



Blisworth Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121794
LEA Northamptonshire
Inspection number 281102
Inspection dates 13 March 2006 to 14 March 2006
Reporting inspector Michael Smith HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Courteenhall Road
School category	Community		Northampton
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Northamptonshire NN7 3DD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01604 858414
Number on roll	205	Fax number	01604 858532
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Piers Massey
Date of previous inspection	29 March 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Celia Irwin

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 13 March 2006 - 14 March 2006	Inspection number 281102
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Blisworth Community Primary is an average-sized, over subscribed school. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals, from minority ethnic groups and with learning difficulties is very low. A small number of pupils are learning English as an additional language. The majority of pupils attending the school live beyond the immediate vicinity of the school and come from areas of low deprivation. On starting school, children's attainment is above that expected nationally of children of a similar age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school's evaluation that Blisworth Community Primary is a good and effective school. Recent developments instigated by the very dynamic and efficient headteacher, ably supported by her senior management team, have ensured the school is improving significantly. The headteacher empowers teachers, pupils and governors to take responsibility for their actions and to meet the school's aim of equipping each child with the skills, knowledge and understanding to become reflective, lifelong, independent learners. Curriculum leaders have a good overview of their subjects' strengths and weaknesses but their relative lack of experience in some subject areas mean they are not yet having a significant impact upon raising standards.

Provision in the Foundation Stage has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Children enter the Reception class with standards that are above the county and national averages. Good teaching and significantly improved learning resources help children to maintain these high standards. Almost all achieve the expected learning goals by the end of the reception year and a significant minority exceed them.

Overall standards and achievement are satisfactory but rising in response to well planned and implemented improvements. The improved quality of teaching, an exciting and engaging curriculum and a very effective tracking system have ensured pupils now make good progress. Teaching is good and well matched to most pupils' needs, but additional attention needs to continue to be given to stretch even further the most able pupils.

Pupils enjoy school. They are very well supported and they show excellent commitment to learning because the school provides a very caring atmosphere. This enhances their development and ensures they have a very good understanding of the spiritual, cultural and moral issues both in the local area and the wide world.

Improvements to the use of information and communication technology (ICT), the match of pupils' work to their level of ability and communications with parents show the school has a good capacity to improve further. The school gives good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards further by ensuring a consistently high level of challenge to the most able pupils across the school.
- Improve further the quality of middle management by developing the role of subject leaders.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are good and achievement to date has been satisfactory. Results in 2005 showed pupils entered the school with above average standards, they made broadly average progress across the school and standards at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2

remained above average. Pupils with learning difficulties made progress similar to their peers. The school has analysed closely national test results and identified areas for development and changed schemes of work in response to areas of weakness.

The school has implemented improved systems to track pupils' achievement and target underperformance. It has also ensured teachers are able to identify when pupils are not making sufficient progress and to intervene appropriately and this has significantly improved the progress pupils make in lessons and across the year. This is confirmed by accurate assessments used by all teachers and the school is well placed for these to be reflected in improved achievement in tests this year.

The school now sets appropriately challenging targets for pupils in each year in Key Stage 2 and works well to ensure pupils achieve at least in line with expectation and often above.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, continues to be outstanding. Attendance remains well above the national average and has been so for several years.

One parent commented that the school 'has a wonderful atmosphere and the teaching is effective and fun'. Their children wholeheartedly agree. They are very proud of their school, enjoy their lessons and speak highly of their teachers. Pupils feel safe and their behaviour has improved since the last inspection; it is now outstanding. They are very polite, work hard and can be relied upon to behave sensibly during lessons and at other times. Bullying is very rare. Lunchtimes are calm, well organised and sociable occasions. Older pupils, for example, serve the younger children, offer to cut up their food and help them to put their coats on. Relationships are excellent and pupils' ability to consider and understand the needs of others reflects their strong moral and social awareness. Pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness is also outstanding. For example, themed weeks help pupils to learn about African music and art and they provide substantial financial support for a namesake school in India. Pupils clearly understand why it is important to adopt a healthy lifestyle. They eat well and younger pupils enjoy being provided with fresh fruit during the mid-morning break. Pupils attending the early morning breakfast club can eat a hearty breakfast and this sets them up well for the day. The school is also one of only four primary schools in the county that provides a hot meal at lunchtime. Pupils undertake plenty of physical education and extra-curricular sporting clubs are especially popular.

Pupils are encouraged to voice their opinions and they play a very active role within day-to-day school life and the wider community. The school council has, for example, changed the way in which teams are selected in games lessons, raised funds for charity and bought new bins for the playground. Pupils also regularly contribute to local events, they serve elderly residents lunch every week and recently supported the local Heritage Society by designing a children's footpath within the village.

The school's good links with local employers, coupled with pupils' confident 'can do' attitudes and strong key skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT, equip them exceptionally well for their future lives within the world of work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers plan very effective lessons with appropriate challenge for the majority of pupils. They make good use of recently installed whiteboards and incorporate ICT well within many lessons.

Pupils behave very well and are engaged in lessons because they have excellent relationships with each other and their teachers. They respond well to very good questioning which enables teachers to develop pupils' understanding and to engage them in a variety of interesting activities. Pupils work well in groups and they often take responsibility for their own learning by working individually and extending a problem.

Assessment is good. Teachers have accurate records of pupils' work, they mark work well to help pupils improve and they use elements of peer and self-assessment effectively.

Good use is made of assistants to enhance the work in the classroom and to support pupils with learning difficulties.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good because it engages and excites pupils and enables them to make good progress within lessons. Careful consideration is given by coordinators to developing appropriate work which develops understanding and which encourages teachers to experiment in delivering enthralling lessons.

Very good use is made of the internet to engage pupils with real life scenarios and resources. The curriculum is also enhanced by cross-curricular days which help pupils make connections between different elements of work. It also ensures pupils extend their literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects. Good use is made of local businesses to enhance the work covered in school, for example, developing a healthy lunch in conjunction with local supermarkets. The curriculum also uses the local area well to enhance the pupils' experiences, for example, studying the local canal and residential events.

The curriculum is enhanced by a variety of additional activities, for example, a significant number of pupils are learning a musical instrument, Year 1 pupils are learning French and a group undertake an engineering course during the year supported by a local employer.

The pupils respond well to a variety of sports and other clubs. They enjoy playing sport after school and many take part in these activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils of all ages receive good care, guidance and support. They feel safe and well looked after and their parents wholeheartedly agree. For example, parents have commented on the school's nurturing atmosphere and speak highly of the way 'the children feel part of a family that cares for them'. Rigorous procedures for child protection and health and safety and close links with outside agencies ensure that pupils with particular needs and difficulties are supported very well. This high level of care ensures that pupils feel very positive about coming to school and maintain a very good frame of mind for learning. Procedures for monitoring pupils' progress have strengthened since the last inspection and are now good. Careful analysis of assessment information helps teachers to track individual pupils and spot those who are at risk of underachieving. Closely targeted support and consistently good teaching helps pupils of all ages to maintain high standards and make at least steady progress in their work. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 know their target for the end of the key stage, the level at which they are working and how they can improve their work. Teachers provide good academic guidance and this is reflected in pupils' high levels of motivation and the high standard of their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The dynamic headteacher provides excellent leadership, well supported by a very effective senior management team. They have empowered subject leaders to develop their curriculum areas, but the lack of experience by recently appointed staff has meant they have not yet had a major impact.

The improved management of the school is having a marked impact upon raising achievement. The more effective use of assessment data by teachers has ensured pupils are making good progress. The improved quality of teaching and learning, along with far greater accountability of staff for raising standards, has shown the school is in an excellent position to improve further.

The school has an accurate self-evaluation which has highlighted strengths and appropriate areas for further improvement. These have been incorporated into a well targeted school development plan. The school gains parents' and pupils' views well and these are used to support the school's evaluation and to identify areas for improvement. Parents find this very useful and this is a significant improvement from the previous report. However, a very small number of parents still feel their views are not adequately considered.

Governors have a very clear overview of curriculum areas and of how the school is progressing. They are very supportive and they feel that the new headteacher has

enabled them to carry out their role as a critical friend very effectively. They now hold the school to account for its standards and provision from a well informed position.

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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	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	2	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?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	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?	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

Thank you for your very positive responses and excellent behaviour when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting with you and your teachers. Your comments helped us to get a clear understanding of school life, what you enjoy and value in school.

We think that your school is good and you clearly enjoy being there. You work well with your teachers to make sure that the school is an exciting and interesting place. Your positive comments show how much you like school and appreciate the work of the staff.

We were pleased to see how you can influence what happens in school and how you take health issues very seriously, for example, how well ordered and calm your lunchtime is and how many of you enjoy a healthy meal. You enjoy some very interesting lessons and activities with some good teaching and varied lessons, including a very large variety of clubs and sports in which many of you take part. We were also impressed by the way in which you help others, for example, the lunch for elderly residents and the school in India.

Your school is very well led and knows its strengths and also the areas it wants to improve. As in nearly all schools, there are areas that could be better. The school needs to make sure that the work in lessons stretches the cleverest of you and to help teachers gain experience in developing different subjects in the school. We wish you well for the future and hope you enjoy your time and are successful at this very caring and supportive school. I am sorry this letter could not be a postcard like the ones pupils in Year 3 were writing when I visited their lesson.