

John Bamford Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124171
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	328070
Inspection dates	10–11 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Alison Cartlidge

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
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	368
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	Steve Elcock
Principal	Lawrence Wood
Date of previous school inspection	1 December 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Crabtree Way Etching Hill Rugeley WS15 2PA
Telephone number	01889 256160
Fax number	01889 256164

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Pupils come to this large primary school from the town of Rugeley and the surrounding area. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. The school has a below average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage is in two Nursery classes and two Reception classes. In the rest of the school, pupils are taught in classes with two year groups in each class. Almost all pupils are of White British origin.

The before-and after-school care club run by an outside provider was not part of this inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. A good curriculum contributes to their thorough enjoyment of learning and is successful in teaching them to behave well. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make a sound start to their education.

Teaching between Years 1 and 6 is satisfactory, enabling most pupils to build steadily on what they have already learnt. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and, by the end of Year 6, standards are broadly average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because they receive good support from teachers and teaching assistants to help them reach their sharply focused targets. The school has started to set more challenging targets for all pupils to ensure that their progress is less uneven across the school.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. This is evident in their good knowledge of healthy lifestyles and of how to stay safe. They develop good moral and social values and are polite and friendly. They make a good contribution to the community through the school council and by carrying out many special jobs in school and locally. For example, older pupils help the younger ones at playtime. The school prepares the pupils satisfactorily for the next stage of education and later life; pupils develop sound basic skills and become responsible and well-rounded individuals. There are good features to teaching in all classes. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils and work together well in their year teams to plan and provide fun activities that make learning interesting. However, in some lessons, teachers do not adapt these plans so that work is matched closely enough to pupils' differing needs. When this happens some pupils do less well than they should. Valuable additional activities such as clubs, visitors and visits boost the pupils' enjoyment of school and help them to learn.

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Members of staff are caring and support pupils' pastoral needs well. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Teachers carry out frequent assessments to monitor pupils' progress, although they do not always use marking and targets well enough to make their expectations clear or to show pupils how to improve. This is especially noticeable in science.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher is committed to raising standards and, together with other members of staff, ensures that pupils' well-being is a priority. Leaders know how to improve the school and recent initiatives are starting to speed up the rate of pupils' progress, demonstrating that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further, particularly in science. Subject leaders recognise that, as identified in the school's action plan, they need to monitor and evaluate provision more rigorously so that they can have an impact on progress in all year groups.

There is a good partnership between home and school. While a few parents expressed concerns over the way instances of bullying are dealt with, evidence found during the inspection suggests this is managed effectively. Most pupils say that they are satisfied with the way that members of staff support them when necessary. Most parents are pleased that their children come to this school. They make positive comments such as: 'All the staff at the school are approachable and listen and help with any issues', and 'My child enjoys going to school so much she hates it when it shuts at the weekend'. These comments reflect what the school is already doing really well.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

On entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage, the majority of children are working at the levels typically expected for this age group. Standards are broadly average by the start of Year 1, with pupils' personal development being a particular strength. Teaching is satisfactory with good features, enabling children to make at least the expected progress. Children make good progress in personal, social and emotional development because these skills are promoted especially well by all members of staff. As a result, children cooperate well, are independent and learn how to make sensible choices. Adults plan exciting activities indoors and outside. For example, children enjoyed taking part in acting out stories about bears and making porridge. However, tasks are more plentiful and challenging in the Nursery classes. In the Reception classes, the use of the outdoor area is restricted. The school has clear plans to improve accessibility.

Adults promote the welfare of children satisfactorily. They provide calm and sensitive support as needed. They frequently observe children as they work although some of these assessments do not have a clear enough focus. Enthusiastic leaders are improving provision satisfactorily and know what needs to be done next. For example, they are aware that there are too few opportunities for teaching writing. The good links with parents enable children to settle quickly. Leaders are improving procedures for assessing children when they first join the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve teaching and the rate of learning by ensuring that planning is adapted to match the needs of all pupils in each class.
- Increase the impact of marking and target setting, especially in science, so that teachers make their expectations clear and help pupils to move to the next step in their learning.
- Ensure subject leaders monitor and evaluate teaching and learning thoroughly so that leaders increase their impact on progress in all year groups.

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

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in the rest of the school, although progress is not even between classes and year groups. The school has recently improved the system for tracking pupils' progress so that dips in attainment can be identified and tackled swiftly. Standards are broadly average by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. Good support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities enables them to make good progress towards their focused targets. Consequently, they do better than other ability groups.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school and are especially impressed by their teachers and the additional activities provided in clubs and visits. Broadly average rates of attendance are not a true reflection of

how much pupils enjoy school, but are due to some parents choosing to take their children on term-time holidays. Pupils are enthusiastic about learning, concentrate well in most lessons and try hard. They are polite and help one another well on the cramped playground.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. Pupils form good relationships with each other and understand the difference between right and wrong. They contribute well to the community by taking part in fund raising events. They carry out a wide range of tasks around school conscientiously. The school council is rightly pleased with the way that it helps to improve the school. For example, pupils are helping to choose an outdoor clock for playtimes. Pupils show good concern for the needs of others. They have a good understanding of local culture and have a good sense of belonging. Their understanding of other cultures is satisfactory and improving. Pupils know how to stay safe and healthy. For example, they can explain how to stay safe when using the internet. Pupils take frequent exercise and know which foods are healthy.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers form strong relationships with their pupils and expect and achieve high standards of behaviour. They use resources, including the interactive whiteboards, well to capture and hold the pupils' attention. Skilled teaching assistants support pupils well when working with small groups, particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, there are some missed opportunities during whole-class work to increase the involvement of teaching assistants. Teachers work together well in year teams, planning interesting work. However, teachers do not always adapt these plans well enough for the specific needs of their own class, and when this happens not all pupils learn as quickly as they should. In addition, some tasks that pupils do when they are working without an adult are insufficiently challenging. Teachers give clear explanations to help pupils understand what to do. Teachers mark pupils' work frequently, although they do not always give clear guidance on how pupils can improve, especially in science.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides pupils with a wide range of relevant experiences, helping them to thoroughly enjoy learning. Teachers contribute their specific specialist skills to help plan an interesting curriculum that links subjects together well. The creative arts are promoted effectively and this is evident in the attractive and innovative artwork displayed around the school. Leaders are working together well to increase the opportunities for pupils to use their writing and information and communication technology skills in other subjects. There is good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in class and in special group activities planned to support their specific needs.

Pupils' personal development is supported well through lessons and a good range of clubs and other activities. There are many sporting activities available to help keep pupils healthy.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils say that they feel safe and happy in this friendly school. The school works well with parents and outside agencies to safeguard pupils' well-being and to support pupils who are finding life difficult. Pupils say that they know what to do if they have a worry and are right to be confident that members of staff will deal with any concerns quickly. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified quickly and are given good support to ensure that they make good progress.

Thorough assessment procedures in English and mathematics provide teachers with good information about how well pupils are doing. Pupils have clear targets to aim for, although they do not always heed them when they are working. Assessment arrangements in other subjects, including science, are less well established.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher, governors and other leaders are committed to increasing pupils' progress and understand what they should do next. The school's systems for self-evaluation are satisfactory. There are new leadership strategies in place to help improve teaching and learning. For example, leaders in each pair of year groups lead by example and support colleagues in planning the curriculum. The school is aware that subject leaders do not have a good overview of teaching and pupils' progress in all year groups and this limits their impact. Leaders use the new system for tracking pupils' progress to identify groups of pupils needing additional support and to provide intervention as needed. Less able pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit most from this arrangement.

The school's contribution towards community cohesion is satisfactory. There are satisfactory opportunities to increase pupils' knowledge about other cultures and leaders are working on forging links with culturally different schools to help pupils learn more about life in multicultural Britain and beyond.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors are supportive and knowledgeable about the school and are becoming more proactive in the evaluation process and in holding the school to account for its actions.

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
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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?	3
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	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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
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	2
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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
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**

12 February 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of John Bamford Primary School, Rugeley, WS15 2PA

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for sharing your work with us. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education.

- Here are some points about your school.
- You make satisfactory progress during your time at the school.
- You behave well and enjoy school very much.
- You take responsibility very well. The school council is doing a good job in helping to improve the school. We hope you choose an interesting clock for the playground.
- Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers work hard to make learning fun by giving you interesting things to do.
- You study a good range of topics, and enjoy interesting visits, visitors and clubs.
- The adults in the school care for you well.
- Your headteacher and other leaders know how to make your school even better.
- What we have asked your school to do now.
- Help teachers to give you work that is always pitched at the right level for you.
- Use marking and target setting, especially in science, to help you know how to do better next time.
- Help teachers who look after subjects to check that you are all learning equally well in all year groups.
- What you can do to help your teachers.
- Make sure that you take notice of your targets and the teachers' marking.

We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you about your work and watching you learn. We are glad that you enjoy coming to this happy school and wish you well for the future.

■ Yours faithfully

Alison Cartlidge

Lead inspector