

Boston West Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120426
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	313611
Inspection dates	13–14 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Sue Hall

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	273
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr S Holland
Headteacher	Mr M J Schofield
Date of previous school inspection	12 July 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Sussex Avenue Boston Lincolnshire PE21 7QG
Telephone number	01205 366013
Fax number	01205 356571

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	13–14 November 2008
Inspection number	313611

© Crown copyright 2008

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 slightly larger than average sized school that is popular and over-subscribed. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The large majority are from White British backgrounds with few speaking English as an additional language. The number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is close to the national picture. Pupils attend the Reception classes during their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The school holds many awards including those for Basic skills, Eco-schools, Artsmark, Investors in People, Activemark and Healthy Schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Boston West Primary School is a good school. This evaluation matches that of the school's overall view of its own effectiveness. Parents are very pleased with the quality of care and education provided. Pupils' personal development is outstanding and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. There are excellent opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities in the school and local community. Behaviour is outstanding as is pupils' enjoyment of the wide range of activities. Most speak with joy about attending school and many think there is little they would change.

Children enter the EYFS with knowledge and skills that are in line with the expectations for their age. As pupils move through the school, they make good progress overall although this is somewhat variable. Currently, standards at the age of seven are average and by the age of eleven they are slightly above the national average. Most pupils have good speaking and listening skills and read well. Even though writing skills are more variable, the school is now focusing effectively on this area. With the current emphasis on problem-solving activities in mathematics and science, progress in these areas is good. Pupils, including those with additional needs and those at the early stages of English, achieve well although occasionally some could do even better.

The quality of teaching and learning is generally good, particularly for the older pupils. Staff have very good relationships with pupils and explain things well. However, there is some variability in the quality of teaching, and the way the day and classes are organised gives a lack of pace to some morning activities, which affects the progress pupils make. The curriculum is good with strengths in the range of extra activities that help develop skills in the arts and sport. The school is successful in utilising the attractive outdoor areas to develop environmental awareness. The care, guidance and support of pupils is good. There are well-established procedures to ensure pupils' safety and well-being. The school has put a lot of time and effort into improving assessment procedures so that staff can carefully track pupils' progress, which is having a positive impact on raising standards.

Leadership and management are good, as is governance. There is an effective team approach to curriculum leadership and management. The headteacher is supported well by the assistant headteachers, the newly established leadership team, staff and governors. This ensures there is good capacity for further improvement. There are good procedures to monitor the effectiveness of initiatives in the school. However, at times the school's evaluation of its own effectiveness is slightly generous in some areas.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Provision in the EYFS is satisfactory. While there are some good aspects, this judgement is below that of the school's evaluation. A strength is the good quality of pastoral care which ensures children are well looked after and their personal development is good. The younger children in the Reception year work in one class, with the older ones working in a mixed-age group with pupils in Year 1. This makes planning for all children a challenge to ensure there is equality of opportunity. Most enter school with skills that are in line with national expectations for their age. However, the assessment of attainment on entry is somewhat cautious and does not always reflect what children already know, understand and can do. The curriculum is

satisfactory because although it meets the needs of older children it does not always recognise or meet the needs of the youngest children in the EYFS. Many are confident children who chat happily to their friends and adults. They make satisfactory progress, mostly meeting the targets expected for their age, and some children exceed them. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory as is the curriculum. Leadership and management is satisfactory. The team of teachers and support staff are very keen to keep improving provision for the children in the cramped accommodation available.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good across the school.
- Review the organisation of the day and the class structures to ensure activities are challenging and meet the needs of all pupils.
- Improve the assessment of children's skills in the EYFS.
- Ensure the curriculum in the EYFS meets the needs of the youngest children.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils enter Year 1 having met the targets for their age. Data shows that until two years ago pupils were reaching expected levels in Year 2 and were doing very well in the national tests in Year 6. Since this time there has been a fall in standards, so that now they are little more than average. In some years, boys, especially in Key Stage 1, have not done as well as girls at school or in relation to boys nationally. The school believes the disappointing results were linked, at least in part, to the many staffing changes in a short period, which affected overall progress. The school set about improving the way it checks and tracks progress and developed more intervention programs to support those in danger of underachieving. Tracking information shows that most pupils make good progress and that this is particularly strong in upper Key Stage 2 where pupils are on course to exceed national expectations. The majority of pupils achieve well, including those with additional needs and those whose first language is not English. However, the school recognises that not enough pupils reach the higher levels and some boys could do better. It is now tracking their progress carefully.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is outstanding overall. Most have a genuine enjoyment of school. This is fully endorsed by parents and by the wholeheartedly expressed view of most pupils who say, 'We love school.' The large majority are very well behaved, considerate, positively motivated and try their hardest at all times. They feel very safe and secure in school, because they have absolute trust in the staff. Their understanding of what counts as a healthy lifestyle is good. They participate eagerly in the various sports clubs offered after school, though there is more work to be done to encourage pupils to eat healthy packed lunches. Pupils' contributions to their own and to the local community are very impressive. The school council is a source of great pride to pupils, as is their opportunity to share their talents in music, art, and in their care for the environment. This helps them develop the confidence and skills that prepare them well for their future. However, pupils' awareness and understanding of the cultural diversity in U.K. is not as good as other areas of their personal development. Attendance rates are above the national average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of the teaching is predominantly good, especially for the older pupils and, as a result, by the time they leave at the end of Year 6 the progress they make is good overall. However, there is a degree of inconsistency in the teaching, which is partly the result of the many changes to personnel over the past three years. The school's leadership has worked hard to overcome this issue. Good assessment systems are now in place, which enable teachers and the leadership team to keep a careful track of pupils' development. This information is used to put interventions in place, which focus on pupils who are not making progress in line with their targets. This is now starting to work well as it is backed up by an effective system of professional development for teachers. There is a good working partnership between teachers and teaching assistants. Together they manage pupils well, and there are good relationships at all levels in the school. Learning takes place in a calm, orderly and friendly environment. The pupils are praised effectively when they do well, but they do not yet get consistent guidance as to how they can make further progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is focused accurately on developing pupils' knowledge and skills in literacy, numeracy and science. This builds well on their prior knowledge and helps promote economic awareness. Teachers are increasingly exploring links between subjects to meet the needs of learners better and to make lessons more interesting. The whole curriculum benefits from the positive use of information and communication technology (ICT) and, although there is a growing element of cross-curricular working, there is still some way to go before this is fully embedded as part of the every day work of the school. The enrichment of the curriculum is good. Pupils are encouraged to make good use of the well-developed outdoor environment. A further notable feature is the wealth of worthwhile art-based activities both during lessons and in out-of-school activities. A good range of visitors and visits brings learning to life for pupils. The wide range of after-school clubs, with strong emphasis on sport, is a good feature. Pupils' emotional well-being is well provided for through the strong emphasis on personal, social and health education.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils' safety and well-being are central and the school's caring attitude is fully embedded in all aspects of its work. Parents praise the high level of care demonstrated by all the staff. Most pupils feel that rare incidents of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with swiftly and effectively. The school operates a 'buddy' system where older pupils help to develop play during breaks and lunchtime. Pupils report that initiatives such as the 'playground leaders' help make playtimes enjoyable social occasions. Parents comment that the use of older pupils to help the young ones is a positive feature that really makes the introduction to school a positive experience. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. The school uses assessment data well to identify pupils who would benefit from additional support to meet any special learning needs. Pupils with particular gifts and talents are identified and given specific support, although the programme is at an early stage and there is limited evidence of its impact.

Older pupils find target setting and the guidance from teachers' marking helpful in improving their learning. An effective marking system is emerging but is not fully in place across the whole school. All staff have received training on child protection and all safeguarding procedures are fully in place.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school has successfully developed a team approach to leadership and school improvement. Staff are widely consulted about the programme of development, which motivates everyone to continue to question what the school provides. However some of the tight structures for grouping pupils, and the rigid organisation of the school day are now holding back improvements in the quality of teaching and pupil's learning and progress. Senior staff are empowered to take full responsibility in specific areas. The monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school is particularly effective in English and mathematics although occasionally somewhat generous in other areas. The school is involved in a large number of initiatives, as noted in the number of awards achieved, which staff recognise makes demands upon management time. The senior leadership team has an effective mix of skills and experience and the assistant headteachers have a good grasp of day-to-day priorities. This ensures the school is able to prioritise areas for further development. There are very effective procedures to work with the local community and help unite different local groups. However there is further work to do on developing community cohesion with regard to the wider U.K. and global communities. Governors are generally well informed and aware of strengths and areas for improvement in school leadership. They have accurately identified a need to develop a more systematic programme of focused visits to the school to enable them to develop their role in the strategic decision-making process.

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

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
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	1
The extent to which 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 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?	2

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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**

17 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Boston West Primary, Boston, PE21 7QG

Thank you very much for looking after Mr Brown, Mr Williams and I when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed speaking to several of you and meeting you in lessons, at lunchtime, in assembly and when we spoke to the school council.

These are some of the best things we found.

- You all seem happy in school. Relationships between pupils and adults are very good and help to make everyone keen to keep improving.
- Your behaviour is excellent as is your enjoyment of the range of activities available to you.
- You really like taking on responsibilities in and around the school and try hard with everything you do.
- The staff look after you well and you have an excellent understanding of how to keep everyone safe, including at playtimes.
- Your parents are pleased with what you learn and they support the school well.

Yours is a good school. To help things to improve further we have asked that the school:

- makes sure that all the teaching you have in school is good
- reviews the organisation of the day and how you are grouped to make sure you all make as much progress as possible
- make sure adults understand what you know and can do when you first start school
- make sure the youngest children have activities that help them do their best.

To help your school to improve even further please continue to be really enthusiastic and encourage your parents to help you make healthy choices in packed lunches.

Yours sincerely

Sue Hall

Lead inspector