

Beckwithshaw Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121411
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	292105
Inspection date	2 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Ralph Higgs

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	69
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Nigel Sinclair
Headteacher	Mrs Caroline Rice
Date of previous school inspection	14 March 2002
School address	Church Row Beckwithshaw Harrogate North Yorkshire HG3 1QW
Telephone number	01423 504642
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This small village school draws its pupils from a widespread rural area and also from the nearby town of Harrogate. Most pupils are from advantaged backgrounds and are of White British heritage. The number of pupils on roll has risen recently, as parents seek the school out if they move to the area, or if their child has not settled at another school. This means that an above average proportion of pupils start school other than when they are four-years-old. There are significantly more boys than girls in the school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) is well below average. The school is organised into three mixed-age classes; one which caters for children from entry to the end of Key Stage 1, and two in Key Stage 2. The school holds several awards in recognition of its work which include the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Activemark, and a local authority award for its provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A new headteacher took up post in September 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 school with some significant strengths. It provides good value for money. Good leadership and management from the headteacher and governing body place the needs of all pupils at the heart of school life. Consequently, a happy and harmonious atmosphere has been established in which pupils flourish. Parents typically say that the school is special, as it treats pupils as individuals. Achievement by the end of Year 6 is good, but this is largely due to the rapid progress they make in Key Stage 2. The challenge for the school, which it recognises, is to bring about sustained good achievement from entry. This is well within the reach of the school as it has a good capacity for further improvement.

Children's skills on entry to Reception vary but they are generally average, with a higher proportion that is above average than is usually the case. Children settle quickly into the combined Reception/Year 1 and 2 class and they are benefiting from recently improved provision. They make satisfactory progress from entry to the end of the Foundation Stage and to the end of Key Stage 1 to reach broadly average standards in each case. In contrast, progress is very good across Key Stage 2. Good quality teaching, with some that is outstanding, promotes very good learning. Consequently, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are well above average.

A good, rich curriculum, a very caring staff, and positive relationships with parents strongly promote pupils' personal development, which is outstanding. Pupils enjoy school a great deal and find it hard to think of anything they would change. Their attendance is well above average and they are punctual. They say, 'learning is fun' and that everyone gets on well. They play together energetically and safely, and are aware of the potential hazards around the school site. Their behaviour is exemplary and they have very positive attitudes to learning. Pupils have an excellent grasp of how to be healthy and stay fit. Many stay for school lunches which are balanced and nourishing. They participate keenly in the many sporting activities on offer.

The quality of teaching is good but varies across the school. It is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, and good in Key Stage 2. Teachers work closely with committed and effective teaching assistants to provide for the needs of all pupils in their mixed-age classes. However, there are differences between the key stages in the sharpness of planning, in the challenge of learning activities and in the effective use of assessment. The school has done a lot of good work this year to reorganise the Foundation Stage curriculum and promote more effective teaching in the combined Reception/Year 1 and 2 class. Consequently, there are signs that pupils are learning better. For example, Reception children are beginning to take the initiative in their choice of play, and pupils in Key Stage 1 are thinking about their targets. However, these improvements have yet to bring about consistently good progress in these age groups.

The school has a good understanding of its strengths and what it needs to do to continue the good rate of improvement since the last inspection. Although the evaluation of its work is done robustly by the headteacher in partnership with the governing body, the school acknowledges that staff who hold other leadership roles have few formal responsibilities in this process. This restricts the contribution that they make to school improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 so that pupils' achievement accelerates.

- Ensure that phase and subject leaders have a formal role in school improvement and are enabled to carry out their roles effectively.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Whereas progress is satisfactory from entry to the end of Key Stage 1, it is very good in Years 3 to 6, where pupils make significant gains in their learning. This is reflected in the results of teacher assessments and national tests in previous years, which, typically, are broadly average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6. A more robust system of assessment has been recently introduced into the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. This has established a more accurate picture of standards, enabling the curriculum to be better tailored to pupils' needs and faster progress to be promoted. The school quickly identifies the needs of pupils who enter part way through a key stage to ensure they receive appropriate support and challenge. Regardless of these different starting points, all pupils achieve well to reach challenging targets by the time they leave in Year 6.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Very good curriculum enrichment fosters a love of literature, insights into art and appreciation of the natural environment. Pupils value education as shown by their very good attendance and high level of involvement in additional activities outside of normal lessons. Pupils clearly know right from wrong and are quick to support charitable appeals for worthy causes. They report that there is no bullying and that occasional teasing and minor disputes are soon settled. The school successfully promotes their very good understanding of diversity and pupils speak compassionately about the needs of others less fortunate than themselves. This means that pupils are strongly developing the skills and values needed to become global citizens. Not only do they take pride in the contribution they make to improvements to their school, they also recognise that their actions affect the lives of others. Hence, they have supported Fair Trade appeals and have calculated their 'carbon footprint'. These qualities, and pupils' very good basic skills, ensure that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education. However, the school is aware that they have more limited opportunities to develop their economic understanding.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Classrooms are bright and welcoming and teachers make good use of the available space. Teachers make clear what is expected in terms of work and behaviour and pupils respond very well. Computers are used well to provide information and make learning easier. The most striking feature about pupils' learning is their sense of responsibility and commitment. Pupils sustain interest and work rate even when the activities are undemanding, as they sometimes are in the youngest age groups. In the best teaching, pupils are inspired to think creatively and express their own views, and they rise strongly to the challenge of making choices about how they respond. A buzz of excitement was evident in both Key Stage 2 lessons, one of which was outstanding, as pupils threw themselves into talking about their ideas and opinions. This is

because teachers share their enthusiasm for their subjects, are precise about what they expect pupils to learn and engage boys well. They give specific feedback about learning points in lessons and in their marking. As a result, pupils in Key Stage 2 have a very clear understanding of how to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good, promoting excellent personal development and good achievement amongst all ability groups. There is a strong emphasis on the basic skills, and sports, and there has been very good improvement in the use of computers since the last inspection. The newly revised Foundation Stage curriculum has good features but some aspects such as role play are limited in scope. It is encouraging greater independence in learning through constructive play. This more flexible approach to learning is beginning to be established for pupils who stay in the same class during Key Stage 1. Across the school, teachers bring learning alive by numerous visits to places such as the Yorkshire Sculpture Park, and by building on the interest aroused by visitors to their classrooms. Pupils keenly take part in the wide range of after-school clubs and activities which include Latin, Urban-Funk, and knitting.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding feature of the school. This judgement is higher than the school's more modest evaluation. High levels of care are evident in daily routines and in the safeguarding procedures that ensure pupils' safety and well-being. Arrangements to support pupils joining Reception are thorough and older pupils feel very well prepared for the transfer to secondary school. Pupils who have found it hard to settle elsewhere find a very welcoming home. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very effectively supported and liaison with external agencies is very well managed. This is an inclusive school and parents rate highly the attention their children receive. Pupils' progress is closely monitored in order to provide extra help or greater challenge for those who need it. This is more effective in Key Stage 2, than in Key Stage 1 where pupils are not always clear what to do to reach their targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher knows the pupils and staff well. The data on pupils' standards and progress are sharply appreciated and employed effectively; this has enabled governors to be kept clearly in the picture. All staff are involved in checking the school's performance and are working effectively together to move the school forward. Recent changes, such as the collective scrutiny of pupils' work, are giving subject and key stage leaders a better understanding of what is needed to bring further improvement. However, staff are not engaged in formally reviewing their areas of responsibility nor, for example, in producing action plans to direct their work. Governors are effective and have been active in fostering links with the community and other institutions. Their expertise is helping the school overcome the limitations imposed by its Victorian accommodation. For example, outdoor play areas have recently been upgraded and there are ambitious plans to build a new classroom.

The school takes good advantage of its links with other schools and organisations to overcome the restrictions of its small size and its cramped buildings. For example, the school uses the village hall for some physical education lessons; liaison with local secondary schools has enabled a modern foreign language and additional sports opportunities to be provided.

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Annex A

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

Annex A

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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave to me when I recently visited your school. I really enjoyed the interesting discussions I had with you, in the classroom and over lunch. You expressed your views very clearly and this helped me a lot to understand your school.

The good things I found out about your school, which provides you with a good education with some outstanding features, are that:

- the progress you make in your work is good and I was impressed by how lively and interested you are in your lessons
- you clearly take pride in your school and are becoming outstanding young citizens because of the opportunities you receive
- your attendance is very good
- you show by your attitudes that you enjoy school a great deal
- you behave very well indeed and are friendly towards one another (and visitors)
- you really understand how to lead a healthy lifestyle and how to keep fit
- you have lots of interesting things to learn and teaching is good overall
- the staff take very good care of you and keep you safe from harm
- the headteacher, staff and governors work hard to give you a good education.

To help you even more, I have asked your school to:

- help the youngest children learn even better by ensuring that they have more challenges in their work but they will have to try hard
- change some aspects of the way it manages the school and brings about improvements in its work.