



Barkston and Syston CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120689
LEA LINCOLNSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 280871
Inspection dates 30 January 2006 to 31 January 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. David Speakman LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Church Street
School category	Voluntary aided		NG32 2NB
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01400 250553
Number on roll	107	Fax number	0140050553
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs.Amanda Strawson
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mrs. Sally-Anne Caunter

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized Voluntary Aided Church of England primary school. Almost all pupils are of a White British background. There are no pupils with English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils entitled to claim a free school meal is very low and there is a well below average proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are taught in mixed age classes. Attainment on entry to reception is in line with that nationally expected for children of that age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school judges its effectiveness to be good. The inspection finds that it is satisfactory, but some important aspects of the school's work are good. The school gives satisfactory value for money. Achievement is satisfactory and by the end of Year 6 standards are average. Writing is weaker than reading and speaking and listening, especially for the higher attaining pupils. Standards in mathematics are average and in science, above. Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are good. Relationships are a strength. The curriculum is good. It is planned well so pupils in the mixed age classes develop skills and knowledge in a structured way. It also has a good range of after school activities. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. However, lesson planning does not always take full account of the learning needs of the full ability range, particularly pupils of higher attainment and those with special educational needs. The school cares well for all pupils. Assessment is thorough and the school is able to provide a good level of academic guidance. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. The leadership of the headteacher is good. Some subject leaders are new to the responsibility and their roles require development. School self-evaluation is good and targets for school improvement in the short term are highly relevant. The school improvement plan does not look far enough into the future. The school has a good capacity to improve in view of the recent developments. When the headteacher took over, some issues from the previous inspection remained. These have been addressed in addition to other issues identified since her appointment.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing, particularly for the higher attaining pupils. - Improve lesson planning so that it meets the learning needs of all pupils, particularly the higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. - Improve the school improvement plan by extending the time scale and planning in the long term. - Develop the effectiveness of the subject leaders in their roles.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory overall. Results of the 2005 national tests at the end of Year 2 in reading and mathematics were well above average and in writing were above average. For Year 6 pupils, results in English and mathematics were average and in science above. Reading and speaking and listening were above average but satisfactory standards in writing depressed the overall results in English. Inspection evidence, based on lesson observations, analysis of pupils' work and the school's assessment data, including targets, confirms this assessment. Targets for 2006 predict similar outcomes, but with more pupils expected to achieve the higher level in mathematics. Pupils are on course to meet the targets set for them. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well, especially in their speaking and listening, reading and personal, social and emotional development. Standards are good by the end of reception and most children

attain the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception, with some working in Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum. Achievement is satisfactory in other year groups. Based on their attainment at the end of Year 2, pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 3 to 6. More could be achieved by the higher attaining pupils, particularly in writing. Learners with learning difficulties or disabilities achieve satisfactorily.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

This is a strong feature of the school. Behaviour is good in lessons, around the school and on the playground. Pupils show positive attitudes to learning. They want to do well and try hard to do their very best. When given the opportunity, they work very well independently and in collaboration with other pupils. This illustrates the very good relationships that exist between pupils and between pupils and adults. Pupils engage willingly in conversation and are very confident when speaking to adults. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is evident in school life generally and during school assemblies. Pupils confirm that they enjoy school, and attendance is above average. They adopt safe practices in lessons and on the playground. They say there is no hostility, bullying or aggressive behaviour. They feel valued and know that their views are listened to, through the school council for example, which although in its early days is already having a significant impact on life in school. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles, keeping physically fit through physical education lessons and the good range of extra curricular activities. They particularly enjoy the opportunity to help 'manage' Belton House, a nearby National Trust property and through involvement in its education programme, build secure skills for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The impact of teaching on pupils' academic achievement is satisfactory, but some good teaching was seen during the inspection. Management of behaviour is good and results in pupils behaving well, enabling teachers to teach at a brisk pace. Teachers use a wide range of teaching and learning methods which interest and engage pupils' attention, including information and communication technology (ICT) as an effective teaching and learning aid. Teachers make clear to pupils what they will learn in the lesson so that they know what is going to be assessed. Marking is good, particularly in English where it clearly tells pupils what they do well and what can be improved. Lesson planning shows different activities for lower and average attaining pupils but is less clear for higher attaining pupils. Some planning details activities for different ages in mixed classes, but does not show how the work will be adapted for pupils of different abilities. There is little mention of how the needs of pupils with special educational needs are to be met. Teaching for pupils in the reception class is good. Activities are closely monitored and achievement continuously assessed by observation.

Activities are fun and children clearly develop an early enthusiasm for learning. There is a great deal of lively interaction between children and adults.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good quality and range of learning opportunities. They are planned well so that all pupils experience a progressive development of skills, knowledge and understanding. Where teachers share a class, each has clear and well defined subject matter to teach. There is no duplication and all subjects are covered fully. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is organised well and children's learning experiences are closely monitored to ensure each child enjoys a broad and balanced coverage of all six areas of learning. Curriculum enrichment is good. This year a programme of personal, social, health education and citizenship, including raising pupils' awareness of sex and relationships and of harmful substances, has been introduced in all classes. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 benefit from weekly French lessons. There is a good range of after school and lunchtime activities, including sport and music, and there is ample opportunity for those who prefer activities other than these.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils' academic achievement is closely monitored and teachers have a good awareness of how well pupils are doing. Pupils confirm that they are kept well informed about their progress through their targets and through informative marking of their work. Some pupils, particularly lower and average attaining pupils receive intensive support to improve. This is where the best progress takes place. Overall support for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Individual education plans are fully in place with realistic targets. Achievement is monitored by the special needs coordinator but there is still insufficient support in class. This is an area for improvement of which the school is aware. Some parents expressed concern. Child protection arrangements are good and procedures to ensure pupils' health and safety are clear and understood by all. The school council is fairly new but is already active in ensuring pupils' ideas for improvement become reality. For example, implementing and running a buddy system.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management is satisfactory overall. The leadership of the headteacher is good. It is strong and purposeful and focused on the academic and personal development of all pupils. In the last year she has identified major areas for improvement and quickly put into action initiatives to achieve targets. The recent track record of the headteacher and the deeper involvement of the governors clearly indicate a good capacity for further improvement. The school provides satisfactory value for money. The head teacher soon gained the confidence of governors, staff and parents. The overwhelming majority of parents responding to the questionnaire

think the school is well led and managed. Leadership and management of English and the Foundation Stage are good. Some other subject leaders are new to their roles and are not yet fully accountable for provision and standards. Governance is satisfactory but the governors have come a long way this year. They have increased their direct involvement with the school. Their deeper understanding is further helped through good levels of information from the headteacher. They are more challenging and ask meaningful questions. Self-evaluation is good. The headteacher monitors the work of the school effectively. Through teaching in each class each week, she sees first hand how well each pupil is doing. She is fully aware that provision for equality of opportunity for all pupils has weaknesses in providing for most able and for pupils with special educational needs and plans to address this weakness as a matter of some urgency. Assessment data is used effectively to identify areas for improvement. The views of pupils and parents are sought through the school council and through questionnaires. The school improvement plan is for this year only and targets are relevant to short term improvement. It does not project improvement beyond the current academic year and this is a weakness. The school is aware of this and there are plans to address this soon.

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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?	3	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	2	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	3	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?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	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	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?	3	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?	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	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	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

I was delighted to meet you when I came to inspect your school. Thank you very much for talking to me, making me feel so welcome and helping me find out about you and your school. The school has come on a long way this last year. The headteacher, teachers and all other adults working in your school do their best to help give you a secure start to your education. They look after you well and I noticed that, in turn, you also look after each other. The teachers go to great lengths to make sure that you get interesting lessons and good opportunities to mature into sensible and confident young people and to grow up fit and healthy. You had really good things to say about your school, your teachers and friends and it is obvious that you enjoy being there. I thought your behaviour and attitudes to learning were good. I am asking your headteacher and governors to help you improve the quality of your writing, especially those who are capable of really good work. I have also asked them to give more support to those of you who need that extra bit of help with your work. They will also look further into the future when planning school improvements and develop the roles of teachers in charge of subjects. I wish you well in the future.