

Bethune Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117918
Local Authority	Kingston-upon-Hull
Inspection number	312748
Inspection dates	21–22 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Dave Shearsmith

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	281
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jan Stallard
Headteacher	Mrs Sue Wright
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2003
School address	Pickering Road Hull HU4 7AD
Telephone number	01482 352245
Fax number	01482 574559

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This large primary school is in an area of relative social disadvantage, and although it has below average proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals this is due to recent changes to local authority provision. The school deprivation indicator suggests a much higher level of deprivation. An above average proportion of pupils has learning difficulties and/or disabilities as the school has a hearing impaired unit as well as a significant number of pupils with other needs. Almost all the pupils are from White British backgrounds with a few from minority ethnic groups. More pupils leave and join the school throughout the year than is seen nationally. The school has a Positive Health in Schools Award, the Basic Skills Quality Mark and is a training school for the graduate teacher programme.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Bethune Primary School is a good school with outstanding features in personal development, and care, guidance and support. Children also receive an excellent start to their school life from outstanding Foundation Stage provision. Pupils' achievement is good. From generally very low starting points, standards by the end of Year 6 are above average, significantly so in mathematics and science. Standards in writing are not as high as in reading. Good teaching overall enables pupils to improve steadily as they move up through the years. However, it is not as effective at Key Stage 1 to ensure that all pupils make good progress. This is because checks on how well pupils are learning in lessons are not used well enough to accelerate progress.

The outstanding direction of the headteacher has created high expectations across all aspects of the school's work. As a result, initiatives to improve pupil's personal and social skills have been particularly successful. Pupils have a good understanding about the links between healthy eating, regular exercise and well-being, and they take good advantage of all the opportunities to put the ideas into practice. The outstanding established systems of care also mean that pupils feel very secure and behave very well. They generally know what they need to do to improve their work: they understand what is expected, and how they should respond.

A strong focus on social education gives pupils a good understanding of how to play their part in different groups and activities and they have good collaborative skills. This enables them to make a really positive contribution to society in a variety of ways. For example, the school has taught pupils strategies to help them deal with any potential conflicts with each other. Pupils are competent using modern technologies and are well prepared for future learning as young adults.

The school has successfully addressed issues raised at the last inspection. It has adapted and extended the curriculum to include more opportunities for pupils to improve their writing skills, although this has not had time to impact on standards. Planned opportunities to develop the pupils' awareness of events and issues around the world are not yet fully embedded in the school's curriculum framework. After significant recent changes in staff, the headteacher and governors have quickly built a new and united team of staff by capitalising on their expertise and by developing their leadership and management skills. Leadership and management are good and the school has a good capacity to continue to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Provision in the Foundation Stage is extremely well managed and gives children a confident and very secure start to their learning due to the outstanding leadership of the Foundation Stage leader. Teaching is outstanding and staff understand children's needs very well and provide an excellent range of activities in a stimulating and exciting environment. Secure assessments are based on children's demonstration of skills in a wide range of activities. These provide the basis for the next layer of challenges that bring outstanding improvements, particularly to personal development and communication, language and literacy. Children work and play together really well. They enjoy moving towards independence by working with their peers as well as with adults. Provision for outdoor learning is good, especially the focused teaching sessions to promote the children's physical development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in writing.
- Make more effective use of checks on how well pupils in Key Stage 1 are learning in lessons to accelerate their progress.
- Strengthen the curriculum to raise pupils' awareness of events and issues around the world.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good. At the start of the Foundation Stage, the children's starting points are generally well below that typically seen for children of their age. The picture on entry is declining and there are children with very low skills in communication, language and literacy, and in personal development. Progress in the Foundation Stage is outstanding and as the pupils start in Year 1, their skills are slightly below expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 2, standards are just below the national average. The school's well focused efforts have improved standards by the end of Year 6 and in 2007, the results were above average, significantly so in mathematics and science. In English, standards in writing are average and below those in reading. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of the effective individual support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Children enjoy all aspects of their learning from when they start in the Nursery through to Year 6. They are always keen to do their best and find lessons challenging but fun. They work well with each other, especially when working with pupils in the hearing impaired unit and when the pupils from the unit come to work with them. Attendance is consistently above the national average, reflecting pupils' enjoyment of school. Behaviour is exemplary and pupils are always polite, friendly and welcoming; they clearly understand the behaviour policy of the school. Pupils feel safe in school and state that bullying occurs 'once in a blue moon' and is quickly dealt with. Assemblies create a strong sense of unity and pupils feel their achievements are valued. A strong sense of respect and support for the school community is clearly evident and pupils understand they have rights and responsibilities to become worthwhile citizens of the future. Links with the local community are also strong and varied with pupils involved in a variety of activities including fund raising. The school actively promotes healthy lifestyles and pupils understand the benefits of a healthy diet and regular exercise. The school has a Positive Health in Schools Award. Pupils show care and consideration for others and relish opportunities to take on responsibilities, particularly in Years 5 and 6. The school council represents the views of the pupils well, with contributions from all classes. Pupils use technology effectively in their learning and leisure and the standards they reach by the end of Year 6 ensure they are well prepared for future learning as young adults.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good with some outstanding practice, in Years 5 and 6 and in the Foundation Stage. Across the school, typical features of good teaching include high expectations for pupil behaviour and engagement and at Key Stage 2, a good emphasis on reviewing how well the pupils are learning throughout the lesson. When the teaching is outstanding, assessment information is used well to make sure every pupil is challenged and makes at least good progress. Lessons are stimulating and delivered with passionate enthusiasm so that pupils are totally engrossed in the learning. In these lessons, the teachers skilfully guide the pupils through increasingly demanding activities by regularly checking their learning. This is less of a feature of the teaching in Key Stage 1. There are many good examples of marking, but occasionally marking is not as helpful as it could be to pupils. Good use of resources promotes learning, along with stimulating displays.

The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified well and they make good progress. Teaching assistants are an integral part of the teaching team and provide high quality support for those who need extra help. Experienced teaching assistants also provide effective support for pupils with hearing impairments.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is lively, interesting and firmly based on national guidelines and includes French for older pupils. There is a strong emphasis on important basic skills including information and communication technology. A high priority is given to raising pupils' self-esteem and to ensuring pupils develop good attitudes to learning. Personal, social, health and citizenship education is a real strength and contributes well to pupils' excellent personal development and understanding of how to keep safe and healthy. The school is beginning to embrace a more creative approach to the curriculum by developing links between subjects and by providing more interesting opportunities for pupils to practise their writing. Themed events such as Africa fortnight, world week, Tudor day and Hull fair day enhance pupils' learning and promote enjoyment. The school provides an interesting range of cultural experiences in which children have the opportunity to work with artists, sports experts, dancers and musicians. The recent visit from African dancers caught the pupils' imagination and enhanced their learning and appreciation of dance in another culture. Opportunities to learn about events around the world are developing, but are not yet formally identified through the curriculum framework. The curriculum is also enriched by a wide choice of extra activities, eagerly embraced by the pupils. Good arrangements are made to prepare pupils for the transition into secondary education.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support of pupils are outstanding. Arrangements for child protection, health and safety and risk assessment are all firmly in place. Pupils' excellent relationships with adults make them feel very safe and they say their teachers will sort out any problems they have. Parents overwhelmingly agree that their children feel safe and happy in school and are keen to attend. All staff know their pupils extremely well, both personally and academically,

and they match support to the needs of every pupil. Pupils are involved well in assessing their own learning, particularly in literacy. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well supported through the very effective partnerships established between staff, parents, the school's unit and external agencies. The use of teaching assistants to support pupils' learning is extremely well planned, targeted and delivered to ensure they make good progress in lessons. Tracking data is comprehensive and is used well to identify how well the pupils are making progress. This information is used rigorously to identify quickly any underachievement so that interventions are targeted effectively. The unit for pupils with hearing impairment provides a happy secure environment in which pupils become relaxed and confident. Pupils have a good understanding of their learning targets and what they should be aiming for in the future.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall with outstanding and innovative elements which have led to a positive impact on the overall improvement of the school. The school is extremely well led and managed by a dynamic and outstanding headteacher who is well supported by a very effective deputy and senior leadership team. The recently re-established team follows a short period of readjustment after the promotion of some senior staff and they are working well to ensure that the whole staff works together very effectively to provide a consistent and extremely supportive environment for pupils. Staff expertise is used well and the opportunities for them to develop their leadership and management skills are good. The management teams have a very open approach to self-evaluation so that their view of the school's performance is measured and realistic. Despite the difficulties created by the local context, staff have set challenging targets for pupils' achievement and they monitor their progress towards these rigorously. Governors provide effective support, with a good understanding of the needs of the school, but also provide an additional layer of challenge. The school works successfully to ensure that all pupils, whatever their needs, take a full and active part in all the school has to offer. The hearing impaired unit is well led by an experienced and well-qualified member of staff. Extensive links with a wide range of medical and social services further promote the excellent care that all pupils receive. As well as successfully addressing issues from the last inspection, the school has adapted well to changes in staffing and accurately focused interventions have brought about good improvements in standards. The school provides good value for money and has good capacity to improve.

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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
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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

23 November 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Bethune Park Primary School, Kingston-upon-Hull, HU4 7AD

Thank you all for the welcome you gave the inspectors when we came to visit your school recently. We really enjoyed meeting you and having the chance to talk to you. The school gives you a good education with some areas that are outstanding.

Here are some of the really good things about your school:

- we were impressed by your considerate behaviour and by the friendly atmosphere in the school
- you work really well together, especially in the hearing impaired unit
- all adults in school work very well together to ensure that you are well cared for and that you develop your personal skills well
- by the time you are in Year 6 you have made good progress, and are well prepared for secondary school.

To become even better your school is now going to:

- improve your standards in writing and make sure that you all make the best possible progress in lessons
- provide more opportunities for you to find out what is going on in the world around you.

You can help by listening carefully to your teachers and by continuing to work hard.

With best wishes

Dave Shearsmith

Lead inspector