

Berkeley Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117781
Local Authority	North Lincolnshire
Inspection number	326683
Inspection dates	3–4 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Alastair Younger

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Veall
Headteacher	Miss Machaela Wright
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2007
School address	Marsden Drive Scunthorpe DN15 8AH
Telephone number	01724 867065
Fax number	01724 873037

Age group	7–11
Inspection dates	3–4 February 2009
Inspection number	326683

© Crown copyright 2009

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 large junior school on the outskirts of Scunthorpe. Most pupils are of White British heritage and transfer to the school from the neighbouring infant school. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. The percentage of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly above the national average.

When the school was last inspected the requirement for special measures was removed, to be replaced with a notice to improve because it was judged to be performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. A monitoring visit, six months later, reported that there had been good progress in addressing issues for improvement and in raising pupils' achievement.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

This is a good school. The outstanding leadership of the headteacher has set an example for good, perceptive leadership and management at all levels across the school. This has been informed by accurate, critical self-evaluation and has led to considerable improvements in teaching, the curriculum and the care, guidance and support offered to pupils. The impacts of these are being seen in the increasingly rapid progress pupils are making, their excellent personal development and the ensuing raising of standards. School improvement is good and continues to pick up speed because this is an increasingly happy school, with a committed staff contributing to securing bright futures for pupils. The governing body has played its part in these improvements through judicious appointments of teachers and leaders.

A large part of the school's success stems from the exceptional way in which it works so effectively with parents, other schools and the many other agencies and professionals who contribute to pupils' well-being and prospects for the future. Strong relationships with parents ensure that they understand how they can contribute to their children's education and development. Communication with the adjacent infant school, from which nearly all pupils transfer, is outstanding with the result that pupils transfer smoothly from the one setting to the other. Links with the secondary schools to which pupils transfer at the end of Year 6 are equally effective, allowing pupils a seamless move through the system. The school sits at the hub of professionals and agencies providing support, ensuring that, as pupils' personal needs arise, they are addressed in the best available way, though not always at the speed a few parents hope for.

Pupils' achievement is good because they are taught effectively, behave extremely well and are very keen to learn. Standards are broadly average. They are above average in English, broadly average in science but slightly below average in mathematics. Standards remain broadly average overall because, although pupils are making good progress now, the school has not yet fully recovered from a period in which they did not.

The curriculum is good. This contributes enormously to pupils' enjoyment of school and their good attendance. A sense of happiness, spirituality and fulfilment pervades the school. Pupils are sensible and show good consideration for one another, factors which demonstrate their excellent awareness of how their actions can contribute to the safety, happiness and well-being of others. Parents express confidence in the care and support their children receive. This confidence is justified: the school is doing all that it can to keep pupils safe.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics by ensuring that work is closely matched to the full range of ability in each class and monitoring closely the effectiveness of new strategies and organisation of the subject.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' standards are below average on entry to the school but they make good progress and achieve well. The good progress they are currently making as a result of good and improving

teaching has not yet been fully reflected in published standards because of the legacy of former underachievement. Nevertheless, standards are satisfactory overall. They are above average in English, reflecting the priority this subject has been given over the past two years. The decisions taken by management to reorganise the way in which the subject is taught to mixed ability groups have been successful, so that pupils can learn from one another as well as from their teachers. Following the success of this initiative, the same approach has been taken this year to the teaching of mathematics, following disappointing results in Year 6 tests at the end of last year. The school is still working to address a legacy of underachievement in mathematics. Inspection evidence points to pupils currently making good progress in mathematics.

The evidence of inspection shows each year-group making good progress. No group of pupils can be seen to be making faster or slower progress than any other but the school is currently looking closely at the progress of those deemed to be gifted or talented to see if they could possibly be doing better.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their well-being are outstanding. A measure of their spiritual development is the consideration they give to others and the happiness they bring to the broader community through simple, caring acts. Examples of this are the school choir visiting and entertaining the residents of a local health care home, and the funds they have raised for the Sheffield Children's Hospital Charity. Pupils' moral and social development is amply evident. Their behaviour is excellent; exclusion is virtually unheard of and pupils strongly express the view that they feel safe, happy and free from any form of harassment. In conversation with pupils it quickly became apparent that they were surprised that children ever misbehave. The introduction of mixed ability groups, most noticeably in English, has been a huge success, not only in the raising of standards but also in the way that this initiative has fostered a sense of responsibility amongst higher attaining pupils and boosted the self-esteem of others. Pupils' contribution to the Holocaust Memorial Day ceremony brought a glowing reference from the mayor of North Lincolnshire and typified their excellent awareness of other cultures. Members of the school council are excellent ambassadors of the school, speaking proudly of their contribution to school improvement. Pupils' outstanding personal development stands them in good stead for the future. Pupils wholeheartedly join in with physical activities. In conversations at lunchtimes it was very clear that they knew which foods were healthy and which were not, even if they sometimes preferred the unhealthy ones.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. The proportion of good or better teaching seen during the inspection exactly matched that observed by school leaders and the local authority over the past year. No inadequate teaching was seen and one lesson was outstanding.

Teachers are confident. They are happy to tolerate the noise of pupils talking excitedly about their work and helping one another. No time is wasted in managing errant behaviour because it is so infrequent and pupils are such keen learners. This is mainly because good, ongoing assessment ensures that the tasks they are set are interesting, fun and usually well matched to individual abilities. Stronger teaching makes good use of technology such as interactive

whiteboards, interlinks many areas of learning and takes particularly good account of previous learning. The difference between satisfactory and good teaching often boils down to the command of the subject being taught by non-specialist teachers. In English lessons, teachers manage mixed ability groups well but there are occasions in mathematics lessons where teachers cope less well with the wide range of ability. Teachers take care to deploy skilled classroom assistants to best effect, and not overly to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These pupils often receive extra attention from teachers whilst assistants support and challenge higher attaining pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has a good, well enriched curriculum. It meets all National Curriculum requirements. Classroom activities are purposeful, imaginative and creative. The good promotion of basic skills stands comfortably alongside learning in other subjects, with good links being made between the two to enhance learning across the whole timetable. French is taught across the whole school, being favoured over Spanish because the former is the language of choice in the secondary schools to which pupils transfer at the end of Year 6. This is one example of how well the school prepares pupils for transfer. Subject leaders are carefully monitoring their subjects to ensure that avenues of learning build upon previous experiences, allowing pupils to put their existing knowledge to good use and thus speeding up progress. There is a wide range of well attended clubs and after-school activities and, although there are relatively few educational visits, there is a good programme of visiting speakers and performers. The possibility of setting up a 'Summer School' is being explored as a means of preventing the slight slippage in standards between pupils leaving infant school and joining Berkeley. The decision to teach literacy in mixed ability groups has been such a success that the initiative has been extended to the teaching of numeracy this year. The impact of this has yet to be seen. There is evidence, however, that some teachers are finding it more difficult to cope with the wide range of ability in numeracy than they did in literacy.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support of pupils are good. Rigorous measures are in place to ensure that pupils are kept safe and well protected. Staff are strongly committed to encouraging enjoyment and achievement and encouraging pupils to live healthily. Safety is equally promoted. Supportive arrangements for vulnerable pupils include good quality nurturing by a learning mentor and the existence of a 'Talk-To' box where pupils can post notes about any concerns they have and name the adult they would like to talk to about them. Good academic guidance is informed by accurate checking of individual progress and good support is made available to pupils who appear to be experiencing difficulties. The school is currently re-evaluating assessment procedures in science, having recognised that they are not as effective as in numeracy and literacy. Excellent arrangements are in place to ensure that pupils transfer to and from other schools with as little difficulty as possible.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership, management and governance are good. They have brought about many changes for the better over the past year and put the school in a good position to keep improving. Rigorous self-evaluation involves all staff and governors. All aspects of the schools' work are carefully monitored and where necessary adjustments made to break down barriers to further improvement and help raise standards. Subject leadership is good overall, but changes in the leadership of mathematics are too recent to have had an impact on published standards in the subject. Care is taken to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities to thrive and leaders and managers are currently checking whether even more could be done for pupils identified as gifted or talented. The school provides good value for money.

The headteacher leads a passionate drive to ensure that pupils feel that they belong to a strong school community in which their views are listened to and acted upon. Good work is being done to ensure that the school is seen to be central to the local community. Excellent partnerships have been forged with other schools. Fundraising activities have benefited local churches and hospital charities. Regular performances and presentations have been shared with parents and the local community. Pupils have been encouraged to think of themselves as national and global citizens, for instance by inviting visitors from a wide variety of backgrounds and cultures and by the sponsorship of a Senagalese child.

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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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	1
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?	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

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

5 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Berkeley Junior School, North Lincolnshire, DN15 8AH

It was a pleasure for us to meet you the other day. We would like to thank you for making us so welcome and sharing with us your experiences and views about the school. Those of you on the school council certainly painted a very bright picture of the school when I spoke to you. That's what's known as being great ambassadors for the school.

We inspect schools to see how you are getting on and to make suggestions if we think anything could be improved. What we felt was that you are getting a good deal. We saw lots of good teaching and were most impressed by your excellent behaviour and your thirst for learning. That is why you are making good progress. We thought that each school day seems to be packed with interesting activities and were pleased to see so many of you joining in with the lunchtime and after-school clubs. We were also reassured that you are being well looked after and helped to overcome any difficulties you experience. A lot of this is due to the good and perceptive leadership and management of the school.

We also noticed that last year's mathematics results were not as good as they were in English. The staff agree and some changes have already been made to help resolve this situation. All the same, we feel that it is very important that the situation is carefully monitored to ensure that these changes are working.

Thank you once again for making our visit so enjoyable. Good luck for the future.

All the best

Alastair Younger

Lead inspector