

Bishop Monkton Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121551
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	327511
Inspection dates	18–19 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Susan Brown 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.
The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	65
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs A Archbold
Headteacher	Mrs C Duffield
Date of previous school inspection	May 2006
School address	St John's Road Bishop Monkton Harrogate North Yorkshire HG3 3QW
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The inspector visited 8 lessons and held meetings with staff, governors and a group of pupils. The inspector observed the school's work, including the out-of-hours care, and looked at a range of evidence including safeguarding information, records of pupils' progress, teachers' planning, curriculum planning and the school development plan. The responses to a questionnaire issued to parents/carers were also analysed.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work and looked in detail at:

- attainment, progress and learning for all groups of pupils
- how effectively the school monitors and evaluates pupil performance to improve outcomes
- the effectiveness of the school's strategies for managing and improving behaviour
- the impact of leaders and managers at all levels, including the governors, on improvement since the last inspection.

Information about the school

Most pupils in this very small school come from the village of Bishop Monkton. The remainder come from neighbouring villages or nearby Ripon. Most pupils are from relatively advantaged social and economic backgrounds. Almost all come from White British families and all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average.

Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes. Class 1 provides for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2); class 2 provides for pupils in lower Key Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4); and class 3 provides for pupils in upper Key Stage 2 (Years 5 and 6). Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Reception Year in Class 1 in the academic year in which they are five. The school also provides before- and after-school care, managed by the governing body. The school holds many awards from external bodies including Artsmark Silver, Healthy Schools and the Basic Skills Quality Mark. The headteacher is retiring at the end of the spring term. Her successor has been appointed.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Bishop Monkton is a good school. It provides outstanding support, care and guidance for pupils because each one of them is known and valued as an individual. Pupils know who to go to if they have a problem and report that they feel safe and secure in school.

Pupils' overall achievement is good: they make good progress and consistently attain above average standards by the time they leave the school despite some fluctuations from year to year because of the small numbers in each year group. In 2007 the school was in the top 5% of schools for the progress made by pupils. Teaching is good and assessment is well used to identify those pupils who require either more support or more challenge.

Pupils' contribution to school and village life is exemplary. They are learning to tolerate and respect the needs of others both in school and beyond. They are also developing a good understanding of how their community differs from others in this country and further afield. The very active school council, which includes all Year 6 pupils and elected representatives from other year groups, plays a very constructive role in the life of the school. Older pupils readily take on responsibilities such as acting as 'buddies' for children in Reception. These links are still in evidence at the end of the spring term. Regular opportunities to work in 'family groups' including pupils of all ages, for example on theme days, contribute to a strong sense of community and shared purpose.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to maintain a healthy lifestyle through exercise and diet. Participation rates in physical and sporting activities, for example with pupils from other village schools, are high. The school works extremely well with its partners to extend the range of activities and experiences available to its pupils beyond that which a small rural primary school could provide on its own. It also works very well with a range of agencies to provide very effective support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school benefits greatly from the support of volunteers, such as those from the village bowling club, who regularly share their expertise, interests and time with pupils in lessons, during special events and in the after-school club.

Behaviour is good and makes a strong contribution to effective learning in lessons. The vast majority of pupils respond positively to the high expectations of teachers

and other adults, show respect towards each other and conduct themselves well. However, in the past two years the school has for the first time experienced occasional instances of inappropriate behaviour from a very small number of pupils and this is a cause for concern for some parents. Governors and staff have responded positively to this challenge, acting on advice from, and with the support of, the local authority. No instances of unacceptable behaviour occurred during the inspection and there was no evidence that pupils' learning and progress were being affected detrimentally.

Leadership and management are strong. Governors make a significant contribution to determining the future direction of the school. They moved promptly to appoint a successor to the existing headteacher to secure a smooth hand-over. The school has made good progress in tackling issues for improvement identified at the last inspection and is well placed to continue this improvement. It provides excellent value for money.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to work with parents to enlist their support for the school's commitment to meeting the requirement to be an inclusive school by sharing and explaining its policy on behaviour.
- Ensure that the assessment procedures currently being developed in the Early Years Foundation Stage become established practice so that:
 - the attainment of children on entry is quickly identified and planned learning is even more closely matched to their needs
 - focused observations of all aspects of children's learning take place as part of a regular and planned programme
 - the school is able to evaluate the quality of provision over time and demonstrate the progress made by different cohorts of children
- Improve pupils' spelling by reviewing the current policy and then ensuring consistency in its implementation.

How good is the overall outcome for individuals and groups of pupils?

2

All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make good progress and the majority attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science. Pupils enjoy their learning and develop skills and attitudes that will serve them well during the next stage of their education. During the inspection, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were seen exploring different points of view about keeping birds in cages. They were beginning to understand the effects of persuasive writing and developing the ability to listen and respect other people's opinions. Years 5 and 6 were seen preparing informative, interesting and eye-catching PowerPoint presentations to explain the life cycle of plants, adding both visual and sound effects. Pupils concentrate well on their work. Older pupils showed a real interest in words

with similar meanings as they explored a thesaurus. A younger pupil was fascinated by the effects of a special type of powder paint sprinkled on some wet paper. In general pupils take pride in the presentation of their work but they do not always give enough attention to spelling words correctly, even when the words are displayed around the room or when they have been taught – and admit to knowing – a strategy to help them remember particular patterns such as ‘would, should, could’.

Pupils’ spiritual, moral and cultural development is good. They recognise the difference between right and wrong, have a strong sense of fair play and understand that actions have consequences. Their social development is a strength. They participate with gusto in a range of activities with a variety of other children, staff and other adults. They are keen to meet children and adults from other communities and cultures. They are looking forward to a visit from children who attend a large multi-cultural school in Leeds and are keen to show them the village church, the beck with its ducks and the wildlife area in the school grounds. They are also knowledgeable about communities much further afield through, for example, their work on Fairtrade business activities related to coffee production in Nicaragua.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ attainment ¹	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	2
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	2
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	2
How well do pupils behave?	2
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	1
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	1
Pupils’ attendance	3
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2
What is the extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	2

The quality of the school’s work

The quality of teaching is good and it enables pupils to make good progress and reach above average standards. Teachers provide relevant work that is well matched to the needs of individuals and groups and secures their interest and involvement. They are able to do this because of their secure subject knowledge and good understanding of how children learn. They are supported well by the school’s assessment procedures which provide accurate information on pupils’ achievements and levels of understanding. This allows teachers to provide the right level of

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

challenge to pupils. An example of this was when older pupils were asked to explain how a poem created a sense of mystery. Teachers are keen for pupils to participate actively in lessons and contribute their ideas and suggestions. They are patient and provide time for pupils to think before providing answers to questions. Furthermore, pupils are routinely involved in assessing their own work and the progress they are making towards their challenging targets. They know what they have to do to improve and they are keen to do so.

The school provides a rich curriculum which broadens pupils' experiences, makes a very significant contribution to their personal development and emphasises enjoyment. A well planned two year cycle of work ensures that pupils in mixed-age classes cover more than the statutory requirements.

The school provides outstanding support, care and guidance for pupils, and their families, which enables them to make good progress in their learning and personal well-being. Pupils are known and supported as individuals as they move through the school and on to secondary education.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Governors, the headteacher and staff have an accurate view of the effectiveness of the school. They know its strengths and areas for further improvement as a result of their thorough monitoring and evaluation of the provision they make and outcomes for pupils. Good leadership and management have ensured that the school has maintained the above average standards and good pupil progress found at the time of the last inspection. Furthermore, good progress has been made with the areas for improvement identified by the last inspection. Attendance has improved. Pupils are familiar with and use strategies to improve their own learning consistently and effectively. The use of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills in other subjects is regular and secure. However, the school does not yet have enough information about the progress children make in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Very active, involved and well-informed governors make a good contribution to the work of the school through both their support and challenge. As governors of a small school they face difficult decisions about the deployment of resources. They take their responsibilities very seriously and take care to understand the implications of a range of courses of action. They moved swiftly to appoint a new headteacher to ensure a smooth change in the leadership of the school. They recognised the need for out-of-school hours care both to meet the needs of existing parents and to make

the school more attractive to new parents. They carried out extensive research into the feasibility of such a venture. As a result, they provide good quality care which is sufficiently flexible to meet the range of parents' needs. Pupils were relaxed, involved in a range of activities and happy to be there. Indeed one pupil thought it was one of the best things about the school. The provision forms a very effective link between home and school.

Safeguarding procedures meet current requirements and are regularly up-dated. Risk assessments are in place and the subject of regular review.

These are the grades for leadership and management

Communicating ambition and driving improvement	2
Promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination	2
Ensuring that safeguarding procedures are effective	2
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	3
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

Good provision for children of Reception age is made within a mixed-age class that includes Year 1 and Year 2 children. Cohorts vary greatly in size and are often very small. In general, the communication, language and literacy skills and the personal, social and emotional development of children when they join the school are broadly similar to those found nationally. Their skills and understanding in other areas of learning are sometimes higher. They make good progress and by the end of Reception almost all are at least ready to begin the Key Stage 1 curriculum.

Children experience a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities both inside and outside the classroom. During the inspection children from all three age groups were seen working together productively on activities that they found interesting and challenging. For example, more able younger children worked alongside older ones to find out about polar bears from books and from the internet. The children enjoy their time in Reception and develop very positive attitudes to learning.

Currently staff are working hard to develop a regular programme of assessment that leads to an ongoing and accurate view of each child's skills and understanding in each area of learning. They recognise that, as they only have the children for the last year of the Foundation Stage, they need to work more closely with pre-school providers to establish each pupil's attainment on entry more quickly and rigorously

than is currently the case. Nevertheless, on a day-to-day basis activities are well planned to match the needs of individuals and groups of children because staff have come to know individual children very well. However, unlike in other areas of the school, leaders and managers are not yet able to monitor the effectiveness of provision or use this information when analysing the fluctuations in outcomes for groups of children as they move through the school.

How good are the outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
What is the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How effectively is the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
Overall effectiveness: how well does the setting/school meet the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2

Views of parents and carers

Replies to the inspection questionnaire were received from the parents/carers of half of the pupils. Most of those who responded are very satisfied with most aspects of the school's work. One parent commented, 'The ethos of the school is warm and friendly – like an extension of a family'. However, almost half of those who responded expressed some concern about the effectiveness of the school in dealing with unacceptable behaviour from a very small number of pupils. A few parents praised the school's response to the difficulties it has faced, with one commenting on the 'dedication, sense of fairness and teaching skills' of the staff. These concerns were looked at closely during the inspection. No unacceptable behaviour was observed during the inspection but staff and governors were open about the challenges they have experienced and the advice and action they are taking to overcome these.

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 2007-8, 15% 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 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2007-8, 5% 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.



20 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bishop Monkton Church of England Primary School,
Harrogate, HG3 3QW

I want to start by saying how much I enjoyed my recent visit to your school. Thank you for your warm welcome and for sharing with me your thoughts about how good your school is. You obviously enjoy school – and I can see why! Your teachers provide such interesting lessons and are always keen to hear your opinions and points of view.

In your work you achieve above average standards and make good progress because of the good teaching and outstanding support and care that you receive. You know lots about keeping fit and healthy and I was very impressed with your ability to speak French.

You help to make your school good because you take on responsibilities like being a 'buddy' to a younger child. The school council listens to your ideas and makes important decisions about which clubs will run and which charities to support. You are also very interested in life in your village and in other communities. I know that you are looking forward to working with pupils from a school in Leeds and that you will make them very welcome when they visit.

To help your school improve further I have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to:

- share the new behaviour policy with your parents
- find out more about how well the children in Reception are doing
- help you to spell more accurately.

Please thank your parents for returning the questionnaire they received.

With very best wishes for your future

Susan Brown
Her Majesty's Inspector

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