

William Barcroft Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117731
Local Authority	North East Lincolnshire
Inspection number	301697
Inspection dates	3–4 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Denis Goodchild

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	265
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Mike Smith
Headteacher	Mrs Christine Lacey
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2003
School address	Barnett Place Cleethorpes DN35 7SU
Telephone number	01472 501777
Fax number	01472 501774

Age group	7–11
Inspection dates	3–4 October 2007
Inspection number	301697

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average school. It serves an area of social and economic disadvantage. Pupils are mainly from a White British heritage with a few from minority ethnic groups. All speak English as a first language. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average as is the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. There are many more boys than girls on roll.

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 that provides good value for money. Good teaching addresses the needs of all the pupils and work is well matched to pupils' abilities. All pupils therefore achieve well and make good progress. From a below average starting point pupils reach average standards in English, mathematics and science overall. The proportion of pupils attaining above average standards is lower than that seen nationally and boys do not achieve as well as girls in writing. Results in the 2007 national tests show that school action has increased the proportion attaining the higher levels, particularly in mathematics, but boys' achievement in writing is still lower than girls.

Pupils have a good attitude to learning. Good relationships and good behaviour contribute to a positive working atmosphere in which pupils work hard and are productive. They willingly accept responsibility and make an effective contribution to the school community through the school council. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular activities, speakers and an annual residential visit. Pupils enjoy these activities which give them a good understanding of a healthy lifestyle. The satisfactory curriculum is not yet sufficiently modified to engage all the pupils' interests and to challenge the more able.

Care, guidance and support are good for all pupils. The large majority of parents say that behaviour is good, their children enjoy coming to school and that their children are safe and well cared for. A small number of parents and pupils commented that play is boisterous. Appropriate action has been taken to address these concerns and this is improving provision at playtime. Dedicated teaching assistants ensure the inclusion of pupils who may become disaffected. The school has very good links with external agencies so that vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported. The school uses a range of strategies to communicate with parents. A small number of parents think that this could be better and this view is supported by inspection findings and accepted by the school.

The headteacher and senior staff provide good leadership and have the full support of the governors. Senior managers monitor the work of the school effectively so they know it very well. This enables them to take appropriate action to make improvements and they have been successful in raising standards in mathematics, for example. They carefully track the progress of individuals and year groups and this enables the school to set and meet challenging targets. This and the effective monitoring of the school's performance indicate that the school has a good capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop a range of strategies to raise the standard of boys' writing.
- Develop a curriculum which challenges and engages the more able and maximises opportunities for writing.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils enter the school with below average attainment. They make good progress and by the time they leave in Year 6 standards are average.

The results of the 2006 national tests for Year 6 pupils were atypically below average in English and mathematics and average in science. This group had a significantly higher than usual

number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In all subjects the number of pupils achieving the higher levels was below average. The proportion of boys achieving the higher standards in English was significantly lower than that of girls. Given their starting point this represented satisfactory progress.

School data and inspection evidence clearly show that standards are now average in English, mathematics and science. This is a return to levels seen prior to 2006 and represents good progress. Effective school action, including tracking of performance and setting challenging targets, has significantly increased the number of pupils achieving the higher levels in mathematics. Though results in English have improved, compared to national levels, boys do not achieve as well as girls in writing. In 2007 the school came very close to meeting its challenging targets. Evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that pupils are performing at expected levels in English, mathematics and science and that the improvement seen in 2007 results is being sustained.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal, spiritual, moral and social development is good and their cultural development is satisfactory. Behaviour and relationships are very good in lessons and around the school. On the few occasions when bullying occurs, pupils know there is someone to go to for help. Pupils are considerate and courteous when working together and this contributes to a good working atmosphere in classes. They say they enjoy coming to school and the large majority of parents agree with this. Pupils particularly enjoy the good range of additional activities provided. They appreciate the 'healthy' tuck shop, make healthy choices and demonstrate a good understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle. A residential visit contributes to developing team spirit, good social skills, confidence and independence. Pupils willingly accept responsibility as monitors and the school council makes a good contribution to school improvement. Good links with the local community include: tackling vandalism; business management training at a local secondary school; contributing to a programme broadcast on the local radio station; and raising money for a local charity. Attendance has improved and is closer to, but still below, the national average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. In lessons, very good relationships and behaviour contribute to a good working atmosphere in which pupils work hard and are productive. New skills and knowledge to be learnt are usually clearly explained by staff. Pupils know what they have to do to succeed. Pupils' understanding is also enhanced by probing questioning. This allows them to learn at a brisk pace. Sometimes, however, discussion is teacher dominated, the pace of teaching is not fast enough and the more able pupils have insufficient time to use what they know during independent work. Teachers' marking and checklists clearly identify to pupils what they need to do to improve their writing. The checklists are also an effective tool for tracking pupils' progress. Teachers know their pupils well and match work to meet their individual needs. Effective support from well informed teaching assistants helps pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. Statutory requirements are met and there are guidelines for each subject that help the teachers to meet pupils' needs effectively. Work is appropriately modified for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Where links are made between subjects this helps pupils improve their basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. The curriculum is not yet sufficiently modified to challenge the more able pupils or to maximise opportunities for writing. Upgraded computer facilities are used well to motivate pupils learning across the curriculum.

The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular activities, outside speakers and an annual residential outdoor activities visit. Pupils say that they enjoy these activities which help them to develop a healthy lifestyle. The opportunities for the pupils to have links with or engage with others from a variety of cultural background are limited, but provision for cultural development is satisfactory overall.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support for pupils is good. The school places a high priority on supporting pupils and has processes in place to ensure that this happens. Thorough procedures for child protection and risk assessments are in place and health and safety procedures are regularly reviewed. The large majority of parents agree that their children enjoy school and are safe and well cared for. The school has responded appropriately to parental concerns by providing more activities at playtime, increasing support systems and putting in place a development programme for improving outdoor provision. Pupils joining the school are well supported so that they quickly settle into its routines. Very effective links with external agencies ensure that vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive the help they need.

Dedicated teaching assistants are in place to support pupils in danger of becoming disaffected. Rigorous systems for checking pupils' progress are in place and this enables the school to set challenging targets. Teachers' marking is generally of a high standard and this helps pupils to know what they need to do next in order to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides effective leadership and is well supported by her deputy. She has created an atmosphere in which staff and children are valued and relationships are good. The large majority of parents value the care and support their children receive.

The school has systems in place to communicate with parents but nevertheless a number of parents feel that this could be more effective. The headteacher has listened to these concerns and has responded appropriately. Additional channels of communication include: a school website; a 'touch screen' parent information point in the entrance; and a family learning mentor.

There is a good commitment to personal and professional development for all staff which is strongly linked to whole-school development. The management team are very supportive of the headteacher and work closely together to help the school progress. They rigorously monitor the school's work and track the progress of individuals and year groups. Self-evaluation is used as an effective tool for improvement and action planning and has, for example, been successful in raising standards in mathematics.

Governorship is satisfactory and supportive of the school. The role of governors as a critical friend is still developing. Issues raised at the previous inspection have been addressed successfully and the school has good capacity to continue to improve.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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?	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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	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

5 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of William Barcroft Junior School, North East Lincolnshire, DN35 7SU

Thank you for making us feel welcome when we came to your school. A special thanks to those pupils who talked to us and who were very helpful in answering our questions.

We were really impressed with your very good attitude in lessons. You listened carefully, worked hard and cooperated very well with one another. This was because your teachers are good at explaining things to you so that you know what to do when you are working on your own. Your teachers have really helped you to improve your work in mathematics. Now we have asked them to do the same thing in your English work and to particularly help the boys get much better at writing.

You told us you enjoy school, particularly the extra activities, visits and visitors. I saw some really interesting work in a classroom after a visit to a local river. Pupils were using their number skills to work out how fast the river flows. Activities like this really make learning much more exciting. We have asked the school to look very carefully at what is taught and to try and make it even more exciting and interesting so that you make even better progress. You have a good understanding of how to live healthily and stay safe and we noticed some healthy choices in the 'tuck shop' and lunch boxes.

Your parents think you are well cared for and we agree. There are lots of adults in school who are there to help you when you find your school work hard or when you get upset. Parents also think that your behaviour is good. We think that it is very good in the classroom and around school. Your behaviour is also good in the playground where you have lots of things to do.

Your headteacher and the staff are working hard to do the very best for you and we think many of you are very helpful around school. Well done! Good luck for the future!

Yours sincerely

Denis Goodchild

Lead inspector