

Bursar Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117968
Local Authority	North East Lincolnshire
Inspection number	294587
Inspection dates	28–29 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Judith Straw

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	186
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Elizabeth Norton
Headteacher	Ms Angela Pomfret
Date of previous school inspection	1 December 2005
School address	Bursar Street Cleethorpes DN35 8DS
Telephone number	01472 691798
Fax number	01472 691798

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average primary school in the centre of Cleethorpes. An above average percentage of pupils are entitled to claim a free school meal. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage, although a minority come from other backgrounds and a few have English as a second language. The school is situated in an area of mixed housing with some social disadvantage. More than twice the national average of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The attainment of children when they begin the Foundation Stage is well below what is usually expected for their age in all areas of learning.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This school provides a satisfactory quality of education. The school is improving and many aspects of its work are good. In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. The energy and enthusiasm with which the school has addressed its weaknesses are leading to better progress and achievement for pupils. Prompt action has already halted the decline in standards in tests at the end of Years 2 and 6.

Parents are unanimous in their praise and appreciation of the school. They say that the school is a safe, nurturing environment where their children enjoy their education. The school successfully enriches the learning of pupils and makes their time in and out of the classroom as interesting as possible. Pupils make a good contribution to local life and the outcome is good personal development of pupils. They enjoy school, most behave well and have good attitudes to work. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools Award and the pupils are keenly aware of the importance of a good diet, exercise and playing safely.

Despite satisfactory progress, standards are below average. Pupils achieve satisfactorily but it is an improving picture; for example, approximately a quarter of all pupils now achieve well and standards are rising in Key Stages 1 and 2. Standards in writing, however, remain well below average. Throughout the school, not enough pupils reach the higher levels, particularly in writing in Key Stage 1. Good provision in the Foundation Stage gives children a good start to their learning. Throughout the school, the substantial proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities makes good progress.

The school has worked hard to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Teaching is securely satisfactory with an increasing proportion that is good or excellent. Senior management has introduced rigorous and effective tracking systems throughout the school so that the progress of all pupils is now monitored frequently. The result is faster progress because of effective intervention strategies to improve teaching, which are helping to reduce underachievement.

Standards of care, guidance and support are good. The school has good links with a wide range of outside agencies to enrich the educational opportunities and ensure the safety of all pupils. The school has a caring family atmosphere. Relationships are based on mutual respect. Parents and children are fully involved and consulted regularly through questionnaires and meetings.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The inspiring leadership of the headteacher has won the respect and support of the whole community. Improved teaching and a developing capacity for middle leadership are all helping to promote pupils' achievement and raise standards further. Governors are very proud of what has been achieved so far. They are confident that the wide range of measures put in to improve the school will result in steadily rising standards and even better outcomes for all pupils. The capacity to improve further is satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Give pupils more opportunities to raise their standards in writing throughout the school so that they match those in reading and mathematics.
- Ensure that more able pupils are challenged so that they reach the levels of which they are capable.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be 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

Standards are below average but pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Inspection evidence and school data shows that pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Challenging and realistic targets are in place to enable the most able pupils to achieve well. Standards are rising in both Key Stages.

When children start school in Reception, their attainment is well below what is expected for their ages. They make good progress so that, although below, their attainment is closer to the national average when they leave Reception.

Standards declined in Years 1 and 2 over the past three years and in 2006 they were significantly below average, particularly in writing. Fewer pupils than average reached the higher levels. However, school data and inspection evidence shows that the school has halted this decline. Although they are still below average, standards have risen. The achievement of pupils is satisfactory because of the improved teaching strategies, which have led to an increase in the number of pupils reaching the higher levels in reading and mathematics but not in writing.

In Years 3 to 6, pupils' achievement is also steadily improving and is satisfactory. In 2006, although standards were significantly below average overall, there was an improvement on 2005 and pupils made satisfactory progress. Current school data shows that standards continue to rise. However, not enough pupils reach the higher levels. The school has strategies in place to focus on the need of the more able pupils. These are recent initiatives and it is too early to say whether they are being effective. The achievement of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities in all year groups is good because of the good support they receive from the school. Pupils whose first language is not English are also making good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' good attitudes to learning, confidence and maturity shine through the school day and are underpinned by good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils generally behave well, are given many responsibilities and contribute well to the cohesiveness of the school community. Pupils have very positive attitudes to cultural diversity. Older pupils are particularly good at caring for younger pupils. Mutual respect springs from the good examples set by staff. Pupils are increasingly good at encouraging each other to think about how best to solve any day-to-day problems that arise in relationships. This stands them in good stead for their future. They know it is good to be 'a problem solver' and 'not a problem maker' and urge their class mates to 'keep their cool'. Pupils know how important it is to stay fit and healthy. Play times are energetic and productive and lunches are increasingly healthy. Attendance is good and has improved since the last inspection because of the school's very effective efforts. Pupils' increasing skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology contribute soundly to their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory with some good elements. Strengths are in the relaxed and purposeful atmosphere that mostly pervades the lessons. Activities are divided up into sections so that pupils' concentration is maintained. Linked to this is good use of time so that pupils' learning has appropriate pace. The learning intentions are clear and pupils understand what is required of them. They know how to improve their work because marking guides them well towards meeting their individual targets. Homework is used well to consolidate learning and links clearly to pupils' work in class. Pupils are confident and mostly eager to learn. They are let down by a very small minority of boys who need much direction in managing their behaviour. Very occasionally, this slows the learning of the class. The challenge for the more able pupils is not always sufficient to move them on quickly.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with some good features. Teachers plan well to ensure that pupils' work covers all areas of the National curriculum. This includes the areas of learning in the Foundation Stage. There is an appropriate emphasis on the basic skills, which is helping to raise standards. Provision for information and communication technology is good. The curriculum effectively enhances pupils' personal development because lessons allow discussion about relationships. This successfully extends pupils' inter-personal skills. The school has recently introduced French to enrich the curriculum. There is good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who are fully included in all activities, as are the few pupils for whom English is not their first language. Teachers made learning more relevant by using real life opportunities for the pupils to meet professionals from a wide range of careers, including artists, sporting experts and musicians. In Years 5 and 6, pupils look forward to, and enjoy, the residential visits.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support that the pupils receive is good.

A recently introduced programme of support and guidance helps to nurture pupils' self esteem and self worth. It is beginning to pay dividends as the school makes clear that all pupils have a choice and guides them to making the right choices. Academic guidance and the tracking of pupils' progress are good and have developed well since the last inspection. Individual education plans for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are clear and are in daily use to meet pupils' needs. Good links with outside agencies support pupils' development. The school's systems for safeguarding pupils meet requirements.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher is an inspiring leader well supported by the good leadership of the deputy headteacher. The capacity of middle leaders is increasing as they develop their roles as subject leaders and are taking more responsibility for their subject areas. The relationship between all adults in the school creates strong team work and a positive ethos. Self evaluation is effective. The school has halted the fall in standards in tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 and has improved teaching and learning. Staff morale is high. There are significant strengths; such as, pupils' personal development, strong links with many partners and the nurturing family atmosphere of the school. As one parent wrote, 'Everyone works hard to make school a positive environment'. The school is pressing forward and taking effective steps to increase the capacity to improve further. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are highly supportive of the school, rightly proud of its achievements and do valuable work in supporting and challenging the school. They are now confident in holding the school to account and have increased their understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Financial management is sound and benefits from specific expertise on the governing body.

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?	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	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	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	2
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	3

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?	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.

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	2
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	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

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

29 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bursar Primary School, Cleethorpes, DN35 8DS

Thank you for making us welcome when we visited your school this week. We enjoyed meeting so many of you and hearing about the things you enjoy in school and seeing you at work. These are the things we particularly liked about your school.

- The family atmosphere and the way in which the older pupils look after younger ones.
- Your good manners and the polite way in which you speak to each other, the teachers and visitors.
- The way in which you enjoy all the activities in school and try to be fit and healthy.
- The many visits you make to local places and the sports and after-school clubs you all enjoy.
- The way in which the school carefully and regularly checks up on your progress to make sure you are achieving as well as you can.
- The way in which teachers make lessons interesting and full of different activities.

The teachers know that you could do much better in writing and we agree with them. You can help by always doing your best work. We also think that some of you could cope with more challenging work and reach higher standards.

The inspection team wishes you well and good luck for the future,

Yours sincerely

Judith Straw and Linda Murphy

Inspectors