

Byfield School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121802
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	292222
Inspection date	10 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Alison Cartlidge

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	
School	84
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian McAllister
Headteacher	Andrew Ward
Date of previous school inspection	26 November 2001
School address	Bell Lane Byfield Daventry NN11 6US
Telephone number	01327 260349
Fax number	01327 264245

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Attainment on entry to the school is average or above average in most years. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is average, although these pupils are not distributed evenly across the school.

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 that provides good pastoral care. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, although their progress is inconsistent across the school. Children make a sound start to their education in the Reception Year. Their satisfactory progress continues in Years 1 and 2 and standards remain broadly average. Pupils' progress is now good in Years 3 to 6 because of recent improvements in teaching and the use of assessment. Consequently, standards in Year 6 are above average.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, but good in Years 3 to 6. Here pupils are taught in ability groups for English and mathematics, making it easier for teachers to ensure that their differing needs are being met. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is not always adapted well enough to ensure that all pupils learn quickly. This is most noticeable for more-able pupils, who are not consistently challenged to complete hard enough work. All teachers form good relationships with the pupils and provide them with purposeful and interesting tasks. These contribute well to the pupils' enjoyment of school and make them keen to learn.

The headteacher and other members of staff are friendly and welcoming. As a result, pupils' personal development and well-being are good. The school has established good partnerships with parents, other schools and the local community and these also contribute to the pupils' good well-being. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. Good pastoral support helps pupils to behave well and work and play together sensibly. Academic guidance and support have recently been improved and are satisfactory. There is a growing understanding of what pupils have learnt but assessment information is not used fully to plan work that meets the needs of more-able pupils in Years 1 and 2. The satisfactory curriculum includes a broad and balanced range of activities for most pupils, although it does not meet the needs of Year 1 pupils well enough. There is an outstanding range of additional activities, including French and the creative arts.

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. Recent developments are having a positive impact on provision and standards in Years 3 to 6. Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 have not been monitored closely enough and targets set are not always sufficiently challenging. Most parents are positive about the work of the school and are especially pleased that their children like school. One parent spoke for many others by saying, 'I feel the teachers are very approachable if I have any concerns'.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make sure that the curriculum for pupils in Year 1 meets their needs fully.
- Raise achievement by providing consistent challenge for more-able pupils in Years 1 and 2.
- Ensure that the monitoring of teaching and learning is more thorough so that weaknesses are identified and rectified quickly. A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children make satisfactory progress in the Reception Year and most are working within the levels expected for their age when they start in Year 1.

Satisfactory progress continues in Years 1 and 2, although more- able pupils do not consistently do well enough, especially in Year 1. By the end of Year 2, standards are broadly average but few pupils are working beyond the expected levels because their targets are insufficiently challenging.

Good progress in Years 3 to 6 makes standards above average by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. Recent improvements in the way older pupils are being taught and more rigorous target setting are ensuring that they are making better progress than in the past.

Throughout the school, pupils with learning difficulties make similar progress to other pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are well behaved and enthusiastic. Children in the Reception Year are happy at school and quick to make friends. Throughout the school, pupils, including those with learning difficulties, look after each other well and play together amicably. Older pupils are sociable and articulate and express very clearly why they enjoy school so much. They are especially appreciative of the many exciting activities that are offered beyond lessons, with dance and music being particularly popular.

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. Pupils develop good levels of confidence and take responsibility well. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe. They are beginning to understand the importance of adopting healthy lifestyles, although this is not always reflected in their choice of playtime snacks. The school council is right to want to develop this area of school life. Councillors are currently working with members of staff to promote healthy eating and they are keen to encourage cycling to school because 'it is a good way to take some more exercise'.

Pupils make a good contribution to the community. They take part in a wide range of local events and frequently raise funds for charities. They are developing an increased understanding of how they can look after the local environment through links with a nearby country park. Activities such as these, as well as pupils' good basic skills, prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers form good relationships with pupils and, as a result, they manage behaviour well. They gain the pupils' attention and motivate them to learn by making good use of interactive whiteboards, particularly at the start of lessons. Teachers make learning interesting by providing purposeful activities. For example, pupils in Year 2 worked around a bonfire as they learnt about the Fire of London. This captured the pupils' interest well and made the task more meaningful.

In the Reception Year and Years 1 and 2, teachers are hardworking and kind but teaching does not always provide enough challenge for the most able pupils, slowing their progress. Teaching is good in Years 3 to 6, where pupils are taught in ability groups in literacy and numeracy. This helps teachers to match work more closely to pupils' individual needs. Across the school, pupils

with learning difficulties are given suitable individual support from teachers and skilled teaching assistants.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

There is a satisfactory curriculum for children in the Reception Year. There is a wide range of interesting activities but they are not always challenging enough for more-able children. In Year 1, the curriculum does not meet the needs of all pupils and, as a result, they do not all make enough progress. This is because they often work on the same activities as the Reception Year children in their class. For pupils from Year 2 onwards there is a good focus on providing a stimulating curriculum. This helps to ensure that there are good levels of enjoyment in lessons. Pupils respond especially well to the many practical activities provided. Additional activities, including visits and visitors, make an outstanding contribution to learning and especially in the creative arts. Vibrant displays of pupils' good artwork make the school bright and cheerful. Pupils maintain their health and fitness through a good range of sporting activities and clubs. The dance club performs to a very high standard and is particularly enjoyed by pupils. Older pupils are very positive about their annual residential trips where, they say, 'We learn to live together and are able to try out new things like abseiling and canoeing'.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Parents are right when they say that members of staff take good pastoral care of their children. Adults know every pupil and treat them as part of the 'school family', enabling them to develop into mature individuals. Consequently, pupils feel safe and secure and they have confidence that their teachers will deal with any worries they might have. The school works well with parents and outside agencies to safeguard pupils' well-being.

Academic support is satisfactory. Pupils' progress is assessed frequently. This information is used well to group pupils by ability in Years 3 to 6, although in Years 1 and 2 it is not yet used fully to identify and challenge the most able. The school has rightly identified that it does not track children's progress in the Reception Year well enough to ensure that they all make good progress. The school has improved the quality of target setting for older pupils, although targets for pupils by the end of Year 2 are not always challenging enough. Pupils have a good knowledge of their individual targets and like them because 'they help us to improve our work'. Targets for pupils with learning difficulties are written clearly in child-friendly language.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher and deputy headteacher work together well and have established the school at the heart of the local community. They are good role models for pupils' personal development.

Satisfactory procedures for checking school effectiveness mean that senior managers understand what needs improving further. There have been some helpful recent initiatives that have had a good effect on standards in Years 3 to 6, and demonstrate the school's sound capacity to improve further. Recently the school has improved the rigour in its use of assessment information, enabling it to spot dips in attainment more quickly, although this is not yet used fully to ensure that all pupils achieve equally well. Subject leaders are enthusiastic and take an

active role in monitoring provision and are rightly focused on improving provision and achievement. There have been several recent changes in staffing in the Reception Year and Years 1 and 2. This situation has not been monitored well enough to identify where teachers need more guidance so that they can provide well for all pupils, particularly the more able.

Governance is good. The governing body has developed its role recently and provides a good level of challenge to senior leaders in a supportive way.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
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	2
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	3

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	2
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	2

The quality of provision

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

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?	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	3
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	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

Dear Children,

Inspection of Byfield School, Byfield, Daventry, Northamptonshire NN11 6US

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for sharing your work with us. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education.

Here are some other things about you and your school:

- Most of you make good progress in Years 3 to 6, but you do not learn so well up to the end of Year 2.
- You are very polite and friendly and enjoy school.
- Your teachers work hard to make lessons interesting, although they do not always make sure the work is hard enough for those of you who learn quickly.
- You have some excellent additional activities. We especially liked the Roald Dahl artwork and the dancing you do.
- All adults in school are kind and caring and look after your personal needs well.
- The school has improved the way it checks on how quickly you are learning, but it does not always use this information to help you learn better in Reception and Years 1 and 2.
- Your parents and carers are pleased that you come to this school.

What we have asked your school to do now:

- Make sure that pupils in Year 1 are given suitable activities.
- Provide hard enough work for quick learners in Years 1 and 2.
- Check more thoroughly that all teachers are helping you to learn quickly.

We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you about your work and watching you learn. We wish you all well for the future and hope that your performance of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' goes well. We hope you continue to help your teachers by listening carefully and trying your best.

Yours sincerely,

Alison Cartlidge Lead Inspector