



Barrowcliff Nursery and Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121314
Local Authority North Yorkshire
Inspection number 292077
Inspection dates 28 February –1 March 2007
Reporting inspector Bernard Jones

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Ash Grove
School category	Community		Scarborough
Age range of pupils	3–7		North Yorkshire YO12 6NJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01723 351767
Number on roll (school)	184	Fax number	01723 374580
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr M Nesfield
		Headteacher	Mr Mark Rogers
Date of previous school inspection	4 February 2002		

Age group 3–7	Inspection dates 28 February –1 March 2007	Inspection number 292077
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is a larger than average Nursery and Infant school set in an area of very challenging circumstances. Many families experience much higher than average levels of social deprivation and the proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal is well above average. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic heritages and only two who are at an early stage of learning English. A large proportion of children have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A larger than average number of pupils joins or leaves the school partway through the year. The school has achieved the Healthy School Award. A new headteacher was appointed in January 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with some good features and the school gives sound value for money. The school provides a happy environment in which pupils feel safe and can flourish. Good care is taken of pupils, not least in the robust vetting of adults who work in the school. Teachers and classroom assistants are successful in ensuring good personal development and well-being for all pupils, reflecting the very inclusive nature of the school. As a result, pupils like coming to school and they enjoy their learning. Behaviour is good and pupils are friendly towards each other and visitors.

The school's results in the Year 2 national tests in 2006 were very low and reflected unsatisfactory achievement. This was because the school experienced two years of instability at senior management level until the recent permanent appointment of a new headteacher. Experienced teachers were taken from the classroom to run the school and replaced by temporary staff, and emphasis switched away from achievement. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 now make satisfactory progress, reflected in standards that are higher, although well below average. This improvement has come about through a more settled leadership and actions successfully taken to identify and tackle underachievement.

Standards have risen, most notably in mathematics where they are near the national average. However, the school has not been as successful in giving enough emphasis to reading and writing, where standards, while higher than 2006, are well below average. Children continue to achieve well in the Foundation Stage. They enter the Nursery with very low levels of skill in all areas, particularly in language and communication. Outstanding provision in the Nursery and good provision in Reception ensures good progress for all. This includes those who are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language or who are looked after in public care.

Leadership and management are satisfactory and the school gives satisfactory value for money. The school's self-evaluation is mostly accurate. Leadership and management are judged as good by the school when they are satisfactory. There are still issues to be resolved about the clarity of roles and responsibilities at senior management level and for heads of subject areas, particularly relating to monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. The governors make a sound contribution, particularly in financial management. The new headteacher has brought a clear vision, where raising the achievement of all is treated as being of central importance. Senior leaders have taken successful action to improve attendance and attainment and to identify and tackle much of the past underachievement. This and the positive response to the last report demonstrate good capacity to improve further. Very good links exist with parents and carers who find teachers approachable and very committed.

The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. In the Foundation Stage, children make good progress in response to the good and sometimes outstanding teaching they receive. In Years 1 and 2, progress is satisfactory in response to good teaching. Many learners are held back by poor learning skills and low standards in language and communication skills. In addition, the larger than average number of

pupils who join in Years 1 and 2 do not benefit fully from the school's good provision. Assessment is used effectively and teachers' marking is accurate and informative. As a result, pupils enjoy their learning because they and their parents and carers know their targets, the progress they are making and what they need to do to improve. Good levels of additional support and teachers' commitment ensure good progress of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in relation to their targets.

The curriculum is good and stimulates pupils because teachers plan their work effectively to meet the needs of all. As a result, pupils are really interested in their lessons. Successful links with local schools and the community enrich the curriculum. Good provision ensures that pupils can make informed choices about healthy lifestyles.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement in reading and writing by the end of Year 2.
- Extend the role of subject leaders in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning.
- Establish clear roles within the senior management team.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage. Teachers' planning and their very methodical monitoring of children's progress ensure that the needs of all are met. Provision is excellent in the Nursery and good in Reception. As a result, children achieve well across all areas and particularly in their personal development. At the start of Year 1, standards have improved but are well below average. At the end of Year 2, standards remain low in English and science, but in mathematics, pupils achieve well and reach standards close to the national average. The recent unsettled staffing situation has mainly been resolved. However, this and the higher than average number of pupils joining and leaving the school means there is still some underachievement that the school is tackling, and a minority of pupils do not achieve as well as they should in Years 1 and 2. Because teaching is good, it is tackling this underachievement with a good measure of success.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal development of pupils is good. In the Nursery it is outstanding, and here children thrive on opportunities that they have to accept responsibility and develop independence. All pupils throughout the school gain a good grasp of right and wrong. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, though more could be done to help them to grow up in a culturally diverse society. Pupils behave in a self-controlled way. One child said, 'There used to be bullies, but now they are nice.' Most pupils enthuse about their work. Boys enjoy the many opportunities they have for practical activities. The attendance of pupils is average

and is improving. Health awareness is good. Pupils can identify the healthiest foods on the school menu and describe those activities, both in lessons and clubs, which improve their fitness. Safe and clean habits are well established. Community responsibilities are taken seriously. After completing a traffic census, the school council corresponded with the local borough council suggesting possible improvements and elicited a prompt and positive reply. The good work habits, self-reliance and basic skills that they develop prepare pupils well for their futures.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good teaching has resulted in recent extensive underachievement being arrested and is improving the poor learning skills that slow the progress of many pupils. Teachers have introduced some good methods to tackle weaknesses in reading and writing but standards are still below those in mathematics because there is not enough emphasis on countering the poor language and communication skills of pupils. It is an area currently being addressed, but the impact is not yet evident. A strength of teaching is the relationships formed between all staff in the classrooms and the pupils they teach and manage. Because levels of care are high, pupils behave well and develop positive attitudes. Teachers plan well to meet the needs of all pupils and effectively include teaching assistants in the process. Teachers use computers well to create interest and foster independent learning during group work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum rightly emphasises the basic skills of English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). The Foundation Stage curriculum is particularly exciting, packed with opportunities to discuss, explore and create. This approach has been very successfully adopted in Years 1 and 2. Curriculum provision is greatly enriched by its links with the local community. Visits and visitors provide pupils with first hand experiences that aid their learning. Many pupils participate keenly in a range of extra-curricular activities that broaden their horizons still further. Teachers plan well to ensure good links that enable the work in one subject to stimulate learning in another. Pupils' personal, social and health education is extremely well organised and meets the particular needs of all pupils. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive outstanding, individual support. Those with particular talents are increasingly being identified so that they can be challenged further. Since the last inspection, required improvements have been made in the physical education curriculum and in ICT provision. The gaining of the prestigious Healthy Schools' Award has given additional impetus in helping pupils to lead healthy lives.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Provision in these areas is good, with some outstanding features. Levels of pastoral care are extremely high. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive outstanding care, delivered by a very dedicated team, together with outside support. For example, the work of the home-school liaison officer and the attention given by teachers to the progress made by each individual child are countering underachievement and bringing levels back to the satisfactory levels of two years ago. Pupils with particular talents are extended well, especially in mathematics. Those who may be in any way at risk benefit greatly from the efforts of the home/school support the school provides. This ensures very close links with many parents to help their children thrive. Arrangements for safety, including child protection and risk assessment, are very well in place. The quality and use of assessment is outstanding in the Nursery and good elsewhere. The school is very successful at raising the pupils' self-confidence and esteem. They are given targets to focus their learning. Parents, as well as their children, keep a check on the progress made on these targets. The health of pupils is promoted well. They are encouraged to be active, both within and outside lesson time. Pupils are well prepared for their next school and beyond.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The new headteacher has inherited a very committed and well-motivated group of teachers and other staff who have embraced change. In a short time, he has clarified the vision for the school to raise standards and achievement and ensure good personal development and well-being of pupils. Parents speak very highly of the school and the way it helps pupils of all levels of ability, reflecting the good inclusive nature of the school. The whole-school emphasis on improving mathematics has led to higher achievement. Previous strengths have been allowed to flourish, such as the outstanding provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The newly adopted whole-school approach to measuring and tracking pupils' progress is very effective and is providing a good basis for further improvement. Actions taken have successfully reduced recent underachievement. Self-evaluation is mainly accurate and satisfactory. Senior managers lack, as yet, experience in school self-evaluation. For example, the headteacher has not had enough time to induct them in ways to monitor teaching and learning. Their roles and responsibilities are not sufficiently clear. Subject leaders' roles are similarly not clear enough, particularly relating to their responsibilities for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects. The governors make a sound contribution to the school and successfully encourage the good partnerships the school enjoys with other schools and local agencies. Their contribution to the financial management is good and helps to ensure that resources are used well.

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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
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?	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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
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	3
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?	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 friendly and helpful to the inspectors when we visited your school. We found your school to be satisfactory, and with a number of good features. Thank you for talking to us and showing us your work. Please thank your parents and carers for all their letters, and for talking to us.

These are the things that are good about your school:

- the way your teachers take such good care of you and make sure that your school is a safe place. They teach you to be healthy and to be safe, so that you enjoy coming to school
- the good and sometimes outstanding teaching you receive
- the recent improvement in standards in mathematics
- your good behaviour and your willingness to take responsibility, such as through your school council
- the many activities such as interesting visits and talks by visitors to the school that you enjoy and that help you understand the community in which you live
- the way the school keeps a close eye on your work so that you are encouraged to do as well as you can.

To make things even better, I have asked your headteacher and teachers to:

- help you to improve your reading and writing
- make it clear to your senior teachers and subject leaders how they can help each other to improve your work even more.