



# Bawdeswell Community Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 120785  
**Local Authority** NORFOLK  
**Inspection number** 291856  
**Inspection dates** 6–7 February 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Tricia Pritchard HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Fakenham Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Bawdeswell, Dereham
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11		Norfolk NR20 4RR
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01362 688282
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	76	<b>Fax number</b>	01362 688500
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Colin Brown
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Gillian Horner
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 November 2001		

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools.

## **Description of the school**

Bawdeswell Primary is a small village school with a falling roll. There is a high level of pupil mobility. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above the national average. There are no pupils with English as an additional language and very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

The school is operating under difficult circumstances. During the past three years, there has been considerable turbulence in the leadership and management of the school due to absence, and there has been instability of staffing in the upper Key Stage 2 classes. Parents hold divided views on the effectiveness of leadership and management.

Attainment on entry is broadly average. As a result of the good teaching in the Foundation Stage, pupils make good progress. During the last two years, pupils in Key Stage 1 have continued to make at least satisfactory progress and there has been an upward trend in standards. By the end of Year 2, pupils are attaining scores in reading, writing and mathematics which are in line or slightly above the national average. This momentum, however, is not maintained in Key Stage 2 where too many pupils underachieve in relation to their starting points. In 2004 and 2006, pupils' progress was inadequate and amongst the lowest nationally. While it is important to take into account the small cohorts of pupils and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, these results are far too low. Teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 is inadequate. On examining the work of current pupils and on looking at the school's own tracking data, it is evident that a significant proportion of pupils in Key Stage 2 are not making satisfactory progress. Targets are not challenging enough. The current class structure, with a larger class of Year 4 and 5 pupils with diverse learning needs, presents a particular challenge.

Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. At the time of the inspection, the day-to-day management of the school was being shared between the senior teacher and a former headteacher, whose initial brief was to support the leadership of the school. Both work part time and agree that this arrangement is not effective even as a short term arrangement. There have been times when no senior member of staff has been on site and this poses potential risks to pupils' safety. The school lacks strategic direction and a well focused long-term plan which sets out priorities for future development. There is no systematic approach to monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in order to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses, and to identify accurately the professional development needs of staff. These are key factors which are impeding progress in raising standards and in improving the quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2.

Despite the problems the school is facing, there is a good team spirit amongst the staff who are committed to promoting the pupils' well-being and to ensuring that the school runs as smoothly as possible. Music and sport are strong features of the curriculum and pupils particularly enjoy these subjects. The pupils also take a keen

interest in participating in community events. They are developing an increasing understanding of the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle. Relationships are good throughout the school. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory. Those pupils who present challenging behaviour are well supported, particularly by teaching assistants. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is well managed.

Governance is satisfactory. Although there are vacancies on the governing body, those who are members are highly committed to fulfilling their responsibilities. The local authority has targeted the school for intensive support in numeracy and this is a good initiative. However, it is too early to measure the impact of this support programme. In 2001, inspectors judged the standards at the end of Year 6 to be too low. The issue remains. The school has not made sufficient progress since the last inspection. Currently, it offers unsatisfactory value for money.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Address the weaknesses in leadership and management.
- Raise standards and accelerate pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 2 by:
  - improving the quality of teaching and learning
  - reviewing the class groupings across the school
  - setting challenging targets and rigorously monitoring pupils' progress towards them.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 4**

Attainment on entry is broadly average. Pupils make good progress in the Reception year and most achieve levels in all areas of learning which are in line with national expectations for pupils about to enter Year 1.

There is a significant discrepancy between standards in Key Stage 1 and those in Key Stage 2. In the last two years, standards in reading and mathematics at the end of Year 2 have risen from below the national average in 2004 to slightly above the national average in 2006; in writing, they have risen from well below the national average to in line with the national average. Mathematics is consistently the pupils' best subject. Higher-attaining pupils and pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress. Boys perform considerably less well than girls, particularly in writing.

In contrast to Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment and progress in Key Stage 2 is inadequate. Since 2003, standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 have been consistently below the national average. In 2004 and 2006, pupils made inadequate progress between Years 3 and 6. For example, in 2006, only two of the nine Year 6 pupils made satisfactory progress in relation to their starting points and compared with the progress made by pupils in other schools. Pupils with learning difficulties made less progress than similar pupils nationally.

There is a considerable mismatch between teachers' assessment of pupils' performance and test results. This is largely caused by the lack of a consistent approach to setting challenging targets for pupils across the school.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' attitudes to learning are satisfactory. At the start of lessons, they show a willingness to learn but when the pace of teaching is too slow or even too brisk, they quickly become passive learners. This is more evident in Key Stage 2. Some parents expressed concern about the behaviour of a minority of pupils. However, during the inspection, behaviour both around the school and in lessons was satisfactory. Pupils play happily together in the playground. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average.

Most pupils say that they enjoy school and parents confirm this. They have extensive opportunities to participate in sporting and musical activities and the majority belong to one or more of the after-school clubs. The pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils contribute enthusiastically to community events. They are gaining an increasing awareness of the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle. The youngest pupils soon develop their social skills. Members of the school council take their responsibilities seriously. They have plenty of ideas on how to improve the school environment and represent the views of their peers well.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 4**

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate because pupils in Key Stage 2 are not making sufficient progress in relation to their starting points. Work seen in books indicates that tasks are not matched well to the needs and interests of all pupils, and especially those of higher-attaining pupils. Teachers use too many worksheets which lack challenge, particularly in science, history and geography. Pupils often do not finish their work and the preponderance of worksheets in books contributes to poor presentation. Teachers write encouraging comments on pupils' work but they do not give enough advice on how to improve. Assessment in Key Stage 2 is not secure. Teachers are sometimes over generous in their assessment of pupils' writing. All these factors impede pupils' progress. There are signs that in Year 6, pupils are benefiting from more focused teaching in a small class. However, weaknesses remain elsewhere in Key Stage 2.

In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, teaching and learning are good. Lessons are well structured and planned to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Expectations are high and consequently, pupils make satisfactory and often good progress. Teachers write helpful developmental comments in pupils' books.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The breadth and balance of the curriculum are satisfactory. The curriculum is underpinned appropriately by the daily teaching of literacy and numeracy in all classes. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to reinforce their literacy and numeracy skills in other curriculum areas because of the overuse of worksheets. The school participates in the Norfolk Healthy Schools initiative. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of sporting and cultural activities, and by outside visits and visiting speakers. The school has a thriving link with a school in Utrecht. Conservation and environmental education have a high profile. Music is especially strong and half of the pupils learn a musical instrument. Pupils who need additional support are identified and intervention groups are timetabled. Parents are encouraged to support their children's learning. Pupils in the Foundation Stage have access to a well planned activity-based curriculum.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Teachers, teaching assistants and other adults working in school provide good pastoral support to pupils. Pupils know who to approach if they have a problem. The playground is well supervised at breaktime and lunchtime. The school has an efficient team of teaching assistants who provide good individual and group support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Middle-attaining and higher-attaining pupils do not receive such good support for their learning. The school works effectively with a variety of agencies when pupils need extra support. Risk assessment procedures for outside visits are thorough. Child protection procedures are secure. The school is developing ways of helping parents to become more involved in the work of the school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 4**

Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. Over the last three years, there has been considerable instability in leadership and staffing. At the time of this inspection, the headteacher was absent. Arrangements for ensuring there is a designated acting headteacher are not in place for all days of the week. The school and the local authority intend to take swift action to ensure that this potential risk to pupils' safety is eliminated.

Over half of the parents express concerns about the leadership and management of the school. For too long, there has been a lack of strategic direction and long term planning to address areas of weakness. Issues for improvement highlighted in the last inspection report still remain to be tackled. Self evaluation has yet to become embedded into the culture of the school and to be used as the starting point for improvement planning. Of necessity, staff and governors are having to spend a lot of time introducing short term measures to solve problems at the expense of long term planning. There

is insufficient monitoring of standards, and of teaching and learning. The performance management of teachers has lapsed. However, teachers and teaching assistants have had some opportunities to attend training sessions. For example, they have undertaken training to improve their information and communication technology skills. Subject leaders possess the right experience to fulfil their roles but they have not had the opportunity or dedicated time to carry them out fully. Despite these difficulties, there is a good level of morale amongst staff and a good team spirit. Governors are contributing to maintaining this positive ethos through their regular visits to the school. They are committed to promoting the well-being of staff and pupils and improving the teaching and learning environment. For example, through their governance classrooms have been refurbished and the outdoor learning environment for pupils in the Foundation Stage has been improved considerably. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is well managed.



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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	4
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	4
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
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	4

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	4
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

7 February 2007

Dear Pupils,

Bawdeswell Primary School, Fakenham Road, Bawdeswell, Dereham, Norfolk NR20 4RR

Thank you for being so welcoming when Mrs Taylor, who was accompanying me, and I visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you all. Your school is set in lovely surroundings. There is plenty of space for you all to play at breaktimes and lunchtimes and it was good to see you playing happily with each other. Those of you in the mobile classroom are especially well catered for as you are well taught and have lots of equipment to help you with your learning, including a large play space just for you! All of you have lots of opportunities to take part in sporting, musical and artistic activities and we can see that you enjoy participating.

We looked at the work you are doing and observed lessons. We were pleased to note that those of you in Key Stage 1 often continued to make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. We were concerned, however, that some of you in Key Stage 2 are not doing as well as you could and are not set sufficiently challenging targets.

We realise that it is a difficult time for the school as your headteacher is absent. However, all the staff have done well to ensure that your routines are not disrupted. We are now recommending that the school receives more help to improve. Inspectors will visit your school regularly to check how it is making progress.

Good luck for the future!

Best wishes

Tricia Pritchard

Her Majesty's Inspector