



Bracebridge Heath St John's Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120372
Local Authority LINCOLNSHIRE
Inspection number 291705
Inspection dates 8–9 November 2006
Reporting inspector Michael Miller

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Grantham Road
School category	Community		Bracebridge Heath, Lincoln
Age range of pupils	4–11		Lincolnshire LN4 2LD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01522 530954
Number on roll (school)	402	Fax number	01522 537719
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Susan Manders
		Headteacher	Mrs Susan Tuck
Date of previous school inspection	21 May 2001		

Age group 4–11	Inspection dates 8–9 November 2006	Inspection number 291705
--------------------------	--	------------------------------------

© 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 three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St John's Primary School is much larger than average. Children enter the school with overall average levels of attainment. Most pupils are of white British ethnic origin. The numbers of pupils from minority ethnic groups, or learning English as an additional language, is low. The proportion of pupils taking free school meals is very low. A lower than average percentage of pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities. There are few pupils with a statement of special educational need. The school is now almost fully subscribed. Due to housing development, the number of pupils moving onto the school roll, other than at the normal time of entry, has been high in recent years. St John's is a lead school for the local Primary Strategy Learning Network. It was affiliated to the Specialist Schools Trust in 2005.

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 and effective school, with outstanding features. It provides a good standard of education, and gives good value for money. The school is realistic in its approach, and reflects well on how it may improve further. Its motto 'In pursuit of excellence' is no idle aspiration. The school boasts a strong team of teachers who communicate effectively with each other and do their best to ensure the pupils are enabled to thrive. It is a happy school. In all classes, there are smiles on pupils' faces. Their eagerness to become involved and contribute in lessons and the obvious fun pupils have in learning explain why they achieve well and attain above average standards. Consequently, there is good capacity for the school to improve further.

Key to the school's success is its promotion of the pupils' personal development. The high quality of display work around the school is a testament to the way the school promotes the self-esteem of its pupils. The majority of parents returning the questionnaire agreed. As one wrote, 'I am more than confident that St John's will provide my children with the excellent education and life skills they deserve.' The vast majority of parents expressed confidence in the way the school approaches the welfare of their children, and how any issues have been resolved. Inspectors find the pupils respect each other, are accepting of differences, and work and play well together. As another parent wrote, the school enables pupils to '... have pride and confidence in their identity and to hold their heads high. Fabulous!!' The elements of excellence in the good guidance and support of pupils outweigh the weaknesses. Most of the school's critics say how good the school is overall.

The school promotes good quality learning through a fitting and interesting curriculum. It has considered well how links between subjects, and year groups, can be developed to make learning more meaningful. The good quality of the teaching underpins securely such planning. Nevertheless, the school is not yet providing fully for specific extension work in lessons to enhance the progress of the complete range of gifted or talented pupils. However, through the effective analysis of its performance, the school has identified areas for improvement, such as in mathematics. It is not afraid to make significant changes to its curriculum and teaching strategies. Through such approaches, there has been good improvement since the last inspection.

The headteacher demonstrates leadership of high quality. Together with the support of teaching and non-teaching staff, she has worked hard to create the right conditions within which pupils can prosper. The successful promotion of social, moral and spiritual values in support of learning underpins well the school's management approach and improvement planning. There is a very strong commitment to the arts as a human right. It is an inclusive school, with productive international links, where pupils from different backgrounds feel their cultures and traditions are valued and understood.

What the school should do to improve further

- Implement the school's developing plans to raise standards, and pupils' achievement, in mathematics throughout the school.

- Ensure that, in all lessons, all teachers plan work which is specifically designed to challenge effectively those pupils identified as gifted or talented.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

When children start in Reception, their skills meet broadly those expected nationally. By the end of the Foundation Stage, their personal skills are particularly well developed. They make sound progress in other areas of learning. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good, and children are prepared well for the demands of the National Curriculum. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress, achieve well, and by Year 6 attain above average standards. Overall, the school meets well its challenging targets. The school's results in national tests in English are particularly strong, being significantly above average. Results in English and science show higher attaining pupils, in particular, make significantly better than expected progress. Pupils with a special educational need make good progress. Standards in mathematics meet the national average, and pupils make satisfactory progress. This relative weakness does not satisfy the high standards the school sets itself. Consequently, it is currently undertaking an on-going analysis of pupils' learning in mathematics in order to enable them to achieve even better. Overall, pupils are prepared very well for the next stage in their education.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development is outstanding because pupils are very well behaved, polite, welcoming to visitors and very positive about school. They reserved particular praise for their teachers, whom they rate highly because 'they help to build our knowledge and make learning fun'. Through an effective school council, they participate actively in making decisions to help improve their school. Pupils are given many opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning. They participate in a wide range of trips, visits, clubs, activities, fund-raising and community events. They recognise and appreciate that the school does much for them, which explains their strong sense of allegiance. This helps account for the high attendance levels, which the school works hard to promote. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, as shown through high quality assemblies which help establish a strong sense of teamwork. They develop self-esteem and confidence because their efforts and achievements are valued and rewarded. Pupils understand well how to keep safe and healthy. They know about the importance of healthy snacks and regular exercise. They are prepared well for their future through firm foundations in basic skills, particularly in literacy.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good, and at times outstanding, because teachers' good subject knowledge and high expectations of good behaviour promote positively good achievement. The excellent working relationships and purposeful atmosphere during lessons empower pupils to develop confidence. This encourages them to work hard and to achieve their targets. Many pupils demonstrate a well developed ability to work independently and take responsibility for their own learning. Teachers' planning is good and meets effectively the pupils' learning needs. However, during some lesson introductions, particularly in mathematics, time is not always used to the best effect. Teachers are skilled at providing a mixture of activities which enable pupils to learn in different ways and to build well on their previous learning. At the start of lessons learning intentions are made clear to pupils. These are reviewed effectively during lessons. Because assessment is good, pupils know what they do well and what they need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school places great importance on reviewing and developing its curriculum. This is because it is conscious of its responsibility to meet the needs and aspirations of all groups of pupils. Although some good cross-curricular links are established between different subjects, these are more limited for mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties are supported effectively through well organised individual education plans. There is a good range of stimulating learning activities for children in the Foundation Stage. Pupils of all ages benefit from an outstanding range of enrichment activities including national and international links, regular visits, and visitors to support the curriculum. This makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development and broadens their experience of the world. The school is very inclusive and pupils become confident learners through the many opportunities for them to engage in team activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school takes good care of its pupils because staff have a genuine concern for their welfare. Health and safety systems are good. Procedures for keeping pupils safe from harm are rigorous and embedded in the school's work. There are effective arrangements for ensuring procedures for safeguarding pupils meet requirements. Pupils' progress is monitored regularly and they are supported well. Provision for those with learning difficulties is organised well, and is effective. However, the school's support for gifted or talented pupils is an area for further development. Systems for monitoring academic achievement are very good. All pupils have targets and they play an active role in

setting and reviewing them. Strong links with local schools benefit pupils well. The school does all it can to smooth the transition of pupils to their next school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Self-evaluation and monitoring are good. A key strength of the school's senior and middle leaders is their commitment to ensuring the pupils get a fair deal. They have a firm understanding as to the importance of enabling pupils to become involved fully in lessons and learning. The good leadership has made sure the school is successful in this. The headteacher leads from the front, and has high expectations of staff and pupils. Consequently, the school knows well what it needs to do to improve further. Communication between staff is a strength, and delegation of responsibility and accountability is accepted readily. The school is very active within the local network of schools, and this element of its work and leadership underpins the pupils' learning very well.

The governing body supports well the good management of the school. Governors are currently discussing, with local authority support and guidance, how best to monitor the school's management and performance. The governing body has recently reorganised well its structure to enable governors to play a more effective part in the national strategy to make sure that pupils' needs are met well.

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

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	-----------------------

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

9 November 2006

Dear Pupils

Bracebridge Heath St John's Primary School, Grantham Road, Bracebridge Heath, Lincoln, Lincolnshire, LN4 2LD

We would like to thank you all very much for welcoming us into your school. We were impressed by your politeness, friendliness, and the interest you showed in the inspection. We really enjoyed talking with you. You showed us how much you care, as well as how much you know. This letter is to tell you what we found out about your school.

These are the things we found are best about your school.

- You work happily together, with your teachers, to make the school a friendly place.
- You behave well, look after each other, and work together sensibly.
- The teaching you receive is good, and sometimes of very high quality.
- You have fun whilst you are learning, and this helps you to achieve well.
- You like challenges, and enjoy taking part in activities as well as lessons.
- You listen carefully to each other, and respect each other's views and values.
- You have excellent opportunity to be creative and imaginative through your arts work.
- By the time you reach Year 6, you are mature young people, ready for your next school.

What we have asked the school to do now

- To help you to improve your skills and learning in mathematics.
- Help those of you who have special gifts or talents to challenge yourselves even more.

You, too, can help by continuing to support each other, and your teachers. In the words of your school's Team Song, we know you believe that:

'Together we'll fly. Together we'll soar. Together we'll push open every door.'

With all best wishes

Michael Miller Lead inspector

Meg Hackney and Derek Pattinson Team Inspectors