



Bentley High Street Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106752
Local Authority Doncaster
Inspection number 287600
Inspection dates 7–8 March 2007
Reporting inspector Rosemary Eaton

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	High Street
School category	Community		Bentley, Doncaster
Age range of pupils	3–11		South Yorkshire DN5 0AA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01302 874536
Number on roll (school)	300	Fax number	01302 820465
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs A Saunders
		Headteacher	Mrs J James
Date of previous school inspection	2 December 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school. A greater than average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Currently, 24 pupils are from Traveller families. A far smaller than average proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and fewer than average have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school is designated an extended school, providing after-school activities, before-school and after-school childcare, and family and adult learning opportunities. There were significant changes to the school's leadership in September 2006, including the appointment of a new headteacher.

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 with some outstanding features. Pupils are provided with an exciting and diverse range of experiences through lessons, visits, special events and a host of clubs. These combine to make the curriculum outstanding. Its impact is seen in the extent to which pupils enjoy being in school and their enormous enthusiasm for learning. 'School is awesome!' remarked one boy. Staff take advantage of every opportunity to boost pupils' self-esteem, for example through programmes designed to meet their emotional needs and by showing every pupil that they are valued. Pupils thrive in the warm and stimulating environment and one parent commented that the school is like a 'second family' to her child. Behaviour is often exemplary, because pupils are so happy and don't have time to be bored. A few parents have noticed that a small number of pupils with social, emotional or behavioural needs find it hard to control themselves. These pupils sometimes have special arrangements to help them and to enable others to play and learn without interruption. The success of these procedures reflects the good quality care, guidance and support offered to all pupils. This is enhanced by the school's exceptional partnerships with other agencies which contribute significantly to pupils' wellbeing. Pupils are made acutely aware of what is involved in healthy living. They have regular and varied opportunities to be physically active, for example performing an energetic dance routine before starting a mathematics lesson.

When children join Nursery, their skills are broadly in line with national expectations. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage and this continues during Key Stages 1 and 2. As a result, standards are above average at the end of Year 6. Compared with other schools, a greater proportion of pupils reach the expected levels in the Year 2 and Year 6 national tests. However, fewer than average get to the higher levels in English, particularly in writing. Pupils achieve well, because the quality of teaching and learning is good. Through making regular assessments, teachers and teaching assistants know how well pupils are learning. Good advice and support are provided to help individuals with their work. Sometimes, teachers rely too much on this approach to meeting pupils' needs. They do not always make sure that tasks are matched closely enough to what each pupil should learn next.

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher's determination that all pupils will achieve as well as possible and enjoy their primary years is shared by all staff. Parents have noticed how hard staff work. Self-evaluation is thorough and accurate and has led to good improvement since the previous inspection. The school provides good value for money and demonstrates a similarly good capacity for further improvement. One parent, understandably, urged the school to 'Keep up the good work'.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels in English, focusing particularly on writing.
- Ensure that work is always matched closely to what each pupil needs to learn next.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children's below average skills on entry to Nursery tend to be least advanced in the areas of personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy. Children nearly all achieve the goals set for the end of the Foundation Stage and a number exceed them.

A higher than average proportion of the current Year 6 pupils were working at below the expected levels when they joined the school. A significant number of them have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Consequently, test results are expected to dip in 2007, despite the good progress pupils are making. Subsequent year groups are achieving well and are in line to return standards to the school's usual above average level. Standards are particularly strong in science, whereas English, especially writing, tends to be a relatively weaker subject. Boys and girls generally achieve equally well, as do pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and pupil from minority ethnic groups.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

These are extremely happy and confident pupils, very willing to tackle new experiences. They have lots of fun and bring equally positive attitudes to their work. Pupils attend regularly, because they want to be here and the school reminds them and their parents consistently about the importance of good attendance. They learn how to keep themselves safe, for instance, when cycling to school. Pupils develop mature attitudes and the school council has helped to bring the weekly tuck shop into line with healthy eating guidelines. Because their behaviour is so reliable, the oldest pupils are now beginning to take on more responsibilities, such as joining the recently introduced playground leaders. Younger ones have fewer opportunities to take on jobs around school. Pupils become increasingly independent and enterprising, characteristics that help to prepare them well for their future lives. All aspects of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils report, accurately, that 'Teachers use fun to help us learn'. Activities are chosen carefully to capture pupils' imagination. For instance, a performance of 'Jack and the Beanstalk' prompted Year 1 pupils to work very hard at their writing as they recounted the story. Teachers make sure pupils know what they are to learn and sometimes involve them in deciding how to judge their own success. In spite of this good practice, there is not always enough difference between what is demanded of higher-attaining and lower-attaining pupils. For example, activities may be the same for all or questions

are not varied to make the fastest learners think harder. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very effectively, so that maintaining a calm and purposeful atmosphere appears effortless. Expectations are very high and regular reminders are given, for instance, to ensure that pupils listen with respect when others are speaking.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

'We're always doing something really good', said one pupil. The curriculum is constantly being reviewed and developed. For instance, lessons in philosophy are currently being introduced. Among the many exceptionally strong features, music stands out. Instrumental lessons, participation in performances and festivals and a recording of their Christmas music give pupils tremendous pride and contribute significantly to their personal development. Days focused on topics such as 'Victorians' excite pupils' interest and help to consolidate learning by linking work in different subjects. Pupils and their parents appreciate the very many clubs, which provide something for everyone and successfully promote learning and personal development. Though timetables reveal a very strong and relevant emphasis on literacy and numeracy, all subjects are represented. This balance ensures plenty of opportunities for pupils to develop skills such as designing and making. First-hand experiences are provided whenever possible. For example, a residential visit enabled Year 4 pupils to investigate mini-beasts. The Foundation Stage curriculum is equally creative, with regular use of the outside environment.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school pays good attention to all aspects of pupils' health, safety and well-being. For instance, child protection and safe recruitment procedures meet requirements. Pupils feel safe in school and know what to do if they have worries. The school provides very well for particularly vulnerable pupils. For example, those who face exceptional personal difficulties have opportunities to relax, talk with a trusted adult, and learn strategies to help them to cope. The clear approaches to managing any challenging behaviour are understood and applied consistently. Specialist agencies are recruited whenever necessary, for example to provide additional support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils' academic progress is tracked carefully, although some systems are quite new and are not yet fully effective. Marking is mostly helpful and pupils are aware of their individual targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

As one parent observed, 'The school is always improving.' The headteacher and staff are enthusiastic and committed. Their very high aspirations for the school and all pupils are backed up by good management systems. For example, the arrangements for monitoring the quality of teaching and pupils' progress are well thought out. Teachers

have started to become involved in identifying and sharing good practice. New systems such as this have not had time to make a full impact on pupils' standards and achievement. Accurate information is collected about the school's strengths and areas needing further improvement. This feeds into the plans for moving the school forward, which include extensive opportunities for the professional development of staff. Governors are well informed and are developing more ways of finding out about the school at first hand. Parents' views are very positive. The school provides regular occasions for them to be involved in their children's education and to develop their own skills. Their participation in courses helps pupils to appreciate learning as a lifelong process.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for being so helpful when the inspectors visited your school. We really enjoyed our short time with you and I want to let you know what we found out about the school.

We were very impressed with your behaviour in lessons and around school. This helps everyone to feel safe and able to do their work. In addition, of course, the staff take great care of you. You told us how much you enjoy school and we can understand why. The staff arrange many exciting things for you to do: visits, clubs, special days and so on. You know a great deal about how to be healthy and we are pleased that you are so keen on sport and being active. A special thank you goes to the Year 4 pupils who performed their 'haka' for me. It was quite frightening!

You learn a lot, because you have good teachers. We think that more of you could reach the highest levels in the national tests, especially in writing. We want the school to find ways to help you do this. You will need to continue to try very hard. Sometimes, work is a bit too hard or too easy for some pupils. We have asked the teachers to make sure your activities are always at the right level. You can help by saying if you don't have to try very much or if you don't understand the work.

You and your parents think you go to a good school and we agree. Your headteacher and the staff have lots of ideas for making the school even better and we know that you will continue to enjoy learning and have fun.