



Bishopton Redmarshall C of E Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114233
Local Authority Darlington
Inspection number 289846
Inspection dates 11–12 October 2006
Reporting inspector Carole Cressey

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Cobby Castle Lane
School category	Voluntary controlled		Bishopton, Stockton-on-Tees
Age range of pupils	4–11		TS21 1HD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01740 630339
Number on roll (school)	69	Fax number	01740 630339
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Alan Pilkington
		Headteacher	Mrs Janet Appleby
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2004		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4–11	11–12 October 2006	289846

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This small Church of England school is set in the rural village of Bishopton. Most pupils are of White British heritage, with a very small number from other backgrounds. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average, as is the percentage with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. At the last inspection, the school was identified as having serious weaknesses. Currently there is no permanent headteacher in the school. The school is being led by a very experienced acting headteacher supported by two senior members of staff.

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 in all aspects of its work. It gives good value for money. In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

The school's own evaluation provides a very accurate insight into the quality and impact of its provision. Self evaluation has been pivotal to the rapid improvements since the previous inspection and there is good capacity for further improvement. Pupils, parents, staff and governors are all very proud of their school and its strong links with the village and faith community. The school's rapid improvement since the previous inspection is due to the outstanding leadership of the acting headteacher and senior staff. Together they have created an environment which prepares all pupils exceptionally well to be very successful learners. The pupils are responsible, well informed, confident and tolerant members of society. This is reflected in the very good provision to promote pupils' personal and social development so that they have a good understanding of how to stay safe, healthy and form good relationships. Pupils show a very mature understanding of their responsibilities to each other and the community. Although they have a very good knowledge of their local culture, their understanding of the diversity of faiths and cultures in British society is limited.

The staff have worked with a range of partners and embraced excellent strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning in order to raise standards. Initiatives such as the 'African Creative Learning' project and the 'Reading Readiness' scheme have all played an important part in accelerating pupils' progress and ensuring that they all achieve well. The latest 2006 national tests indicate that standards are even higher than in 2005 when they were significantly above average. These high standards are now similar to those consistently achieved before the school was identified as having serious weaknesses. Learning in this school, including in the Foundation Stage, is both exciting and challenging. The most mundane of tasks are made exciting and pupils respond eagerly to tasks such 'Mission impossible,' which are available to them if they complete their work early. Assessment and recording systems provide a detailed picture of attainment and progress. However, they are not used as well as they could be to measure if the rate of progress is fast enough and to provide guidance to pupils on how they can move forward.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use the assessment and guidance systems to ensure that pupils are progressing at an appropriate rate for their ages and abilities and know what they need to do to improve.
- Provide pupils with more opportunities to learn at first hand the diversity of cultures in British society.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

High aspirations and good teaching ensure that all pupils achieve well. The school's 2005 test results for seven and eleven year olds were well above average and the 2006 results are of a similar high standard. Pupils join the Reception class with levels of attainment which are above average. They make good progress in Reception and by the time they move into Year 1, the majority are exceeding the early learning goals expected of their age. This good start is continued in Years 1 and 2 and at the end of Year 2, the pupils attain above average standards. In the latest tests, all pupils reached the expected level for their ages and an above average proportion reached the higher levels in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In Years 3 and 4, pupils continue to make good progress and the school's own assessments show that high standards are maintained. Progress for pupils in Years 5 and 6 who underachieved in Year 2 is now accelerating and most are now achieving well. By the end of Year 6, standards are high. In the most recent tests, almost all pupils reached the expected level for their ages and over 60% reached the higher levels in English and science and almost half in mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve very well and most reach the targets set for them and a significant number reach the expected level for their ages. The school is aware that standards for some boys are not high enough. They are working with other schools to identify how boys' attainment can be improved. The very few pupils from minority ethnic groups achieve well and reach the expected levels for their ages and abilities.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good with some outstanding features. Pupils are very well behaved, keen to learn and their attendance is above average. The school council is very effective and sees its role as 'communicating with adults to try to make people feel better'. Pupils certainly communicate and they do make a difference. Their enterprise knows no end. In order to improve the environment, they have asked local shops to provide plants, gardening equipment and money to help them improve the already exciting grounds.

In addition, they were successful in gaining a grant to help build a bicycle shed to encourage fewer car journeys to school. Pupils are very aware of the importance of healthy food and exercise. They can be seen queuing up to buy healthy snacks or participating in the many sporting opportunities the school provides or taking part in 'wake up shake up' before the start of school. The pupils are exceptionally well informed about how to keep themselves safe and even the very youngest pupils remembered what they had all been told about how to keep safe during the long summer holiday. Pupils are very aware of their responsibility to their own village and to the wider global community and they collect a substantial amount of money for good causes. They realise the importance of learning about the diversity of cultures in British society

saying 'it's so we don't judge them; they are the same as us', but their understanding is limited.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Standards have improved rapidly because teaching and learning are good with some outstanding elements. Teachers provide pupils with many rich experiences that bring learning to life such as going to Whitby to explore the setting for a book. Pupils relish such experiences and say learning is 'challenging'. The teachers and assistants are very skilled at planning lessons and organising flexible teaching groups in order to meet the needs of a wide range of abilities and ages. They know the pupils well and are very clear about the levels they are working at. However, assessments are not used as well as they could be to evaluate whether the rate of progress for each pupil is in line with their targets and abilities. The regular marking of pupils' work helps them to know how well they have completed a piece of work and group targets remind them of what they need to do to improve in the short term. However, pupils do not have an overview of what they need to do to move on to the next level. The teaching for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very good. Sensitive support and child friendly targets, which pupils set for themselves with their teacher, are having a very positive impact on learning and as a result pupils quickly catch up with their classmates.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills through exciting creative projects along with a very good programme of social and health education, provides the pupils with necessary tools to develop personal safety, care and healthy living and prepares them well for life in the twenty-first century.

Throughout the school, flexible groupings ensure that all pupils including those with learning difficulties and those who are gifted and talented work at the right level. The decision to employ additional staff in Reception so that the children benefit fully from the Foundation Stage curriculum is greatly valued by the parents. They are relieved their children settle into school without tears and are delighted with how quickly they learn to be competent readers, writers and mathematicians. Enrichment activities are outstanding. Excellent visits, visitors, projects and resources create excellent opportunities for pupils to immerse themselves in an exciting environment for learning. Reading, writing and mathematics in this small school have meaning and purpose. How better to learn about the settings of a story than to actually visit it for themselves.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well in their personal and academic development because of the very good care the school provides for them. Very effective procedures are in place to safeguard children's welfare, health, and safety. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very quickly identified and the necessary support is put in place. Parents say staff have endless patience and are especially caring of pupils who are new to the school or who are reluctant learners. Even the most sensitive and shy child quickly settles into this very happy, Christian community and blossoms into an independent, successful learner. Pupils say they feel very safe and well cared for and particularly value the 'worry box' where they know they can confidentially share any concerns with their teachers. Most pupils are aware of their group targets but they do not have sufficient guidance to help them know what they as individuals need to do to move on to the next stage in their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The rapid turnaround of this school is due to the outstanding leadership of the acting headteacher and the senior school staff. All concerned with the school have been galvanised into ensuring that the school quickly became the successful school it once was. The school has worked with the local authority, the diocese and a range of other partners to improve the provision. Staff have rigorously analysed test results to identify whole school weaknesses for example in spelling, punctuation and the attainment of most boys. Strategies have been put in place to address these issues and, as a result, standards have risen rapidly. The school has developed a range of assessment and recording systems which provide staff with clear information on the standards pupils are attaining. However, the information is not being used effectively enough in deciding whether individual pupils are progressing at the appropriate rate in relation to their abilities. Pupils themselves do not have sufficient information about the next steps in their learning.

Governors have responded well to the challenge of becoming more actively involved in the school and they now have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have worked closely with the local authority and the diocese to resolve the appointment of a permanent headteacher. However, a significant number of parents, while having complete confidence in the acting leadership, are rightly very concerned that the school as yet has no permanent headteacher to provide security and continuity for their children.

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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	1
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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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?	2
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	1
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

Bishopton Redmarshall CofE Primary School

Cobby Castle Lane

Bishopton

Stockton-on-Tees

TS21 1HD

13 October 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you so much for being so friendly and welcoming when I visited your school a short while ago.

When inspectors last visited your school two years ago they said there were quite a few things that the school needed to do to make learning better for all of you.

Well, I am so pleased to tell you that all of your teachers have worked so very hard to make things better that your school is now a good school with lots of really exciting things happening.

You are all behaving extremely well, working hard and reaching high standards in your work. There were so many things about your school that I liked but the one which I think I will remember for a very long time is the polite, grown up way you set about persuading your teachers, governors, parents, local shops and people in the village to listen to your ideas on how to improve your school.

Your teachers organise so many exciting activities, games, trips and visitors to help you all to be really good learners. I could see that your daily spelling lessons are obviously helping all of you be much better readers and writers.

You all seem to know the importance of eating sensible food and taking lots of exercise. Do keep that up because it is so important to staying healthy and happy.

There are only two things I have asked your teachers to do to make the school even better.

- To tell you how you can improve your work even further.
- To help you learn more about the lives and backgrounds of children who live in Britain.

I think you are very lucky to go to such a good school where your headteacher and teachers work so hard to make lessons fun and help you learn such a lot. I hope you will continue to enjoy school as much as you do now and that it will help you to become happy and successful adults.

Carole Cressey

Additional Inspector