

**Bilsdale Midcable Chop Gate Church of England Voluntary Controlled
Primary School**
Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121480
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	314003
Inspection date	25 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Rosemary Rodger

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	15
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs J Ryan
Headteacher	Mrs L Wood
Date of previous school inspection	13 September 2004
School address	Chop Gate Middlesbrough TS9 7JL
Telephone number	01642 778202
Fax number	0

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This very small school is confederated with another primary school several miles away. Pupils in both schools work together one day each week and the headteacher divides her time between the two schools for teaching and leadership responsibilities. The school serves a mixed catchment area in the midst of a National Park. There are no pupils eligible for a free school meal. Many pupils travel to school from outlying areas. All pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The school has received several awards including: Healthy Schools, Local Authority Highly Effective School, Inclusion Award, Leading Aspects and Investors in People. There are currently no Year 6 pupils attending the school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Bilsdale Midcable Chop-Gate School is outstanding. It lives exceptionally well up to its aim to, 'develop pupils to become rounded individuals who have the confidence to use their abilities for the benefit of themselves and the community'. Standards are well above average and pupils make exceptionally good progress based on their average starting points in the Foundation Stage. There is excellent support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. They are fully included in lessons and make the same outstanding progress as their peers. Parents are overwhelmingly positive in their praise of the school, citing, 'the confidence, self-esteem and happiness' that their children develop.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. They are encouraged to lead healthy lives because of the priority given to eating healthily and keeping fit, with daily 'huff and puff' exercises. Pupils say that linking with the confederated school is 'brilliant' because they are able to take part in many additional sporting events. Pupils blossom in the school as a result of all the individual attention they receive. Behaviour is outstanding. Excellent teaching means that pupils know exactly what to do and rise to the challenges and high expectations of teaching at all times. This is very notable in their independent and paired activities. Pupils demonstrate excellent collaborative skills. There is meticulous assessment of the progress of each child throughout their time in school. Older pupils proudly express their understanding of their skills and abilities. A high priority is given to assessing and recording their progress in learning, particularly in all aspects of English. Reading records are exemplary and provide excellent prompts to aid teaching. This informs pupils and parents very well of the progress made. Homework is a regular feature of pupils' learning and they enjoy this. Relationships and personal development are excellent because pupils know each other very well and really do get on.

Residential visits and many trips enrich the excellent curriculum. Frequent productions for parents and visitors, and musical performances provide excellent opportunities for pupils to show their considerable talents. The application of basic skills across many subjects means that pupils write with ease and fluency from an early age. Practical activities provide the basis for pupils' writing, which means pupils are never at a loss as to what to say or write. For example, older pupils vividly described their imaginary characters in a 'hot seating' activity. Pupils' care, guidance and support are exemplary. Parents are well informed of their children's progress.

Leadership by the headteacher is outstanding. The pursuit of excellence is a major strength of the headteacher and well exemplified in the high standards reached by pupils. Links with the local community and work with a number of agencies for the well-being of pupils are very strong. Collaboration with other schools is excellent. Governors are well informed and support the headteacher very well. Improvements since the last inspection are excellent and the school has an excellent capacity to improve further. The school provides excellent value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The Foundation Stage is outstanding. There are very few children in this age group each year. Nevertheless, they integrate very well and benefit from learning alongside their older peers. The curriculum builds effectively on children's prior learning. Excellent records of assessment build up a clear profile of children's progress. These show that children make very good progress

by the end of the Foundation Stage in all areas of learning. Innovative, practical and natural materials are used very well to develop creative skills in and outside the classroom, although the range of equipment and resources for outdoor learning is very limited. High priority is given to laying the foundations for developing later literacy skills through a well planned practical approach to teaching sounds and letters. Exemplary leadership is a key to recent improvements, although financial stringencies mean that improvements to the outdoor environment are only just beginning to take place.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the outdoor area for the Foundation Stage children.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Based on the pupils' broadly average skills when they start school in the Reception class, achievement by the time they leave school is outstanding. Standards in all lessons are higher than those reached in the 2007 national tests. This is particularly evident in writing throughout the school, which has benefited from being a current priority for improvement. Interpretation of the national test results needs to be treated with caution, as numbers are very low. Pupils achieve very well throughout their time in school, which is why they reach well above average standards. More able pupils achieve particularly well in all subjects. The oldest pupils in school, in Year 5, are currently reaching above nationally expected levels in all their work.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being, including pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding. Pupils express their views and show excellent respect for the needs, interests and feelings of others. Pupils are fully aware of the need to eat healthily and to take regular exercise. The school council take their responsibilities seriously. Those involved are being well prepared for their later lives through their roles and responsibilities. Teamwork and collaboration are strong in lessons. Pupils also work independently very well and take responsibility for their actions. They get on exceptionally well with each other as demonstrated by preparations for the school production of 'Joseph'. Behaviour is consistently outstanding in and out of lessons because of the consistent maturity shown by the older pupils and the excellent relationships between pupils. Pupils enjoy school, which is reflected in the above average attendance figures. They want to attend school even when unwell, according to some parents. Attention to safety is a priority for everyone in the school, including governors. As a result, pupils feel very safe. For example, they are fully aware of Internet safety and know that access to some sites is denied.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The quality of teaching and learning is excellent. Pupils are exceptionally well motivated to learn because of the high expectations of all teaching and the excellent relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils' work is well matched to their individual needs because of thorough planning. Intervention and support by teachers to individual pupils are particularly outstanding

in day-to-day teaching. This results in pupils growing in confidence and, in some cases, making spectacular gains in their learning. Behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary. Pupils work hard at school and in completing the frequent homework they receive. Assessment is rigorous. Pupils know what they need to do to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The outstanding curriculum gives an excellent priority to developing pupils' basic skills in literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology. Opportunities to apply basic skills across subjects such as history and science are exceptionally well applied. For example, Year 5 pupils demonstrated their writing capability superbly as they vividly described the living conditions of child chimney sweeps in Victorian times. In science, various types of graphs are used effectively to illustrate the insulating properties of various materials. Topics studied are enriched through visits to historical landmarks. Strong links with the local community are mutually beneficial through funds raised to enrich learning. Pupils commented very favourably on their enjoyment of many joint activities with the confederated school, for example, on trips to take part in sculpture and theatre productions. Daily after-school clubs provide further curricular enhancement for all pupils who wish to participate. This is contributing very well to pupils' academic achievement and personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are excellent, which is why parents praise the confidence their children acquire in this warm and very caring environment. For example, a typical comment is that '... has gone from strength to strength ever since coming here. The care and concern shown has been second to none'. Pupils' safety in all they do is paramount. Procedures to ensure that arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements are in place. Systems to track the individual progress of each pupil throughout the year are meticulous and show clearly those pupils making higher than expected levels of progress in English and mathematics.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher very effectively balances the demands of being a teaching headteacher in two schools. Parents are inspired by what they describe as this 'exceptional' management of two schools. There is no doubt that pupils really value the regular links they have with their partner school and staff, too, enjoy being able to teach their specialist subjects in the larger of the two schools. Systems to monitor the progress of pupils are robust. They are clearly linked to performance management, which gives teachers clear points for development. Self-evaluation is accurate and clearly reflects thorough monitoring. The actions taken by the school are well targeted and have had a good impact in bringing about improvements in writing, reflected in the well above average standards. Challenging targets are set for 2009. These fully reflect the ambitious goals for raising standards for all pupils.

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
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	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

Thank you for making me so welcome when I spent a day in your school recently. I am writing to let you know what I enjoyed in your outstanding school. Everyone enjoys going to your school and you all feel safe and secure because your headteacher and teachers work hard to provide you with many exciting activities. Very small classes mean that you have lots of individual support. Your behaviour is excellent and you all take care of each other very well. You understand how important it is to lead a healthy life and to take exercise. Your books are a delight to read as your writing is so interesting and beautifully set out. Some of you are also very skilled at using the computers to word process your work.

There is very little that needs to improve in your school, but I have suggested that the outdoor play area for the younger children needs more resources and equipment.

Good luck to you all. I hope your rehearsals continue to go well for your performance of 'Joseph'.