

Bowburn Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114087
Local Authority	Durham
Inspection number	338294
Inspection dates	21–22 April 2010
Reporting inspector	Ann Wallis

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	165
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr R Walsh
Headteacher	Mrs L Lyons
Date of previous school inspection	13 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited twelve lessons and saw seven teachers teach. They held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and groups of pupils and spoke with the School Improvement Partner. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, the school improvement plan, pupils' progress data and other documentation. They analysed 51 questionnaires from parents and carers, 100 from pupils and seven from staff.

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

- the progress of current Year 6 pupils, particularly boys, especially in English and science
- pupils' understanding of how to stay safe and healthy, their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development and the curriculum they follow and whether these are strengths of the school
- leadership and management at all levels and whether it is good enough to bring about improvement.

Information about the school

This is a below average sized school which serves a former mining village in County Durham. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for a free school meal is above average. Most pupils are of White British heritage and few are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. A well above average proportion of pupils has special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has gained the Sportsmark, Healthy Schools and International School awards.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Bowburn Junior School is a good school. Pupils feel extremely safe because they are cared for well. The school's promotion of equal opportunities is outstanding and is central to its work. The skills and talents of all pupils are highly valued and all groups of pupils work, play and achieve well together. Pupils are very well informed about how to stay healthy and relish the many opportunities they have to take part in all kinds of sport. Pupils behave well, understand it is important to look smart and to respect each other and their teachers.

The school has made good progress since its last inspection. Standards in English and mathematics have risen. Attainment is now above average and pupils make good progress. Currently, Year 6 pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science and the gap between boys' and girls' attainment has now closed, so all groups of pupils are achieving well. Leaders and managers evaluate the school's work well, and have identified suitable areas for improvement and have a clear plan of how to achieve these targets. Based on this good track record of improvement and the school's good leadership and management, the school has good capacity to improve further.

Teaching is good overall with strengths in the way in which teachers set pupils clear objectives and check on learning carefully to ensure that they achieve them. The school has identified the need to improve lessons further by eliminating the satisfactory teaching and ensuring that more lessons are outstanding. In less successful lessons, teachers talk for too long and the pace of learning is slower.

Attendance is average because, despite the school's best efforts, there remains a core of pupils whose attendance is persistently low. This is partly due to them missing school by taking holidays in term time, which impacts negatively on their learning.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching even further, by:
 - reducing the amount of 'teacher talk', enabling pupils to become even more active in their learning
 - ensuring that the pace of learning is quick enough in all lessons
 - sharing the good practice evident in teaching across the school.
- Improve attendance and reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent by continuing to work with parents and carers to help them take responsibility for ensuring their children attend school regularly.

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Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils achieve well. They make good progress in lessons. They respond well to the good teaching they receive and most are keen to learn, want to answer questions and work hard. Work in pupils' books, discussions with them about their work and displays on classroom walls all confirm the good progress that all groups of pupils make. Despite a dip in 2009, when results in English and science were lower than in previous years, pupils have reached above average standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 over the last three years. Detailed school tracking data confirms that the current Year 6 pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language, are on track to reach their challenging targets this year.

Pupils' basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) are developed well. They also work well in groups and teams and share ideas and information sensibly. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for their future lives. They are keen to take responsibility and have raised large amounts of money both for charities and to equip the school with electronic 'brain trainers' to help to develop pupils' sharpness in answering questions and solving problems. Attendance remains average, although the school makes strenuous efforts to encourage parents and carers to ensure that their children attend school regularly.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2 3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The vast majority of teaching is good. Teachers and teaching assistants plan lessons carefully and make good use of assessment data to ensure that the work is closely matched to pupils' needs. Good use is made of ICT to present a range of attractive resources which engage the interest of pupils, particularly boys. Despite many strengths, some lessons lose pace when pupils listen for too long and have too few opportunities to be actively involved in their learning.

The curriculum is well matched to pupils' needs. Thematic work, such as 'our child in the community', where subjects are linked together, allows pupils to develop their skills well and adds to their enjoyment of learning. Pupils also enjoy the very wide range of extra-curricular activities that are on offer. Participation in sport is high and the school is rightly proud of the recognition it has gained as 'Durham County Primary School of the Year' for an outstanding contribution to school sport.

Pupils speak highly of the good care their school gives them. They are totally confident that any worries they may have will be listened to and dealt with. Good transition arrangements ensure that pupils move seamlessly from the infant school into Year 3. Pupils who are vulnerable are particularly well supported both by the school and by a range of specialist agencies with which the school works in close partnership.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2 2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior leaders, well supported by governors and all staff ensure that there is a common vision for, and a clear sense of purpose at, Bowburn Junior School. Teaching and learning are monitored effectively, but as yet the exchange of the best teaching techniques, skills and ideas has not been shared sufficiently widely. Governors know the school well and are supportive and challenging in equal measure. Safeguarding procedures are robust and meet requirements. Staff are well trained and

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knowledgeable about all aspects of child protection and risk assessment.

The school promotes community cohesion well both in the local area and further afield, through links with schools overseas and visits to other countries. The school's work to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities and that no-one is discriminated against are excellent. The benefits of close links with the local Muslim community have been recognised by community leaders and help to ensure all groups of pupils understand and respect each other. The school has also worked hard to close the gap between the achievement of boys and girls so that in the current Year 6 all are achieving equally well.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

A large majority of parents and carers are very supportive of the school and pleased with the education their children receive. They speak particularly highly of the support and encouragement staff give to their children. Inspectors entirely agree with these views. A small minority of parents and carers have concerns that the school does not keep them sufficiently well informed about their children's progress and about the way in which the school deals with incidents of poor behaviour. Inspectors found behaviour to be well managed and the school's communication with parents and carers to be good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bowburn Junior School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 51 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 165 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	21	41	28	55	0	0	2	4
The school keeps my child safe	27	53	24	47	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	13	25	33	65	3	6	2	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	27	31	61	3	6	2	4
The teaching is good at this school	15	29	30	59	2	4	2	4
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	25	29	57	9	18	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	29	31	61	4	8	1	2
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	12	24	34	67	4	8	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	31	28	55	6	12	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	29	26	51	9	18	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	25	32	63	6	12	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	18	35	23	45	6	12	2	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	17	33	25	49	6	12	1	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
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.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



23 April 2010

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Bowburn Junior School, Durham, DH6 5DZ

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school last week. We particularly enjoyed talking with you and hearing about all the things you enjoy at school.

These are some of the important things we have said about your school in our report:

- yours is a good school where you make good progress, achieve well and reach above average standards
- you are well taught, follow an interesting curriculum and are very well cared for by all the staff at your school
- your school is well led and managed
- you behave well, work hard and have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and healthy.

This is what we have asked your school to do now:

- make lessons even more interesting by ensuring you work at a fast pace and spend more time doing things for yourselves, as well as listening to your teacher
- work with your parents and carers to make sure you all attend school regularly so you do not miss out on important lessons and get behind with your learning.

You can help your school become even better by continuing to behave well, look after each other, come to school regularly and work with your teachers to achieve the very best you can.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Ann Wallis

Lead Inspector

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