

# Billingborough Primary School

## Inspection report

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Unique Reference Number	120371
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	327263
Inspection dates	5–6 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Elaine Taylor HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	102
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs J Spikings
Headteacher	Mrs J Harrison
Date of previous school inspection	30–31 January 2006
School address	Victoria Street Billingborough Sleaford Lincolnshire NG34 0NX
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## Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI). She was assisted on the first day by a second HMI.

The inspectors visited 10 lessons, and held meetings with the chair of governors and senior staff. They also spoke to parents. Pupils shared their views of the school through a formal meeting with the school council and the Healthy Heroes and through informal discussions at lunchtime. The inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised pupils' books and looked at documents, including the data that tracks pupils' progress, the records of the monitoring the school undertakes of its performance and the planning to improve the outcomes for pupils. They also took account of the views of the 30 parental questionnaires and the 14 staff questionnaires which were returned.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the improvements made in the levels of pupils' writing, which was an issue at the last inspection
- the effectiveness and rigour of the systems the school uses to evaluate its performance and the accuracy of its judgements.

## Information about the school

The number of pupils in the school fluctuates from year to year and increases significantly throughout the year, with many parents choosing the school for their children from a wide geographical area. Since the last inspection the senior team has been restructured following the retirement of the assistant headteacher and there have been several changes of teaching staff. The school has also gained awards including Artsmark Silver, Basic Skills Quality Mark, Active Mark and, most recently, the Healthy Schools Standard. Since September 2006 the school has trained 3 teachers under the Graduate Teacher Programme. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision comprises the reception class and children from the term after they are four years old.

## Further information about the school

	School's figures	School's figures compared with other schools
School size	102	Below average
Free school meals	11%	Below average
Proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	19%	Average
Proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups	0%	Below average
Proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language	2%	Below average
Proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	3%	Above average

## Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

1

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

## Main findings

The leaders of this outstanding school have created a vibrant and exciting environment where children feel totally safe and make excellent progress in all areas of their personal development. The dedicated staff work exceptionally hard to make learning fun and they ensure pupils make at least good progress in their lessons. Those pupils who need additional support are exceptionally well provided for and make outstanding progress. The school has built on the successes identified at the last inspection and has good capacity to improve further. In the words of one parent: 'The atmosphere is so happy and loving, the children excel'.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure there is a greater proportion of teaching that leads to exceptional progress by:
  - having a sharper focus in the lesson planning on what pupils are required to learn
  - identifying the logical steps in learning, adapted to suit the needs of all pupils.
- Increase the effectiveness of the school's monitoring of teaching to ensure leaders at all levels consistently give feedback on performance that clearly identifies areas for development.

How well does the school meet the needs of individuals and different groups of pupils?

1

Pupils achieve well and enjoy their learning immensely. When the children enter the school in EYFS, many have not reached the expected levels, especially in communication, language and literacy. They make excellent progress in this stage and build steadily through Key Stage 1, successfully closing the gap. Progress then accelerates, so that by the end of Year 6 attainment is above average.

Pupils who need additional help with their learning achieve exceptionally well and

many reach the expected levels for their age by the time they leave the school. Some of the most vulnerable pupils have particularly impressive individual successes to celebrate.

Progress in writing has improved greatly since the last inspection, but attainment in writing in 2008 showed a slight dip. The school has carefully analysed the reasons for this and appropriate strategies are in place to ensure the previous upward trend resumes.

Pupils of all abilities are excited by their learning. They want to succeed and are able to work alone or with others. Even the youngest pupils are starting to be able to work independently. All pupils cooperate readily with each other and with adults. Behaviour is excellent. Older pupils offer outstanding support to the younger ones and spontaneously step in to make sure they are safe. They treat everyone with respect and everyone is included in activities in class or games in the playground.

The pupils have an outstanding understanding of what they need to do to stay healthy and safe. They take full advantage of everything the school does to promote this aspect of their development, for example by cooking healthy meals in the cookery club or taking plenty of exercise in the many sporting opportunities.

Attendance is good and many pupils arrive early or stay on after school. They take part in discussions in a mature way and are developing outstanding skills to help them succeed in their working lives, such as in the use of information and communication technology (ICT).

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	1
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	1
How well do pupils behave?	1
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	1
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	1
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	1
Pupils' attendance and punctuality	2
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	1

<sup>1</sup> Grades for attainment are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; 4 is low

## The quality of the school's work

The school uses its small size to great effect and plans the provision for individual pupils creatively and flexibly in order to meet their needs. All teachers use consistently good teaching strategies to manage the learning in their classes and close team working means children can comfortably move from one class to another, according to their level of achievement, rather than their age.

Lessons are well planned with a particular strength being the outstanding range of imaginative ideas teachers employ to make their lessons sparkle. Excellent use is made of ICT to engage pupils and they have regular opportunities to develop their skills in this subject. Teachers use good questioning to extend the pupils' understanding, but sometimes do not give enough time for them to talk at greater length about their answers. A whole school focus on writing is raising pupils' basic skills, but more could be done to help them write at length by allowing them more time in lessons to talk about their ideas. Lessons have clear learning objectives but in choosing activities, teachers do not always focus sharply on what they want pupils to learn. As a result, progress is good rather than outstanding.

The care and support pupils receive is outstanding and results in their exceptional personal development. Teaching assistants make an excellent contribution to the work of the school both in classrooms and through working with small groups, running clubs or directing positive play at lunchtimes. Thorough systems for tracking individual progress ensure problems and weaknesses are quickly identified and tackled. Pupils are starting to be aware of their targets and receive good guidance on how to achieve them.

### *These are the grades for the quality of provision*

High quality teaching and purposeful learning	2
Effective assessment and academic guidance	2
An appropriate curriculum which meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, provision through partnership with other organisations	1
Support, guidance and care	1

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has successfully created a school community where everyone feels important and valued. Staff morale is exceptionally high and as one parent said: 'You never see a grumpy teacher.' The whole staff is committed to raising attainment and preparing pupils for the next stages in their development.

The school monitors all aspects of its work through regular checks, but sometimes these are not evaluative enough to move those aspects of its work that are good into outstanding. In particular, the lesson observations carried out by the school's leaders

accurately identify strengths, but rarely offer enough guidance on areas for improvement to raise the overall profile to outstanding.

Governors have good systems for gathering evidence of the school's work, but are not yet sufficiently involved in the self-evaluation processes. Parents contribute their views through regular verbal or written surveys. Their suggestions support developments, such as the booklet produced for parents of children about to start in the EYFS to help them prepare their children for school.

Excellent partnerships have been formed with a wide range of external providers and the local community to enhance the provision for pupils. Parents speak very highly of the way the school communicates with them and helps them to support their children's learning.

Imaginative use of all available services and resources, coupled with a detailed understanding of the community that the school serves, means that the school provides excellent value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

Monitoring, evaluating and planning for improvement to outcomes for pupils	2
Promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination	1
Ensuring that safeguarding procedures are effective	1
Ensuring that the governing body provides effective challenge and support so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities are met	2
Promoting the school's relationship with parents and carers, including their involvement in decision-making about matters relating to learning and well-being	1
Developing partnerships with other providers, organisations and services	1
Ensuring the school contributes to community cohesion	2
Deploying resources to achieve value for money	1

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The EYFS is outstanding, because the creative curriculum effectively promotes links between different areas of learning, captivates the children and ensures that they make outstanding progress. For example, aspects of literacy and numeracy were supported during a cookery lesson, where the children showed outstanding confidence and dexterity in making Christmas cakes. The Foundation Stage leader tracks their progress in detail, and this enables her to identify any areas of underachievement and take robust action to meet children's individual needs. Children are encouraged to make sensible choices and participate fully, because staff support them with excellent questions and explanations. The relaxed and happy 'family' atmosphere helps children to settle quickly in Reception and their confidence soon grows. The children's personal development is outstanding; they behave very well and quickly develop positive attitudes to learning. Well established routines, help children to form positive relationships. They show an outstanding level of curiosity



and awareness of the world around them. Visits to places of interest in the local area give the children regular opportunities to practice the skills they are developing in the classroom. The very effective leadership is characterised by accurate self-review and determination to improve. There are very positive partnerships with parents and they are fully engaged with their children's early development.

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?*	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?*	1
How effectively is the welfare of the children in the EYFS promoted?*	1
How effectively is the provision in the EYFS led and managed?*	1

\* Common judgements made across all inspections of the EYFS

## Views of parents and carers

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and speak very highly of the outstanding commitment of the staff. They appreciate the excellent communication with the school. Those parents whose children have been at other schools previously are especially impressed by the improved progress their children are now making. The wide range of after school clubs receives consistent praise and all feel behaviour is very good. The inclusive nature of the school is seen as a real strength and the parents of pupils who need additional support gave detailed accounts of individual success stories.

## What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2006-7, 14% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2006-7, 46% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing for its pupils suitably. In 2006-7, 34% of schools were judged satisfactory.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2006-7, 6% of schools were judged inadequate.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Achievement:	an overall measure of the pupils' success in their academic learning. The term combines attainment and progress. Pupils might make good progress, for example, but if their attainment remains low, inspectors may judge that their achievement is only satisfactory.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.



7 November 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Billingborough Primary School, Sleaford NG34 0NX

What a pleasure it was for me to visit your school this week and share in your fun and enjoyment as you learn. I want to thank all of you for the way you spoke to me about the school. You are right to be proud of all your hard work and good achievement. Particular thanks must go to the school council and Healthy Heroes who gave up some of their time to come and talk to me.

Your school is outstanding and you develop excellent personal skills. You are exceptionally well informed about how to stay safe and keep healthy and your behaviour is excellent. I was particularly impressed by the way you all care for each other and you told me there is no bullying. You make good progress in your learning and your writing is improving.

You obviously enjoy the many interesting and exciting activities your teachers provide for you. The lovely pictures around the school of trips, visits and of the work you have completed show what an enjoyable school it is in which to learn. Teaching is good and teachers help you to understand how well you are doing and what you have to do to get better.

There are two things I have asked the school to do to make sure your progress in learning is excellent.

- The leaders of the school regularly check the work everyone does, to make sure it is as good as it can be. When they do this I have asked them to be clearer about what needs to improve. You can help in this by sharing your ideas on how lessons could be even better at helping you to learn.
- I have asked teachers to plan their lessons by looking in great detail at the steps you all need to make to achieve your learning objectives. It will help them to do this if you all make sure you know what your targets are.

Yours sincerely

Elaine Taylor  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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