

Bagthorpe Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122578
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	314333
Inspection dates	16–17 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Glynn Storer

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 special
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	174
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 Viconte da Villa
Headteacher	Mr David Walton
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	School Road Bagthorpe Near Underwood Nottingham Nottinghamshire NG16 5HB
Telephone number	01773782843

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	16–17 September 2008
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors

Description of the school

This is a smaller-than-average sized primary school. It is situated in the village of Bagthorpe, Nottinghamshire, but also serves the nearby communities of Selston and Underwood. Virtually all pupils are from White British backgrounds and none speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) attaining standards broadly in line with those expected of four-year-olds. However, about a half of the school's Key Stage 2 pupils transfer from a neighbouring infant school at the age of seven. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than that in schools nationally and currently, there are no pupils with a statement of special educational need. A new headteacher and deputy headteacher were appointed in September 2007.

The school has gained Healthy Schools Gold and Eco Schools Silver awards and is a holder of the Activemark for its work in promoting physical education and fitness.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Bagthorpe Primary School is a satisfactory, but rapidly improving, school. It provides satisfactory value for money because the headteacher has successfully improved the quality of education that the school provides and has halted a decline in standards. Consequently, the school has risen in parents' estimation. One parent noted, 'There have been fantastic changes in the last year and all for the better.'

Children get a sound start in Reception and build satisfactorily on this when they transfer to Year 1. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are broadly average and represent satisfactory achievement through both key stages. However, writing develops more slowly than other basic skills and the school rightly identifies this as an area for improvement. Nevertheless, an improving rate of progress is evident in the current work of pupils in Years 2 to 6, where standards in mathematics and science have improved considerably during the last school year. Consequently, growing numbers of pupils are firmly on course to reach or exceed the expected standard for their age.

Teaching and learning are generally satisfactory, although inspection evidence indicates that the incidence of good teaching is rising. During the last year, staff have raised their expectations and worked hard to instil positive attitudes that have improved the quality of pupils' learning. They plan lessons carefully and make appropriate provision for pupils with different abilities. However, when teaching is less successful, this matching of tasks to pupils' known abilities is not so sharp and some pupils do not make the progress that they should.

The curriculum is sound, although current planning does not always identify the key skills that pupils should learn through the various activities provided. There is a good range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities that promote healthy lifestyles effectively and increase pupils' enjoyment. An emphasis on ecology and learning out of doors is rapidly becoming a strength of current provision that underpins successful learning across the curriculum.

Staff provide effective pastoral care and support for all pupils. Good relationships and open channels of communication between home and school enable staff to respond sensitively to pupils' welfare needs. This quality of care results in good levels of personal development and well-being. Pupils know how to lead safe and healthy lifestyles and their good behaviour and relationships, along with the care they show for others, help the school to function as a caring community. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the wider community and develop respect for and understanding of people from different backgrounds and walks of life. Sound basic skills and positive attitudes prepare pupils satisfactorily for later life. Measures for safeguarding pupils fully meet current requirements. Pupils receive satisfactory academic guidance. They like their recently introduced home/school diaries, but inconsistencies in teachers' marking mean that pupils do not always receive clear messages about how to improve their work.

The headteacher and his deputy have done a good job in promoting school improvement. The rate of improvement has increased because they have introduced rigorous procedures for checking on standards and for improving quality and consistency in the classroom. School self-evaluation is accurate and forms a good basis for forward planning. These foundations have quickly enabled senior leaders to make a difference. However, despite an impressive record of school improvement, leadership, management and the school's capacity to improve further are, at present, no better than satisfactory. This is because it will be some time before governors

and staff at all levels have the experience and training necessary to take on leadership roles and to support and challenge the school effectively.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Under the direction of the teacher responsible for leading EYFS provision, an experienced team of two teaching assistants manage day-to-day arrangements satisfactorily. The children have just started school but have already settled in well. The classroom and outside area are well organised and children have a good understanding of daily routines. Staff organise a suitable range of purposeful activities to extend learning. The shoe shop gives good opportunities for developing numeracy as children measure feet, sort pairs of shoes into sizes and ring up their takings. Shopkeepers are polite to customers and demonstrate appropriate social skills. Children develop a good understanding of how to stay healthy. They insist that they must wash the bits off the strawberries they pick in the garden or they will be sick. The daily phonics session helps them to extend their understanding of the sounds that letters represent. This gives them a solid foundation for developing early reading and writing skills. The highlight of the week is the 'Woodland Wednesday', when the class ventures into the extensive school grounds to explore the environment. Children's good personal development is a strength of the provision. Staff encourage them to be independent and to express their ideas freely. Even the shyest children soon become self-assured. Staff pay good attention to welfare, health and safety. Although day-to-day management is satisfactory, there are shortcomings in leadership. Staff do not receive enough guidance and so opportunities are sometimes missed to make the most of promising learning situations.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing in both key stages.
- Ensure that all teachers use assessment information effectively to plan work that meets the needs of pupils of all abilities.
- Give governors and all staff with management responsibilities a more prominent role in monitoring provision and planning for school improvement.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before the next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

In recent years, there has been a downward trend in pupils' achievements and in the standards they have attained. Provisional data from the most recent national tests and assessments show a marked upturn in both key stages. The overall scores attained by seven-year-olds improved substantially having been below the national average in 2007. Standards in reading rose to be above average for the first time in recent years and, whilst standards in writing and mathematics remained marginally below average, those in mathematics rose considerably. There were also substantial improvements in standards in mathematics and science at the end of Year 6. The proportion of pupils attaining the nationally expected level was well above that in most other schools and the proportion of above-average scores more than doubled. However, standards in English were considerably lower because pupils' writing scores remained well below average. Nevertheless, the 2008 results represent satisfactory achievement by pupils at the end of both

key stages. Following some years of underachievement, most pupils in the last Year 6 group made the expected rate of progress and some exceeded it. Tracking data show that progress is accelerating and that increasing numbers of pupils throughout school are working at or above the expected level for their age.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils develop good social skills. They are polite and sensitive to the needs of others. They have a keen sense of fair play and willingly contribute to charities that help those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They feel responsible for helping to protect our planet and support the Eco Committee's efforts to promote conservation and recycling. Pupils are so sensible and well behaved that they are very capable of being independent and taking responsibility for their learning. Pupils learn about different religions but they have limited understanding of the cultural diversity in our society. They understand the need for regular exercise and a balanced diet. Most pupils are bursting with enthusiasm and relish opportunities to explore and investigate. Their good personal development supports learning well. Attendance remains somewhat below that in schools nationally but is improving satisfactorily.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Pupils' progress is improving because senior leaders have raised teachers' expectations of how pupils should respond and of what they should achieve. This has resulted in a higher level of challenge in many lessons and a positive response that adds to the quality of pupils' learning. The school has introduced a rigorous regime for assessing pupils' attainment. In the best lessons, teachers use assessment information to set work that matches the needs of pupils of different ages and abilities, although this practice is not yet consistently effective throughout the school. An increasing number of lessons involve pupils in exciting, 'hands-on' activities, often in the school's excellent outdoor areas. These lessons engage pupils' interest and so promote enjoyment in learning. At times, however, teachers are unclear about the learning that should result from an activity and when this happens, pupils' progress in the development of key skills slows. There is satisfactory teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants, which enables pupils who find learning difficult to take a full part in lessons and to make similar progress to others in the class.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Leaders are remodelling the curriculum by grouping subjects together and developing a thematic approach to provide stimulating activities that capture pupils' interests and are relevant to them. Staff have made a good start and interesting projects are planned. They recognise that the next steps are to identify the range of skills they seek to teach and to develop a system for evaluating how successfully pupils master new concepts. A particular strength is the way that the school grounds are being developed as a learning resource. Going into the woods to feel and describe different types of bark adds extra interest to English lessons on how to use powerful adjectives.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils' welfare and safety receive the highest priority. Risks associated with activities, such as educational visits, are carefully evaluated to make sure that staff can minimise the possibility of danger. Governors make appropriate safety checks on school premises and adults are thoroughly vetted before starting to work with pupils. Pupils receive good guidance about healthy lifestyles, the misuse of drugs and on how to stay safe. They receive satisfactory academic guidance, though targets that lead them to the next steps in their learning are not always reinforced in teachers' marking. All pupils have equal opportunities to succeed. Those with particular gifts or talents receive encouragement. For example, musically talented pupils delight in playing intricate duets with the headteacher during assemblies. Those who find learning difficult receive satisfactory support. Pupils report that relationships with staff are so warm and friendly that they would have no qualms about sharing personal problems with their teachers.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and his deputy have quickly gained the confidence of staff, pupils and parents. They have brought a renewed rigour and sense of urgency to the job of school improvement and have already had notable success. Standards are rising, the learning environment is much improved and exciting initiatives, such as the 'Lets Glow' environmental project, are beginning to enrich the curriculum and bring pupils' learning to life. Importantly, staff share the vision and direction that senior leaders have set. The school is going from strength to strength because everybody is pulling in the same direction and responding positively to the challenging targets that they set for school improvement. The headteacher involves others in aspects of leadership and management. However, the school has a long way to go in training subject leaders and developing their roles before they can play a full part in school leadership. Similarly, a recent turnover of governors means that the governing body is not yet in a position to gather the first-hand information needed to hold the school to account for what it achieves. Nevertheless governance is satisfactory overall.

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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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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?	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/or disabilities make progress	3

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?	2
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	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
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 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?	2

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	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	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

18 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bagthorpe Primary School, Nottinghamshire, NG16 5HB

Thank you for your friendly welcome when Mr Messer and I came to visit your school. We enjoyed talking to you when we visited your lessons and particularly liked hearing your excellent singing during assemblies. The piano duets were also great.

This is what we found out about your school.

- Children in Reception get off to a sound start in school.
- Your behaviour and the way that you work during lessons is getting better and, as a result, you are making better progress, particularly in mathematics and science.
- Your teachers plan lots of exciting things for you to do, and the way you use the school grounds makes learning interesting and fun. 'Lets Glow' is brilliant!
- Your teachers and other adults take good care of you and keep you safe.
- Mr Walton has done a lot in a short time to make your school better.

In order to help, we have suggested three things that the school should do.

- Do everything possible to help you improve your writing.
- Make sure that teachers use everything they know about you to plan work that is just right to help you all make the best possible progress, whatever your abilities or needs.
- Find ways to enable all staff and governors to do even more to help Mr Walton organise, check and improve parts of the school's work.

We heard the school council say that they wanted to make the school better too. You can all do your bit by passing on your ideas and helping them to do a really good job.

Glynn Storer

Lead inspector