which standards are very low. They make good progress in all six areas of learning so that by the time they start in Year 1 standards have improved and are broadly average and in line and with the local authority average. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is outstanding, because of exceptionally good teaching. As a result, standards reached in the 2005 teacher assessments were exceptionally high in reading, writing and mathematics. They were higher than the previous year's results because of very effective intervention strategies to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and lower attaining pupils. The small number of pupils with English as an additional language make excellent progress. All pupils achieve equally well. The high results are born out by the high quality work seen during the inspection.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Inspectors judge this to be outstanding rather than good, as the school's self evaluation stated. This is because pupils demonstrate a high level of confidence and maturity for their age and say they really enjoy learning. They give many examples of how to stay safe and lead healthy lifestyles. They are keen to exercise in play and sports. They understand the importance of helping others in school, for example, through the buddy system, and in the wider world by raising money to help others less fortunate than themselves. Playground 'buddies' take their roles very seriously.

The school prepares its pupils extremely well for their future education and work. This is reflected in the high standards they attain and their very positive attitudes. One pupil said 'If you don't learn in school you won't get a job when you get older.' Pupils' behaviour is excellent; bullying or racial harassment are not problems. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. For example, the school makes very good use of parents to help all to value and understand the culturally diverse society in which we live. Attendance is above average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Inspectors judge teaching and learning to be outstanding, which is better than the modest judgement in the school's evaluation form. The judgement on teaching is also based on the high standards and the excellent progress pupils make. The strengths of teaching are common to several classes where the teaching seen is consistently outstanding. They include knowledgeable, enterprising and innovative teachers, whose introductory sessions capture pupils' interest instantly, leading to excellent learning. This was a strong feature in Year 2. High expectations, clear and well-paced explanations and demonstrations left pupils in no doubt about what they learn. For example, the teacher's outstanding expressive reading was an excellent example that helped Year 2 pupils to read with expression and understand the characteristics of different characters in the story of 'Cinderella'. Support staff are invaluable and effectively cajole pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities to contribute and play a full part in lessons. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. Well-managed teamwork means that good intervention and support extend children's learning in a wide range of activities inside and outside, despite a lack of resources. Assessment procedures are exemplary. A thorough analysis of the yearly assessments is used to target groups of pupils for additional support and to give pupils clear statements about how to improve their work; this information is usefully shared with parents.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum overall to meet the needs of all children and fulfil statutory requirements. The strength of the curriculum is the emphasis placed on personal, social and health education that enables all children to become confident learners and so achieve highly. Information and communications technology supports learning very well. The curriculum is enriched very well by visitors and outings. For example, a storyteller worked with all children, but particularly boys, to motivate them to write more interesting stories. The school provides good opportunities for children to learn to play musical instruments and to take part in an after-school sports club. Parents are very well informed and know how to support their children with homework. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is well planned to provide children with a wide range of activities inside and outside the classroom, although the nature of the accommodation restricts access to the outdoors in the two reception classes.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school judges care, guidance and support for pupils to be good, but the inspection shows this to be a conservative assessment, because this aspect is outstanding. Very good procedures ensure that staff and children are safe. Children's concerns are taken very seriously and they know who to turn to if they need help. Child protection systems are carefully detailed and staff know the procedures to follow. There are excellent systems to identify any areas of concern with children's learning. Teachers use the information gathered by the systems extremely well when considering what support and guidance are needed to ensure all children achieve standards of which they are capable. For example, caring and committed teaching assistants provide very good support in lessons for all who need it. Children, especially in Year 2, are provided with well-designed personal targets so that they know what they have to do to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The acting headteacher, on a part-time secondment from headship in another school, is very effectively building on the legacy of the previous headteacher. She is very well supported by an extremely talented and hardworking deputy headteacher. Teaching staff are highly committed and those with subject responsibilities show initiative and vision in securing the very best provision for all pupils. Governors have an excellent impact through their vision for the future development of the school. The monitoring of teaching and learning is having a good impact on improving teaching due to the high expectations and excellent relationships fostered at all levels throughout school. This is an exceptionally inclusive school in which the needs of all pupils, irrespective of their learning difficulty or disabilities, are very well served. Recently appointed staff are efficiently looked after, and quickly

incorporate the school's high expectations into their teaching. Teamwork is strong. Very skilled classroom assistants and administrative staff ensure high quality care and support and excellent day-to-day running of the school. The school's self-evaluation is an accurate, if somewhat modest reflection of its strengths and areas for improvement. The school has sustained its high quality since the previous inspection and has the capacity to improve.

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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
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	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?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	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?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	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

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Bowburn Infant School

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1 December 2005

Dear Children

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed watching you work and talking to you about school.

What we liked most about your school.

You work very hard and do very well in the tests you take each year.

You love being in your school, especially the dinners you have.

You enjoy your lessons very much and laughed so much when some of you took on the characters in 'Cinderella' in Year 2.

You like to play with your friends and feel very safe because the 'buddies' are there to protect you.

Your teachers make your learning good fun and very enjoyable.

You love to play games in your mathematics lessons and learn how to add and subtract big numbers

You are very lucky to have very clever teachers who use the whiteboards brilliantly in your classes.

What we would like to see improved in your school.

Your headteacher, governors and everyone else in your school know what to do to make your school better. They work very hard to make sure your school is one of the best, and it is.

Yours sincerely

Rosemary Rodger

Lead inspector