



The Duke of Bedford Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110705
Local Authority CITY OF PETERBOROUGH
Inspection number 288747
Inspection dates 22–23 February 2007
Reporting inspector Roger Sadler

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Wisbech Road
School category	Community		Thorney
Age range of pupils	4–11		Peterborough PE6 0ST
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01733 270243
Number on roll (school)	187	Fax number	01733 271004
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Pauline Coakley
		Headteacher	Mr Simon Chandler
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors over two days.

Description of the school

Most pupils are from White British families and almost all speak English as their primary language at home. The school serves an area that is neither advantaged nor disadvantaged. A larger proportion of pupils have learning difficulties than is typical nationally.

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. Pupils achieve well, make good progress and attain above average standards by the time they leave the school. Good leadership and management have resulted in substantial improvements to many aspects of pupils' education and to the progress they make.

Children enter the Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills in line with what is expected nationally because the headteacher has ensured that many of the weaknesses that caused children to make a slow start in Reception have been successfully resolved. Most are now making satisfactory progress and almost all children reach the standards expected for their age. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2. They are currently making good progress to catch up to average standards in reading writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2.

Throughout the school, care, guidance and support are outstanding. Work is marked carefully and very constructively and many pupils, especially in the oldest three classes, know their targets and demonstrate a very clear understanding of where and how they need to improve. As a result, pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress and achieve well. Because of determined and effective leadership, staff have worked well together to raise the standards of writing, especially boys'. The current Years 4, 5 and 6 pupils are attaining above national expectations in writing and mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and higher attaining pupils make good progress and achieve well because teachers make careful assessments and ensure they are well supported.

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. Although the curriculum mostly provides appropriate challenge and interest for pupils, insufficient chances are provided for pupils with talents in creative aspects to do their very best. The curriculum in Reception is satisfactory but does not place enough emphasis on the use of the outdoor curriculum.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good and the school gives pupils' progress in this area high priority. Pupils' great enjoyment of school is reflected in their excellent attendance. Pupils concentrate well, work hard and behave with consideration for their own and others' safety and feelings. The school's increasing emphasis on exercise and healthy eating is helping pupils adopt healthy lifestyles.

Subject leaders for English and mathematics play an important part in raising standards in their subjects. The school recognises, however, that leadership of other subjects, such as history and geography and creative subjects, is not fully effective. Almost all parents who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire are fully supportive of the school. Parents' views reflect the inspection findings and the positive picture of a school that is going through a period of considerable modernisation and improvement and has good capacity to continue to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that leadership of all subjects is effective.

- Improve outdoor provision for learning in Reception.
- Improve opportunities for the most able pupils to do their very best in creative subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

By the time they leave in Year 6, pupils are achieving well and attain above average standards. The quality of teaching in Reception has improved so that all children now make satisfactory progress and almost all are achieving in line with national expectations. Because they are sensitively cared for in Reception, children quickly grow in confidence and make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development.

In Years 1 and 2, pupils progress well and catch up on the slow start they made when they were in Reception. Year 2 pupils reach average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. In the classes for the oldest pupils, pupils continue to make good progress because of good teaching and the careful use of assessment. Test results for 11 year olds up to 2006 have been broadly average but inspection evidence, including pupils' work, indicates that standards are rising, especially in writing. Ambitious targets in English and mathematics have been set for the current Years 5 and 6 pupils. School assessment information and pupils' current work indicate that they are on track to reach above average standards this year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils are extremely enthusiastic about school. They value the friendships they form and develop very positive attitudes to learning, which reflect in high attendance. By the time that they leave school, most are mature, confident and hard working. Pupils have good insights into human emotions and act on a clear understanding of what is right. They are well informed about safe and healthy lifestyles and show this, for example, in their understanding of the importance of the school's visitor stickers and in their good uptake of healthy snacks. Pupils respond well to high expectations and generally behave well, although standards of behaviour occasionally lapse when staff make insufficient demands on pupils in this respect. Pupils are well prepared for secondary education, the world of work and for life in adult society. The school council provides pupils with a voice in the running of the school and they are, rightly, proud to be involved in decision making.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly and make good provision for pupils with different capabilities. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. This is particularly apparent in Years 4 to 6, where pupils benefit from challenging tasks that allow them to develop independence and to take responsibility for the quality of their work. Positive relationships with staff encourage pupils to grow in confidence and rise to the challenge to do their best. Most teachers manage pupils very effectively but, in a minority of lessons, the casual approach of a few pupils occasionally slows the pace of their learning and reflects in lower standards of presentation. Teachers use interactive whiteboards well to add interest and impact to lessons.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. The school has done much to improve the curriculum for the Foundation Stage, which now provides a satisfactory balance between teacher directed and child chosen activities. However, current planning does not place enough emphasis on the outdoor curriculum as a way of extending children's physical and social skills and of improving achievement in all other areas of learning. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 has a good emphasis on literacy and standards in writing are rising. Recent moves to link subjects are bringing added interest, motivation and challenge for many pupils. Whilst provision for the school's most able pupils is developing well in mathematics and English, there are too few opportunities for potentially gifted pupils to excel in creative subjects. The school modifies its curriculum effectively to ensure that pupils with learning difficulties succeed and make good progress. The school enriches its curriculum with a good range of interesting educational visits, visitors and club activities, which add significantly to the quality of pupils' enjoyment, learning and achievement.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Standards of care, guidance and support are outstanding. Pastoral care is highly effective and pupils thrive in the very positive atmosphere that the school promotes. New entrants to school settle quickly because induction arrangements, including the assigning of personal 'buddies', work really well. Pupils feel secure because teachers and other staff respond to their needs and readily provide guidance, especially in matters of personal development. There are extremely good arrangements for safeguarding pupils. Pupils say that incidents of bullying are rare and are dealt with quickly. The school has thorough and effective systems for tracking pupils' progress. Potential underachievement is clearly identified and carefully tailored programmes

guide pupils to do their best. Staff set targets and, through constructive marking and on going dialogue, ensure that pupils understand how to improve their work. Teaching assistants work well with teachers and give sensitive support to pupils with learning difficulties and lower attaining pupils, which enables many of these pupils to progress at a similar rate to other pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management have resulted in all staff working together as an effective team, with a shared commitment to improving the school and their own work even further. The school knows itself well. It has some well developed and effective strategies for judging its success and checking that all pupils are achieving successfully. It is working on appropriate priorities and this is resulting in continually improving teaching and rising standards. For example, the school targeted English, especially boys' writing, as an area for improvement. Staff training and better provision have ensured that pupils enjoy writing, spell and punctuate more accurately, and use more lively vocabulary when writing. The school analyses pupils' performance in tests and assessments very thoroughly and continually seeks ways to help pupils learn well.

The senior management team, the special needs coordinator and subject leaders in English, mathematics and physical education play an important part in improving the aspects of the school for which they are responsible. Subject leadership in other subjects, such as history, geography and creative subjects, is not fully effective. Not all subjects have staff who are responsible for leading them. The governing body makes a valuable and committed contribution to the school's development and provides good support and challenge to the senior management team.

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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?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
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	2
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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	2
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

24 February 2007

Dear Children

The Duke of Bedford Primary School, Wisbech Road, Thorney, Peterborough, PE6 OST

Thank you for making Mr Storer and me so welcome when we came to inspect your school. We are pleased that you show real enthusiasm for your school and that you attend so regularly and arrive punctually. We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you and your teachers and watching you learn. We think your school is well run and is giving you a good education. Adults provide good teaching and outstanding care for you so that you make good progress. You are being well prepared for the next stage of education and the world of work beyond. You show good understanding of the importance of eating the right food and exercising regularly. Your behaviour is good, you know right from wrong, show consideration for others and are friendly and helpful to each other. We were impressed by how older pupils take responsibility for helping others within the school. Those of you who find learning hard make good progress because the school gives good attention to helping you learn.

There are three things that we have asked your school to work on.

- Ensure that all subjects have staff who are responsible for leading them.
- Improve outdoor provision for learning in Reception.
- Improve the chances for those of you with special talents to do your very best in creative subjects.

With very best wishes for the future

Mr Sadler

(Lead Inspector)