

Barkston Ash Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121635
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	314064
Inspection dates	7–8 November 2007
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 aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	126
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Clare Thornton-Eckford
Headteacher	Mrs Anne O'Neill
Date of previous school inspection	17 November 2003
School address	London Road Barkston Ash Tadcaster North Yorkshire LS24 9PS
Telephone number	01937 557373
Fax number	01937 557373

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	7–8 November 2007
Inspection number	314064

© 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 one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small school serving a wide area with broadly typical social and economic circumstances. Many pupils travel to school from surrounding villages. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is small. A below-average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. All pupils are of White British heritage. The school provides an after-school club on site and a breakfast club in the nearby village hall. These facilities are not managed by the school. The school has achieved an Activemark and a football charter mark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Barkston Ash is a good school with outstanding features. It enjoys much success in fulfilling its mission statement, 'We will strive to ensure that all children achieve their full potential.' Parents too, are very appreciative of the school's work in ensuring their children's progress and also the, 'exceptional number of sporting events' provided. Parents are kept fully informed, for example, by being given their children's learning targets. Standards are above average by the end of Year 6 and have been for several years. Achievement is good based on the children's standards, which are typical for their age, when they start school. There was a rare and expected fall in standards at the end of Year 2 in 2007, due to a higher number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, but the overall picture over time is one of above-average standards. Standards in writing, particularly at Key Stage 1, are not as high as in other subjects, and this is an area for development. All pupils achieve equally well. There are good measures to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, especially for older pupils; these are fulsomely praised by parents. All pupils make good progress.

Pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being contribute highly to their very positive attitudes to learning and above-average standards. Pupils enjoy school. As they say, 'We enjoy the small, cosiness of school, the sports, the research we carry out and the responsibilities we are given.' Exceptional attention is given to promoting a healthy lifestyle, to keeping fit and understanding the effects of eating healthily. The care, guidance and support for pupils are good. A recently introduced system to track the progress of individual pupils is developing well and providing useful information about pupils' progress term by term. There are meticulous systems to ensure pupils' safety and personal well-being, both in and out of school. Teaching is good. Lessons are carefully planned and pupils are fully involved in their learning because explanations are clear, with good use is made of interactive whiteboards. Pupils' work is matched well to their needs. The pace in lessons is brisk and teachers generally have high expectations. The good curriculum is developing well since the introduction of a 'themed' approach, although pupils in Key Stage 1 are not always given enough opportunities to practise their writing skills. After-school clubs for sports and the arts are well supported. Pupils commented positively about their work to calculate the cost and profits for the school calendar and the usefulness of this for their future learning as young adults.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides strong leadership and sets a clear path for improvement that involves all staff. Subject leader roles and responsibilities are developing well, although there are insufficient links between actions and raising standards in some of the action plans. Governors are well informed and provide useful support on several fronts. The school is improving and has made good improvement since the last inspection. It has a good capacity to improve further. The school provides good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in the Foundation Stage work alongside Year 1 pupils. When they start school, their standards are generally typical for their age, although with small numbers there is wide variation from year to year. By the time they start in Year 1 the pupils have made good progress and reach standards that are above national expectations in all areas of learning, apart from physical development. The quality of teaching is good. Children benefit from the challenge provided in the mixed-age class and the resulting high expectations. Children's personal, social and emotional

development is particularly well fostered and leads to much enjoyment and worthwhile learning because children gain in confidence and develop independence. The curriculum provides an appropriate balance between indoor and outdoor learning, although the purpose of outdoor play is not always reflected in planning. Recent steps to improve the provision by managers are progressing well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more writing opportunities for pupils in Key Stage 1.
- Ensure that subject leaders' improvement planning links actions to raising standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well and reach above-average standards by the end of Year 6. The interpretation of the national results needs to be treated with some caution due to the small numbers of pupils in each class. The results of the most recent Year 6 national tests show that pupils have maintained the above-average results of the past four years. There is a slight fall in writing standards and this is a key priority for improvement. Actions taken so far have not had time to make an impact. Standards in lessons reflect the above-average standards at the end of Key Stage 2, but are generally average in other classes. Although the results of the 2007 assessments at Key Stage 1 indicated a fall to below-average standards, this does not accurately reflect the overall trend in attainment, which is improving. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1; their progress in Key Stage 2 is good because there is a higher level of support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding. Pupils are given many responsibilities around the school which lead to them taking high levels of responsibility for their learning in lessons. Pupils are proud to attend Barkston Ash School. The above-average attendance reflects their outstanding enjoyment and enthusiasm for everything they do in and out of school. Behaviour is outstanding with all pupils, even those with potentially challenging behaviour, listening and taking part in class discussions. The school council contributes to the ongoing success in encouraging healthy lifestyles in their organisation of a healthy poster competition. Pupils learn about healthy lifestyles and have a good understanding of how to stay fit and healthy. Pupils say they are safe and, as a result, develop into confident and responsible young people. Relationships at all levels are outstanding.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is good and pupils learn well. The good subject knowledge of most teachers helps to equip pupils with the precise skills they need, for example, to improve the vocabulary they use when writing. Questioning is probing and encourages pupils to prepare and think before giving their replies. Lessons are well planned and take account of the full range of abilities, with an appropriate level of challenge for the more able pupils. Teachers are

clear about what they want pupils to learn and this is explained well to pupils. Teaching assistants provide valuable support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, although this is better established in Key Stage 2; intervention and support programmes are due to start shortly in Key Stage 1. Pupils work well together and really enjoy the times they are able to share their targets with their teacher. Marking is good because it provides pupils with information to help them to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum provides a good balance between teaching basic literacy and numeracy skills and applying these skills to relevant and interesting tasks that link subjects together, for example, in studying the Victorians. Long and medium-term planning in Years 1 to 6 is currently under review to incorporate new ideas. However, pupils in Key Stage 1 do not always have enough opportunities to practise their writing skills, which limit their progress in this area. There are many opportunities for pupils to take part in creative activities and sporting events during the school day and after school. Pupils enjoy a range of after-school clubs, especially those that promote a healthy lifestyle and creativity. This is reflected in the recent Activemark award. The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils effectively. Enterprise skills are well developed and links with the community enrich pupils understanding of life in other countries.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The good quality of the care, guidance and support provided for pupils ensures they are well cared for, feel safe and are happy in school. Arrangements to ensure the safety of pupils on trips, for example, are meticulously checked, as are all other matters relating to the health and safety of pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are provided for and are fully included in lessons. Learners requiring additional help, including those most at risk, are identified and usually provided with a good level of support, particularly at Key Stage 2. The systems to track the progress of individual pupils are good and provide parents with detailed information. A newly introduced system to track the progress of class groups is in the early stages of implementation. Although it is too early to judge the impact of this, there are early signs that it is effective in streamlining assessment information and reducing the considerable amount of information currently kept by teachers.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The school is managed efficiently and effectively on a day-to-day basis. The headteacher works well with a team of committed and hardworking staff. Her vision to provide the best for all pupils and ensure their care, safety and well-being is paramount and evident in all priorities. The recent priority to improve the systems used to track the progress of pupils is a good example of this and results in accuracy in target-setting. Governors are well informed and provide a wealth of support as a result of their professional expertise. Teamwork is strong and involves everyone, from running lunchtime and after-school clubs to delivering training for staff. Subject leadership is good and developing well as the school incorporates recent changes into its work. However, action plans are not always clearly enough linked to improvements in standards. The school is well resourced and benefiting from

recent improvements to the building and additional information and communication technology resources. The headteacher's monitoring and evaluation are thorough and accurate. The school's self-evaluation has accurately identified relative strengths and weaknesses. The actions being taken are beginning to have a good impact on bringing about school improvement that is well reflected in the challenging targets set for the coming years.

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.

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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
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?	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	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

Thank you for helping to make my time in school so enjoyable. It was a pleasure to attend the school council meeting and see you in action, planning the competition to make a poster about healthy food. I hope you had some good entries.

You go to a good school with some outstanding features. The headteacher and her staff work very hard to provide you with many interesting and exciting activities to help you learn. You are expected to work hard and behave well. Your behaviour is excellent and you show care for others as you carry out your roles as buddies, prefects or play-leaders. This helps the youngest children feel safe and happy in school.

I know you are all working hard to improve your writing. I have asked your school to make sure you are expected to write often and to improve your writing even more. You can help by always trying your best and writing at home too. I have also asked that teachers' plans to improve what you all do in school give a high priority to making your learning even better so you continue to achieve as well as you are capable.

Thank you once again for making me so welcome in your school.