



Birstwith Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121550
LEA North Yorkshire
Inspection number 281038
Inspection dates 15 May 2006 to 16 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Keith Bardon CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Wreaks Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Birstwith
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG3 2NJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01423 770 554
Number on roll	59	Fax number	01423 772690
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs S Baugh
Date of previous inspection	4 December 2000	Headteacher	Mrs E Bedford

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 15 May 2006 - 16 May 2006	Inspection number 281038
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© 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 one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a very small primary school which serves rural communities to the north west of Harrogate. Relatively few pupils live in Birstwith itself and a growing number travel some distance to school each day. Most pupils are from advantaged homes. Almost all pupils are white British. All pupils speak English as their home language. An average proportion of pupils has learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Inspection findings agree with the school's own evaluation that Birstwith Primary is a good school with outstanding features. Pupils of all ages achieve well. Although the small number of pupils in each year group causes standards to fluctuate from year to year, attainment is above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6. The provision made for Reception age children is good. This gives them a secure start to school and almost all children move into Year 1 having attained or exceeded expectations for their age. Teaching and learning are good and as a result pupils maintain a good rate of progress in all classes. Teachers match work carefully to the needs of individual pupils and provide lively lessons. Pupils try hard, concentrate well and persevere with the tasks they are set. The school provides a high quality of care for its pupils and promotes their personal development extremely well. Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They readily help others and get a great deal of pleasure from school. The curriculum provides a broad range of stimulating activities and gives all pupils equal opportunities to learn. The school makes effective use of its links with other organisations to support and extend pupils' learning. Parents and pupils hold very positive opinions of the school, which are fully justified. The school is led and managed well. Since it was last inspected, the school has made good improvement and it is in a strong position to continue to improve. Senior staff and governors have an accurate picture of how well it is performing and plan pupils' educational provision carefully. However, some plans for development are too broad and do not provide the finely detailed guidance that is now needed. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that development plans identify in detail what staff need to focus upon to ensure high standards and to guarantee continuing improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good and standards are above and at times well above average. Most children start school with attainment that is a little higher than average. The teaching in Reception builds successfully on this solid base and by the time they enter Year 1 most pupils are working securely within or above the levels expected for their age. This good progress continues throughout Years 1 to 6 and pupils transfer to secondary education with well developed knowledge and skills across a wide range of subjects. Most pupils read accurately, write fluently and articulate their thoughts with confidence. They calculate accurately in mathematics and have a good grasp of science ideas. Pupils' performance in the national tests is better than in many schools nationally, although results fluctuate year by year because the number in each year group is often small. In 2005, results were above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6. Year 6 pupils met the challenging targets the school had set for their performance in the national tests. Targets for 2006 have been set at an equally challenging level

and the school is confident that these will be met. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive effective support and make good progress towards the targets set for their learning. The school makes good provision for particularly high attaining or talented pupils and they achieve well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. High levels of attendance indicate how much pupils enjoy school. They are eager to learn and readily participate in lessons. Teachers' questions are answered thoughtfully and pupils of all ages take considerable pride in getting things right. Behaviour is excellent and pupils of all ages get on extremely well. They value being part of the school community and feel safe and secure in its warm atmosphere. Pupils give and accept help readily and older pupils take particularly good care of the younger ones. The school is free from bullying; 'Not in this school!' as one Year 2 pupil said very forcefully. The friendly welcome new pupils receive is remembered with immense pleasure by those who joined the school part way through their primary education. Pupils develop into sensible, caring young people with a wide range of interpersonal skills. These, along with well developed literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills, prepare them well for the future. Since the school council was established a short while ago pupils have become increasingly aware of the responsibilities associated with representing others. Pupils know and appreciate what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and recognise fully how important this is to their well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Lively lessons stimulate pupils' interest in learning and extend their knowledge and skills progressively. Frequent discussions, questions and interactions keep lessons moving at a good pace and help pupils to maintain high levels of concentration throughout. However, on a very small number of occasions, pupils are asked too many direct questions and have insufficient opportunity to extend their thinking by formulating questions of their own. Relationships between pupils and staff are very good and help is quickly provided if a pupil is encountering difficulties. This gives pupils confidence to try hard. A Year 6 pupil remarked, 'No one is scared to ask for help, and no one shows off if they know the answer'. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and add helpful comments that make clear to pupils where they have been successful and what could be improved. Rigorous checks are kept on how well pupils are progressing and work is matched carefully to what individual pupils need to learn next. This is very evident in the work provided for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities which is modified carefully to meet their needs. The constructive and well judged support pupils receive from the teaching

assistants enhances their learning and contributes positively to the good progress they make.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and matches the needs of the pupils well. Pupils study all the required subjects and the school places due emphasis on the key areas of literacy, numeracy and ICT. Different strategies, such as history days or art weeks, keep the curriculum fresh and exciting. Teachers have begun to link subjects together in their planning in a meaningful way. Lessons which promote pupils' personal development feature prominently and provide enjoyable opportunities for discussion and the sharing of thoughts and feelings. The addition of French lessons has broadened the curriculum and is providing pupils with a useful introduction to modern languages. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities covering sports, languages, computers and the arts which are well attended. Regular visits and visitors enhance the quality of the curriculum and their contributions are much enjoyed by the pupils. The curriculum for Reception children is well planned and gives them a good start to school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school takes exceptionally good care of all its pupils. Child protection and health and safety procedures are very thorough and staff know the pupils extremely well. Relationships are excellent; pupils feel safe and secure and know help is always available if they need it. The support provided for vulnerable pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very effective. Their progress is monitored closely and the individual learning targets are reviewed regularly to ensure they remain relevant and closely match pupils' needs. There is excellent provision in place to promote all aspects of pupils' personal development and they make rapid gains. Pupils' academic progress is monitored closely and the information used constructively to set them targets for improvement. Procedures for managing the data produced by assessment are very effective and enable the school to respond quickly to pupils' needs. Pupils benefit from the strong links the school has forged with other organisations. The school works closely with parents and the partnership between school and home is very productive.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides the school with high quality leadership, utilising the strengths of the staff well and giving careful consideration to how best to maximise the advantages provided by a small school. The ethos is strong and the warm family atmosphere encourages pupils to do their best at all times. The school has benefited from having a stable staff for a number of years.

They work closely as a team, sharing management responsibilities equitably and supporting each other fully. The unity of purpose, based firmly on providing each and every pupil with a high quality of education, has helped to provide a good pace of improvement since the last inspection. Although the school regularly receives very positive reports about its achievements from a variety of sources, there is no complacency and the will to continue to improve is strong. Fluctuations in pupil numbers make forward planning difficult at times but the school has a secure platform upon which to build for the future. The school benefits from a conscientious and effective governing body and governors are regular visitors to the school. Along with the senior staff, they monitor the school's performance closely and have a clear understanding of what is influencing pupils' achievements. Development plans correctly identify the school's main priorities for improvement. However, at times, action planning is too broad and does not focus sharply enough on exactly what is needed to make pupils' good achievement even better. All those concerned with the pupils' education, including the pupils themselves, are consulted regularly and close attention is paid to their views when decisions are taken.

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?	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	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?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	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?	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?	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?	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?	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	2	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	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

Thank you very much for the very friendly welcome you gave me when I visited your school recently. Although I was with you for only two days, I thoroughly enjoyed finding out about the work you do, and a special thanks to those who talked with me about the school. You go to a good school and I can understand why you enjoy it so much.

These are the things I particularly liked about the school:

- you are happy at school and attend regularly
- everyone is very friendly and you get on well with each other and your teachers
- you try hard and make good progress in all subjects
- teachers make lessons enjoyable and you are eager to learn new things
- adults take extremely good care of you and are always there to help
- you behave extremely well and listen carefully in class
- you willingly help each other and the staff, and older children take very good care of the younger ones
- you have an excellent understanding of how to do things in safe and healthy ways
- you thoroughly enjoy and participate fully in the many interesting clubs and additional activities the school provides.

I also looked at what the school might do next. This is what I suggested:

- make sure that teachers have the clearest picture possible of how to make your good school even better.