

Barlby Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121449
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	313996
Inspection dates	22–23 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Lesley Clark

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	359
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Paul Hallett
Headteacher	Mr Rob Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	6 December 2004
School address	Hilltop Barlby Selby North Yorkshire YO8 5JQ
Telephone number	01757 703317
Fax number	0

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average school. Pupils come from a broad mix of social and economic backgrounds. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage; those that are not, speak English well. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average as is the proportion with a statement of special educational need. The headteacher has been in post since October 2007. The school has had four headteachers in four years. It has also had acting headteachers for interim periods and staffing difficulties.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Barlby Community Primary School gives pupils a satisfactory education. It is improving rapidly. This is because of considerable strengths in the leadership and management of the new headteacher who has given a renewed sense of purpose and direction to the school. The rapid pace of change since his appointment is having a marked impact on pupils' attitudes and achievements. Pupils really want to come to school. They are keen to learn so they behave well and their attendance is above average. They relish the new clubs at lunchtimes and after school and many turn up to take part in early morning band practices. As far as they are concerned the best things about their school are 'the way it is organised' and the fact that 'everybody helps you and you all work together.' Staff agree. Their strong sense of teamwork is reflected in the way they plan and teach lessons together and in their willingness to take on different roles and responsibilities. The rate of progress is impressive; however, a lot of systems are newly in place and a lot remains to be done.

Standards are average in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 as confirmed by the results in the national tests in 2007. Pupils' achievement is broadly satisfactory from their starting points but there are differences between the key stages. Achievement is good in Key Stage 2, especially in English, and broadly satisfactory in Key Stage 1 except in writing, where pupils underachieve. Pupils make good progress in Years 3 to 6, particularly in writing, because teaching is more effective in these year groups. In the 2007 assessments at the end of Key Stage 1, standards were average in mathematics but below average in reading and well below average in writing. The school's most recent assessment information for Year 2 confirm improved standards in reading, which are now close to average as a result of the school's recent focus. Standards remain low in writing because teachers do not take into account what pupils can do before moving them on to the next stage. For example, teachers introduce speech marks to pupils who struggle to use full stops correctly. In addition, the Key Stage 1 curriculum is very narrow, with over two hours each day spent on literacy with seemingly minimal impact, especially on writing. Pupils have limited opportunities to learn through active, purposeful activities and so they do not practise literacy and other skills sufficiently in a wide range of subjects. As a result, their progress slows and their learning lacks sparkle.

Teaching quality is satisfactory but it lacks consistency across the school. While there are considerable strengths, some lessons are less effective than they should be because teachers tend to talk for too long. This limits the opportunities pupils have to learn on their own. In the best lessons, teachers make learning exciting and match work very well to the different age and ability groups in their classes. A concerted effort by all staff to raise girls' achievement is proving successful because teachers make sure that activities appeal equally well to girls as to boys and encourage girls to ask and answer questions. A satisfactory curriculum with strengths in cultural provision and in the creative arts is beginning to enrich pupils' learning, especially in Key Stage 2.

The school gives pupils satisfactory support and guidance and their personal development is satisfactory as a result. Pupils understand why it is important to lead healthy lives. The recently established gardening club, together with older pupils taking on responsibilities for recycling and composting, is reinforcing their awareness of the environment. Pupils feel safe and know they can turn to adults in school for help should they need to. The school council is taking on increasing responsibilities and pupils are enjoying playing more of a part in what goes on at

school. Recent initiatives such as 'global partnerships' are successfully extending pupils' understanding of community spirit. They are satisfactorily prepared for their future lives.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Although the headteacher's leadership is highly effective, he leads a largely new team, many of whom have only recently taken on responsibilities. While there is tremendous commitment from all staff, new systems are not yet fully implemented. For example, methods used to track pupils' progress as they move through the school are not used sufficiently well by subject and key stage leaders to provide a clear overview of standards together with an analysis of what needs to be done to raise achievement. The governing body is very supportive but it too is learning its role; its effectiveness is satisfactory. Excellent financial management, combined with astute management of staffing, has drastically reduced a large deficit and boosted the school enormously. The prospect is exciting but with so many recent changes and with some leaders and managers still finding their feet the school's capacity to improve is satisfactory at present.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Provision is satisfactory with good provision for children's learning outdoors. The new Foundation Stage leader has pertinent plans to mesh Nursery and Reception provision into one unit where children largely direct their own learning. This is operating well outdoors but has yet to take full effect indoors. Teaching quality is satisfactory overall with strengths in some imaginative activities such as creating large spiders' webs using wool and sticks and a huge variety of outdoor activities that encourage children to learn through discovery. Children's learning slows when they sit and listen to adults for too long at a stretch. From skill levels that are broadly typical on entry to Nursery, most children are working within the expected levels by the start of Year 1. Assessing children's learning is at an early stage of development but recent observations of children's progress are accurate and used well by staff when planning the next steps of learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise writing standards in Key Stage 1, ensuring that pupils develop writing skills by systematically building on what they know and understand.
- Make the Key Stage 1 curriculum more active, purposeful and exciting so pupils have many different opportunities to practise their literacy and other skills in lots of different subjects.
- Ensure that pupils in every class have sufficient time to learn independently.
- Ensure that subject and key stage leaders make more effective use of tracking systems to raise pupils' achievement.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but 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' performance in national tests confirms average standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6. The trend in the school's results is upwards. The more able pupils are well challenged in Years 3 to 6 and the school's most recent assessments confirm that a larger proportion is currently exceeding expected levels. Standards at the end of Year 2 are

currently close to average in reading and average in mathematics but remain well below average in writing because of weaknesses in the way writing is taught and lack of opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills in a variety of different contexts. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory on balance with most progress being made in writing at Key Stage 2. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress as a result of effective support from teaching assistants. Pupils with a statement of special educational need explained they 'feel more confident' as a result.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a good awareness of cultural diversity and develop a strong social and moral sense through establishing class rules and defining their obligations towards each other. As a result, they respect each other's views and are tolerant of different people's needs. Older pupils enjoy taking on new responsibilities and are currently planning to set up a 'lunchtime squad' to make lunchtime play more purposeful. They are aware that there are 'right choices' to be made and, consequently, they treat each other kindly. The school council is taking on increasing responsibilities and pupils now have a more democratic say in matters that affect them but they do not as yet make a good contribution to the community. Pupils are becoming increasingly confident and articulate as a result of recent measures to raise their self-esteem but many still require a great deal of encouragement.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching quality is inconsistent across the school, varying from satisfactory to outstanding. The best lessons are in Key Stage 2, where there is a larger proportion of good or better lessons. The most effective lessons are characterised by a rapid pace of learning and many opportunities for pupils to discuss ideas, assess each other's learning and discover for themselves. Pupils rightly say, 'These lessons are fun' but 'You have to work hard and they make you think, it's quite tough.' Less effective lessons are characterised by teachers' undue emphasis on pupils' learning through listening. In these lessons, there is often too little time left for pupils to use learning purposefully to try out for themselves what they have been taught. In addition, teachers leave themselves too little time to check what pupils have understood and where they feel unsure. Consequently, pupils' learning slows and they do not learn from their mistakes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum has several good features, including good provision for art and music. The introduction of French is adding to the cultural understanding of pupils. Learning about other cultures is linked through a range of creative, social and learning opportunities, including looking at different buildings and lifestyles. All the required subjects are taught and in Key Stage 2 teachers are beginning to make connections between subjects so as to enhance pupils' learning. This, however, is at a very early stage of development. All subjects are covered in Key Stage 1 but there is a lack of breadth with literacy dominating the daily timetables in Years 1 and 2. It offers too few opportunities for pupils to develop writing and other skills through

different subjects and this is reflected in their achievement and standards. The school offers a good range of extra-curricular clubs, activities and educational visits.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Safeguarding requirements are met. A recently appointed inclusion mentor gives good support to pupils who lack self-esteem. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is satisfactory with a secure system for identifying and providing for pupils' different needs now in place. This is beginning to have a positive impact on their progress. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Assessment systems are not yet used effectively enough in Key Stage 1 so opportunities are missed to promote pupils' progress; for example, in writing. Older pupils are beginning to use targets to help them learn effectively but these are not always specific to individual needs and so their contribution to progress is inconsistent. Teachers' marking varies from very effective to satisfactory with the best giving clear indications as to what pupils should do to improve their work and involving pupils as 'critical friends' to each other.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

In an extremely short time the headteacher has strengthened staff morale and imbued the school with a renewed sense of purpose. The result is an enthusiastic team of people, eager to do their bit to improve the school. Much has been tackled in a short time and with considerable success because the school's self-evaluation is absolutely accurate and clearly identifies systematically and methodically what needs to be done next. The role of subject and key stage leaders is at a very early stage of development with many of them new to post. Most initiatives therefore are led by the headteacher. New systems are beginning to have an impact on standards. While subject and key stage leaders are recognising the potential of these systems to set targets and analyse what needs to be done next to raise achievement, they are not yet making sufficient use of them. The increased teamwork is gathering pace and this is beginning to impact positively on sharing expertise between year groups and key stages. The governors are now making a positive contribution as they are beginning to ask the right sort of questions for the school to account for its actions. The school has a good partnership with parents, who appreciate the recent developments.

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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?	3
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?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Inspection of Barlby Community Primary School, Selby, YO8 5JQ

On behalf of the inspection team I would like to thank you for making us so welcome and talking to us so readily about your school. Many of you told us about all the changes that have taken place recently and how different the school now seems to you. We can see what a lot your new headteacher has done and how enthusiastic everyone is in school. You behave well and your attendance is above average. You treat each other kindly and you have a good awareness of different cultures.

Thank you for showing me your work. I was impressed with your writing in Years 5 and 6 and at how neatly you set out your mathematical calculations and record your work in science, including colourful diagrams to help you explain your findings. You learn a great deal about writing in Key Stage 2 but younger pupils struggle with it.

Your school gives you a satisfactory education. This means that it does some things well but needs to improve on others. Your school has started to do a lot of different things since Mr Taylor came and some of these need a bit longer before they take full effect.

This is what I have asked your school to do next.

- Help pupils to write more accurately in Key Stage 1 and give them time to learn how to do one thing properly before moving on to the next.
- Make the curriculum in Key Stage 1 more interesting and exciting so that younger pupils have opportunities to learn actively and to practise their literacy skills and other skills in lots of different subjects.
- Make sure that pupils in every class have enough time to learn on their own.
- Help teachers who are in charge of different subjects and areas of the school's work to use information they have about your progress to help you to improve your work.