

The Bardney Church of England and Methodist Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120589
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	332280
Inspection dates	4–5 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Nada Trikić HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005; 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)	96
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	Mrs Caroline Pritchard
Headteacher	Miss Helen Okrafo-Smart
Date of previous school inspection	23 May 2007
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Henry Lane Bardney Lincoln Lincolnshire LN3 5XJ

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	4–5 February 2009
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Bardney Church of England and Methodist Primary School is a small school serving the village of Bardney, and surrounding hamlets. The great majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds with very few from other ethnic groups. The number of pupils with a statement of special education need is above average. The overall proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is broadly average. The school achieved Activemark in 2008.

When the school was last inspected in May 2007, it was judged to require special measures. The headteacher retired in August 2007 and since that time the school has been led by an interim headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Bardney is a satisfactory and improving school with strengths in its Early Years and Foundation Stage provision. It is a happy place; staff and pupils provide a friendly, safe and welcoming learning environment. At the time of the last inspection, there was widespread underachievement, linked to weaknesses in teaching and leadership. Improvements in provision and leadership have led to better outcomes for pupils. Standards are now broadly average overall, and achievement satisfactory. The pattern of performance remains uneven across year groups, subjects and groups of learners reflecting the legacy of previously weak teaching. The school is taking effective steps to tackle this.

Central to the school's improvement is the rigorous system for assessment and tracking that supports greater accuracy in the monitoring of progress. It is too soon to see the full impact of this approach in reducing variation between year groups. Regular training and the moderation of work samples has increased confidence and expertise in assessing pupils' progress. Consequently, the quality of teaching and learning has improved; it is satisfactory overall, with an increasing amount that is good. Staff create the positive climate for learning evident in good relationships between pupils and adults. Although lessons engage pupils they are not always planned well enough to build on their individual learning needs.

Regular feedback about the quality of teaching and learning is provided for staff. However, it is not yet sufficiently focused on gains in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding, set against their previous learning to accelerate progress further. More able pupils are not consistently provided with work that fully challenges them, and this aspect has been identified for development by the school. The curriculum is satisfactory and improving. The introduction of cross-curricular thematic work to promote links between subjects is popular with pupils. School leaders recognise the benefit of extending this work to challenge pupils, in creating links with other parts of the country and beyond to develop their awareness and understanding of different cultures and beliefs. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong.

Pupils' personal development and well-being is satisfactory. Pupils are very enthusiastic about recent changes as shown in their good behaviour, positive attitudes to learning, improved attendance and enjoyment of school. Pupils say they feel safe in school and have the confidence to approach adults with their problems, knowing that their concerns are important to staff. Care, guidance and support is satisfactory. Pastoral care is a stronger feature. Academic guidance is satisfactory and improving but there is too much variation between classes. There are some good examples, such as in the Early Years Foundation Stage where the dedicated teaching assistant routinely discusses the teacher's comments with pupils to ensure that they respond to feedback and improve or extend their learning.

Leadership and management has improved and are now satisfactory. Good use of external support has strengthened both leadership and provision, building a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement. A good range of regular monitoring activities is now in place to support improvement, such as lesson observation, pupil progress checks, as well as planning and work scrutiny by senior staff. This enables leaders to identify very clearly where additional input is required, for example, in tackling weaknesses in writing.

The governing body benefits from stronger representation from the local community. It now provides a good level of challenge and support to the school.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The school has maintained the strength of its provision since the previous inspection. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start. Effective leadership and management show in the strong sense of purpose staff have in meeting the individual needs of children. They are happy, enjoy the lively learning environment and make good progress. Their progress is particularly good in writing and number skills. Children usually enter the school with skills typical of children nationally at four years of age, but in some years, their early counting and writing skills are more limited. The great majority reach the expected goals by the end of Reception, and a minority exceeds them. This is due to good teaching that is based on accurate and detailed individual assessments of children's progress. Accurate assessments help the adults to provide the right next steps in learning for each child. There is an effective focus on developing basic reading, writing and numeracy skills through the good teaching of letters, their sounds and number. Children's skills improve quickly with collaborative teaching being an important factor. A key to children's good progress is the way the staff mark children's work and review what has been said with individual children. They therefore have a clear idea what they are trying to achieve next. At the same time, children have the opportunity to correct mistakes and to learn why they made them.

Children's personal development is good. Children have a growing understanding of other cultures through learning about how, for example, the Chinese celebrated the start of the Year of the Ox. Children respond well to the outdoor area, which provides a full range of activities to support the different areas of learning. Parents appreciate the care and support given to their children. The provision for children's welfare is good. The planned curriculum is good and there is an adequate balance between activities directed by adults and activities chosen by children. However, not enough activities are based on children's own ideas and about what they want to learn.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the proportion of good lessons by using assessment information more consistently to provide a better match between classroom tasks and pupils individual learning needs.
- Embed assessment, tracking and intervention procedures to ensure that all pupils, and especially those with the capacity to reach the higher levels, make the best possible progress as they move through the school.
- Extend the curriculum through creative links between subjects to challenge and interest pupils, and to increase their awareness and understanding of different cultures and communities.
- Improve the quality of marking and feedback to provide pupils with sharper improvement points and regular opportunities to respond.

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

Standards in Key Stage 2 improved significantly in 2008 as shown in national test performance in English, mathematics and science. This was boosted by the improvement of boys' standards in all core subjects and the high standards reached by girls in science. Improved teaching and careful planning accelerated rates of progress during Year 6, and this covered previous gaps in learning. In contrast, the attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 declined sharply in all subjects, especially writing, partly due to staff changes and weaknesses in teaching.

Improved tracking and teaching have supported recent improvements. Regular reviews of progress now enable targets to be adjusted to build in greater challenge. Careful analysis supports planned intervention to focus more precisely on specific skills, for example, in boys' writing. The benefit of this approach can be seen in measures of progress in reading, writing and numeracy. Classroom observations confirm that pupils make satisfactory and sometimes good progress. Teaching assistants make an effective contribution to pupils' learning, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities. Confidence, skills and expertise have all improved supported by closer partnership working with class teachers. Current assessment records show that pupils' progress is accelerating especially in Years 5 and 6.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

There have been a number of improvements since the last inspection. Relationships between staff and pupils are good. Pupils' behaviour is good because they enjoy school more and there is an effective reward and sanction system. They work well together on tasks. Pupils have a satisfactory awareness and understanding of other cultures. The school does not have enough links with, for example, schools in different parts of the country or the world, so that they can understand the views and beliefs of others or know how others live.

Attendance is average and has improved notably. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles, the importance of exercise and staying safe. They participate eagerly in the school council, which makes a good contribution to the school community. The council plays a key role in appointing pupils to carry out different tasks, which gives them valuable experience about making judgements. Pupils readily take on the many responsibilities around the school, for example as playground 'buddies' and house captains. Pupils willingly support those less fortunate than themselves by taking part in charity fund raising activities for those in need. These activities effectively promote pupils' sense of belonging to the broader community. Pupils' acquisition of key literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills prepares them soundly for their future education. Recent activities such as Industry Week give pupils a greater insight in to the world of business.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Pupils respond positively in lessons, enjoy collaborative working, and support each other well. The improved learning environment provides additional support for learning. The 'working wall' is a helpful point of reference to refresh learning from previous lessons. Lessons have a clear structure and teachers use a good range of learning resources and activities. Security in the

use of assessment is raising expectations and leading to a stronger emphasis on the learning needs of individuals and groups. Lesson planning is improving but does not always take sufficient account of pupils' previous learning to ensure that time is well used to accelerate progress.

In the most effective lessons, expectations are very high and pupils are challenged by activities to stimulate their interest and to make them think. Questions are used effectively to probe and assess understanding, and to move pupils on. Many pupils talk confidently to their partners about their learning, and to share ideas.

The role of teaching assistants has strengthened considerably since the previous inspection. The planning of intervention programmes now provides teaching assistants with a clear structure for delivery. Regular discussion with class teachers is helping to check pupil progress and to inform adjustments and next steps.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with a number of good features that contribute positively to pupils' enjoyment and personal development. The curriculum makes satisfactory provision for developing pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. This is supported by the provision of guided reading in all classes, and an emphasis on improving writing skills across all subjects. School leaders recognise the need to strengthen consistency in the delivery of these skill areas to enable pupils to progress at a good rate in all classes. The use of extended projects is proving to be a successful strategy for developing the writing skills of boys.

The inclusion of cross-curricular thematic work to promote links between subjects continues to strengthen the curriculum. The recent focus on the Chinese New Year was greeted with great enthusiasm. The school is keen to develop a more integrated and imaginative approach to curriculum planning, to extend pupils' learning opportunities. Leaders recognise the need to incorporate planned opportunities to develop spiritual and cultural awareness, and of pupils' understanding and appreciation of diversity within the local area, the UK and the wider world.

The inclusion of specialist teaching in music, physical education, drama, French and Spanish enhances the curriculum. A number of popular enrichment activities are in place to extend experiences. These include visits and visitors to bring relevance to learning, a variety of sporting, ICT, recorder and art clubs, and a growing number of community events.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The day to day care and encouraging attitudes of staff are strengths. There are satisfactory links with outside agencies that enable the school to meet the needs of pupils. The support given to pupils who find learning hard allows them to make steady progress. The degree to which pupils know their individual targets and how to make further progress varies from exemplary in Reception, Year 1, Year 5 and Year 6 to more limited knowledge in Years 2, 3 and 4. Adults mark pupils' work, but there is wide variation between classes. At best, pupils know how well they have done and what their next target is, while at times some work is not marked. The good practice observed in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not routinely shared to strengthen consistency.

The school has a strengthened system for tracking pupils' progress from Reception to Year 6. The system allows teachers to set end of year targets more accurately, but is not fully embedded as a useful tool in all classes.

Procedures for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements. Attendance has risen due to the school's good efforts to encourage and reward those who attend regularly. The school continues to be successful in reducing the number of pupils taking term time holidays. The provision for pupils' personal and social education has improved. Staff give pupils more time to consider their feelings and those of others. This approach allows pupils to enjoy their education more and understand the feelings of others.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The interim headteacher, senior team, staff and governors have shown great determination to tackle the weaknesses highlighted at the time of the last inspection. Although this has presented challenges through staff changes and absence, the school team has emerged as a stronger unit committed to learn, engage in training and to share practice. Confidence is growing in the school within the local community and feedback from parents is supportive and encouraging.

Subject leaders continue to develop confidence and expertise in carrying out a range of assessment, monitoring and evaluation activities including test analysis to identify gaps in learning. Improved progress checking allows them to review their planning, and to deploy teaching assistants more effectively and flexibly on the basis of emerging need. Staff expect to be held to account for the progress of their pupils. Well-planned review meetings focus on pupils not making the progress expected to identify specific learning needs. Leaders recognise the importance of monitoring to support consistency across classes, and the need to develop a coaching approach, to embed specific teaching and learning techniques, and to utilise expertise and strengths from across the teaching staff.

Governors are regular visitors to the school through 'buddy' links with each year group and subject leaders. This is providing valuable, first hand evidence of the school's work. Governors prioritised the development of local community links as the first part of their community cohesion strategy. This is successfully drawing the school and community together.

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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?	3
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?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
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?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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?	3
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?	3
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	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**

6 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Bardney Church of England and Methodist Primary School Bardney LN3 5XJ

Thank you for all your help during our recent visit to your school. We really enjoyed talking to you and seeing you at work. You made us feel very welcome and told us that you felt very safe and happy in school. Staff know you very well and you appreciate the care and support they give you.

As you know, your school was found to require special measures in May 2007 because, at that time, it was not providing you with a good enough education. I have visited your school on five occasions and have seen how hard everyone has worked to improve the school. I have noticed that you enjoy your work more and have a variety of activities in your lessons to keep you interested. You especially enjoy special events such as the Chinese New Year where you can learn in different ways. Ms Okrafo-Smart and all the other staff have been working closely together to check on your progress and help you to improve. Attendance has improved and I have been impressed with your good behaviour. You help each other very well in lessons, which is good to see. The school council does a great job by helping in the smooth running of the school.

It is now time to congratulate everyone at Bardney, as the school no longer requires special measures. Bardney is a satisfactory and improving school. Children who join when they are 4 years old get off to a good start. The governors and staff know that the school can be even more successful. We suggested four things to help.

- To plan lesson activities carefully so that they help you to make good progress.
- To increase comments on your work so that you know how to improve, and have time and support to do so.
- To check on your progress so that you can get extra help if you fall behind, and be challenged to do your very best.
- To have more special learning events such as the Chinese New Year, and to make links with schools in other parts of the country and abroad.

You can play your part by continuing to work hard, and trying your very best to come to school every day.

I wish you all every success in the future.

Nada Trikic

Her Majesty's Inspector