



Bracebridge Infant and Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120428
LEA LINCOLNSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 280814
Inspection dates 2 May 2006 to 3 May 2006
Reporting inspector Dr. Trevor Watts LI

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Francis Street
School category	Community		LN5 8QG
Age range of pupils	3 to 7		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01522 520591
Number on roll	86	Fax number	01522 520591
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Cllr.Neville Jackson
Date of previous inspection	24 January 2000	Headteacher	Mrs. Marie Denham

Age group 3 to 7	Inspection dates 2 May 2006 - 3 May 2006	Inspection number 280814
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average infant and nursery school. All pupils are White British. Pupils come from the local area, where social and economic deprivation is above average. The pupil population is more stable than average. A higher than average proportion of pupils has learning difficulties.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school that is effective in raising pupils' standards in their personal and academic development. The school also judges itself to be good, particularly in the light of recent improvements. Staff have accurately identified several areas for development by thorough self-assessment procedures. They continue to work hard to improve pupils' learning. The headteacher is outstanding in her energy and vision in bringing staff, governors and parents together for the benefit of pupils. The school gives good value for money. It has a good capacity to continue improving. The improvement since the previous inspection is good. The curriculum is good, as is the teaching. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes have a good start, with caring and capable staff to guide them. They make good progress from a low starting level, and are heading towards the 'early learning goals' by the time they leave Reception. This good progress continues through the school, with pupils attaining average standards by the end of Year 2. Their progress and achievements are good. Standards have risen over the past two years. However, standards in writing are lower than in other basic skills, especially for boys. Many recent initiatives are having a positive effect on standards, but there is not enough systematic teaching of skills in information and communication technology (ICT), because new equipment is not yet fully used. Pupils are secure, safe and well cared for. They develop good personal and social skills. Many contacts with other schools benefit everyone involved, whether as part of a network to improve writing standards, for example, secondary age pupils running a fitness club.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to improve writing skills, especially boys'. - Implement existing plans to expand the systematic teaching of ICT skills when the computer suite is re-sited.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils attain levels that are broadly average for children their age by the time they leave the school. This represents good progress and achievement. Generally, children enter the Foundation Stage with below average knowledge and skills, and well below average language, mathematical and creative skills. The lowest level is in pre writing skills. Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes, and are well on the way towards attaining the expected 'early learning goals' when they enter Year 1. In Years 1 and 2, pupils continue to progress well, including the most able, and those who have learning difficulties. In Year 2 national tests in 2005, pupils' attainments in mathematics were average. Their reading attainments were above average. Their writing attainments were below average, though not significantly so. This represents good progress because their starting level in writing was considerably lower than in other aspects of learning. Boys enter school with fewer learning skills than girls. They improve well, but are still lagging behind the girls, and are a little below average when

they leave. The school is fully aware of this difference, and has taken clear steps to raise boys' attainment, especially in writing. Over the past five years, results have varied, being sometimes above and sometimes below the school's challenging targets. Since 2004, results have improved. Predictions based on in-school assessments indicate that Year 2 pupils will attain about the same level this year, but the following years are predicted to show a greater improvement as the school's actions take full effect.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress in personal and social development because staff put much effort into this aspect. Through assemblies, group discussions (or 'circle times') and lessons that are sometimes run by visitors, such as a nurse, police officers and fire-fighters, pupils learn how to be safe. They develop a good sense of spirituality, and good cultural awareness, both of their own local area and how people in other countries live. They have a clear feeling of right and wrong in situations that affect them, and often in wider situations as well. Staff expectations help pupils to develop social skills so they get along very well together. Pupils enjoy school very much, and behave beautifully on most occasions, although some older boys are not sensible all the time. Most pupils are very attentive, especially with lessons being made especially interesting for boys as well as girls. Boys often sit in rapt attention as the teacher explains, and they volunteer to carry out tasks and answer questions. Because they are so well motivated, boys' attainments are rising rapidly. Attendance is satisfactory. It has steadily risen from an unsatisfactory level two years ago because of actions taken by the school to make learning more enjoyable, praise and reward good attendance, and check on reasons for absence on the first day. During one assembly, for instance, there was a great cheer by the class that won the 'best attenders' award for the previous week, and clear disappointment on the faces of the losing classes. Extra physical activities, fitness and gardening clubs, and the provision of healthy hot meals contribute to pupils' good awareness of what makes a healthy life. Pupils learn good basic skills in the areas of personal, social and language development to prepare them for their future learning and later lives. They make a good contribution to the community through, for example, singing Christmas carols at the local library and supporting each other as 'playground pals'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good because the school's own intensive observations of lessons during the past 18 months have highlighted inconsistencies that have now been overcome. New staff have arrived, and extra training and guidance have been provided. Occasional lessons are still seen as satisfactory during the school's on-going monitoring, but all that were observed during the inspection were good. Teachers enjoy good relationships with pupils. Teachers very carefully and accurately assess how well pupils are learning

from the time they enter the Nursery to when they leave. Teachers plan their lessons very well to take account of pupils' learning so far, whether pupils have additional needs or not. Challenging activities are well matched to learning targets, and are very well based on pupils' previous learning. A poetry lesson about 'Using our hands' was especially imaginative and practical, for instance. Pupils are very willing learners; 'I especially love my teacher and writing,' one said. Teaching assistants and parent helpers are very capable, whether working with groups, or giving good support to individuals who need extra help. Staff and pupils often use electronic whiteboards and other equipment, from which pupils gain a satisfactory grasp of ICT skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good because it includes all required subjects, is well matched to the needs of all pupils, and is well enriched. From a good curriculum based on the 'early learning goals' in the Nursery and Reception classes, teaching moves seamlessly into the main school's National Curriculum. The main focus is on language skills. Teachers plan lessons in different subjects to include aspects of writing, such as about a visit to the castle or a science investigation. Learning is often boosted when topics combine several subjects. ICT is taught to a satisfactory extent, but there is not enough direct teaching of skills. The school rightly intends to increase the separate teaching of ICT skills when the small computer suite is moved to a new location soon. Through a very positive atmosphere, staff examples, class discussions, and separate lessons, pupils learn how to be healthy and safe, and how they can help in their community. They gain much confidence and enjoyment when they put on regular plays and performances that are very well attended by parents. Pupils go into the city on public transport to visit the castle and museum, and visit other places such as farms. To broaden pupils' learning, visitors hold workshops, for example on African drumming, and theatre companies put on performances. Well attended clubs include fitness, gardening, computing and craft.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Provision for care, guidance and support is good. It underpins the whole positive teaching and learning ethos of the school. Pupils' safety and welfare are well looked after by secure procedures overseen by well trained staff, who are very committed to pupils' personal development as well as their academic prowess. Guidance is outstandingly good. Senior managers analyse what is happening by regularly watching lessons, checking pupils' work and monitoring teachers' assessments of pupils' progress. They give clear feedback to staff, share the best ideas and methods, and give extra support where it is needed. This has resulted in a major boost to teaching and learning in all subjects, including in pupils' personal development. Pupils understand how well they are learning. They are involved in setting their targets and understanding their own progress as much as possible. All pupils are well supported by teachers and

assistants in lessons, whether they are especially able, or if they struggle to understand some things.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good because leaders are very committed to improving teaching and raising standards, and are doing so successfully. This improvement is based very strongly on analysing national test results, frequent lesson observations and looking at pupils' work in detail. The school has an outstanding understanding of its own strengths and weaknesses. This has led to recent improvements in teaching, resources, the curriculum, and pupils' achievements at the end of Year 2. The Foundation classrooms, for instance, have been completely refurbished and redecorated recently. ICT provision has improved with the purchase of much new software, several computers, and the creation of a small computer suite. The school regularly consults parents and takes note of their views when planning improvements. Parents are extremely positive about all aspects of the school. 'The improvements are excellent,' wrote one parent. The headteacher is an outstanding force behind developments and the solid restructuring of management. Quite new to the school, she has developed clear priorities, and very effective strategies for achieving her goals. Governors have a clear understanding of the school, strengthened by their recent resistance to closure proposals. Their role as a critical friend to the headteacher is developing well. Subject leaders are also developing their role. As well as checking pupils' work in their subjects, they are beginning to observe lessons themselves, with a view to improving teaching and standards further. Leaders show a good capacity to improve the school further.

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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?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	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?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	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?	2	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?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	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	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	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

I expect you will remember me visiting you recently. Thank you for helping me, answering my questions and being so polite to me. I think you go to a good school with a lot of exciting things happening. Many of you told me how much you enjoy going on visits, and all the different kinds of writing you do. You also told me you enjoy your lessons very much because you like working hard and you like your teachers. Your mums and dads told me how good they think the school is, as well. Your teachers work hard to look after you, and to make your lessons interesting for all of you. They are helped by other adults who also do a lot to help you. You learn many different subjects and do some very interesting topics, such as the ones about gardens and the seaside. You are learning well, and most of you behave very well and pay attention to what is happening in class. The school's headteacher is very good at deciding what needs to be done next, and making sure that things happen the way she wants. She has a good team of teachers and other adults from outside the school to help her. You can help by always being sensible in class and listening to what your teachers are telling you. I have asked the teachers to keep on finding ways to make your writing even better, especially for the boys. You often have chances to use computers and the electronic whiteboards, but I think it would be better if you had more chances to learn to use them in separate ICT lessons. Thank you all for your help.