

Barrowcliff Nursery and Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121314
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	339917
Inspection dates	29–30 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Robert Jones

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	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	174
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Graeme Parkins
Headteacher	Mr Mark Rogers
Date of previous school inspection	28 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited eight lessons, observed seven teachers or teaching assistants and held meetings with a governor, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including policies, the school improvement plan, records of pupils' progress and child protection records. The inspection team received and analysed 13 questionnaires from parents and carers, as well as a number of questionnaires completed by staff.

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

- how effectively the school promotes regular attendance
- the progress pupils make, particularly in reading
- the rigour of systems that are in place to improve the quality of teaching and to track pupils' progress
- how well children in the Early Years Foundation Stage develop personal, social, emotional skills alongside their communication, language and literacy skills.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average Nursery and Infant school. The proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal is considerably above the national average. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and very few speak English as an additional language. More pupils than average have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school holds various awards, including the Healthy Schools Award, the Dyslexia Quality Mark, the North Yorkshire Inclusion Quality Mark and the Activemark.

The school is due to be federated with the neighbouring Junior school in September 2010.

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

This is a good school which is improving steadily in various areas. Pupils' enjoyment of school is summed up in comments, such as, 'I really like all the school trips and interesting things we do'. A key feature of the school is the friendly, welcoming atmosphere, which is underpinned by excellent relationships between children and between adults and pupils. There are outstanding opportunities for pupils to make valuable contributions, such as gardening in the community, and many grasp these with enthusiasm.

Although this is a very caring school, the headteacher has rightly established an ethos where academic expectations are equally high. Although there was a slight dip in reading standards in 2009, they have been steadily rising overall for the past three years. Pupils now leave the school with similar standards to those found nationally, having made good progress since the beginning of Year 1. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes thrive due to the very close attention to their needs whilst also being encouraged to become independent. Until recently, the school was making good progress in improving attendance. However, attendance rates have declined and are now low. Despite this, good care, guidance and support ensure that those pupils with low attendance receive the help they need, which results in none of them underachieving.

Teachers are developing their use of data to plan interesting and varied activities that are appropriate to the different abilities. This is ensuring most pupils make good progress as well as having a lot of fun learning. There is, however, scope to improve the sharpness of how teachers and school leaders work together to set challenging targets for all pupils. Similarly, the recording of the progress children make in the Early Years Foundation Stage is over complex and lacks sharpness.

Self-evaluation is incisive, undertaken by all school leaders and leads to swift action to remedy most areas of weakness. For example, as a result of a dip in pupils' reading standards, the school analysed the reasons for it, concluding that although pupils were reading fluently, there were gaps in their comprehension. New systems for assessment, training for staff and updated resources have now remedied the problem. Since the last inspection, teaching has improved considerably, which has directly resulted in improved progress and rising standards. This demonstrates well the school's good capacity to sustain its improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attendance so that it is at least average by April 2011.

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- Increase the rigour with which pupils' progress is tracked, by:
 - ensuring challenging targets for all pupils are set by teachers and school leaders
 - improving and simplifying the methods used to track the development of children's skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

All teachers have established an environment where appreciation of the contributions of individuals, mutual respect and understanding are very much the order of the day. A key success of the school has been in developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. As soon as pupils arrive in the morning, teachers display interesting images with questions listed around them. These instantly create a buzz of activity as parents, pupils and teachers all discuss them. This focus on speaking has resulted in not only improved standards, but also in the excellent way pupils relate to each other and to adults. Teachers go out of their way to make learning fun, stimulating and active for pupils, who respond with good and sometimes outstanding behaviour. Those pupils who have complex special educational needs and/or disabilities show good literacy skills, due to the early emphasis the school places on the development of reading. Pupils begin in Year 1 with standards that are below national averages in all areas of learning, but as a result of imaginative teaching, which captures pupils' interests so well, they make good progress overall.

Pupils show a good understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles. For example, very young pupils can sort plastic food into 'healthy' and 'not so healthy' as part of a numeracy exercise. Pupils say how safe they feel in school and from bullying and how adults 'are very kind' if a caring ear is needed. Pupils' well-developed reasoning and speaking skills equips them with the abilities to work very effectively in teams, solving problems and resolving disputes amicably. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop a good awareness of other cultures, including, for example, sampling different food and taking part in Brazilian football. This means that their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The majority of teaching provides pupils with varied, fun activities that stimulate pupils' curiosity and motivate them well. This is securing good and sometimes outstanding progress overall. In one outstanding lesson, pupils learned about division through varied activities which included a shop, sandpits and the interactive whiteboard. The excitement that this generated led to pupils enjoying their learning and making outstanding progress. On occasions in lessons, tasks are a little repetitive which means that pupils make satisfactory rather than good progress. Teachers skilfully question pupils so that they answer in full sentences. This significantly enhances pupils' speaking and reasoning skills. Pupils assess their own and each others' work using, '2 stars and a wish,' which helps them understand what they need to do to improve.

The rich, vibrant curriculum is much enhanced by visits and extra-curricular activities. One pupil commented that: 'I loved going to visit the Victorian museum'. Many pupils from different backgrounds sing in the choir, an experience that is enriching their musical and social development. The school has thoughtfully ensured that boys are motivated to read and write by choosing topics that interest them. During the inspection, for example, one boy was enthusiastically talking about a recent book he had read on prehistoric flying reptiles. The emphasis on developing speaking and listening in the curriculum is highly effective in improving rates of literacy, but also improves pupils' self-esteem and confidence. However, during reading lessons, there are occasional missed opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills.

Vulnerable pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported to ensure they develop well socially, emotionally and academically. As a

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result, they make good progress. At the end of Year 2, effective transition arrangements with the neighbouring Junior school ensure pupils settle quickly into their new surroundings. The school monitors closely those pupils who have low attendance and provides catch-up work for them. A range of courses is available to support pupils who have difficulties with reading, writing and mathematics. The improved tracking systems and effective links with outside agencies, ensure that those pupils who need extra support are quickly identified and that measures are swiftly put into place to provide this

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	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 assistant headteacher ensure the caring ethos of the school and that all the staff are focused on pupils' academic development. The dedicated staff are fiercely supportive of the school, being committed to ensuring pupils do as well as they can. This harmonious working environment means that staff share their good practice and are not afraid to experiment with new techniques and technologies.

The tracking of pupils' progress has recently improved. Teachers analyse the progress that pupils make from their starting points, however, the system is still being refined and occasionally lacks rigour. The regular monitoring of teaching and subsequent actions, have led to its quality improving. For example, the literacy leader's monitoring of reading has been instrumental in establishing a new focus for assessing pupils' comprehension skills, which in turn has led directly to much improved attainment.

Arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements. Equal opportunities are promoted well, with any difference in standards between boys and girls carefully analysed so that they achieve equally well. Any rare instances of discrimination are tackled decisively. The school promotes community cohesion well. It is particularly strong in linking with the local community, with projects such as singing in the community, and environmental projects. A link with a school in Uganda has enhanced pupils' awareness cultures other than their own. Governors are committed to the school and are a regular presence. However, they have limited understanding of academic standards in the school and the main priorities for development, so are not best placed to challenge the school leadership on such matters. The school works well with parents and carers, many of whom support the school through becoming helpers. Turnout at parents' evenings is very high and parents and carers have excellent relationships with their children's teachers.

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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	3
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children generally start in the Nursery with skills well below those found nationally, particularly in the areas of personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy. They make good progress but still enter Year 1 with knowledge and understanding that is lower than that expected for their age. Children participate in interesting and engaging activities where they learn through play and having fun. The innovative deployment of staff and use of learning areas give immense benefits to children. This means they settle quickly, develop secure relationships with each other and with adults. The outdoor area is well equipped and complements well that indoors. There is a great deal of emphasis on developing children's independence, for example, by encouraging them to register themselves and choosing their own fruit. The school places the welfare of children as the highest priority, and the area is safe and secure but also very welcoming. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has engendered a strong team spirit. She is well aware of the strengths of the unit and priorities for its development. Excellent relationships have been established with parents, who are magnanimous in their praise of staff. The systems to monitor children's progress are too complex. This means it is difficult at present to clearly see how well children are progressing in all the areas of learning.

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

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are supportive of the school's work. Many of their comments focused on the friendly and welcoming nature of the school and how well the school involves them as partners in their children's education. The inspection findings confirm the very positive responses from parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Barrowcliff Nursery and Infant 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 13 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 174 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	12	92	1	8	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	11	85	2	15	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	11	85	2	15	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	11	85	2	15	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	11	85	2	15	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	11	85	2	15	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	11	85	2	15	0	0	0	0
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)	11	85	1	8	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	12	92	1	8	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	11	85	2	15	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	85	2	15	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	11	85	2	15	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	11	85	2	15	0	0	0	0

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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.



31 March 2010

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Barrowcliff Nursery and Infant School, Scarborough, YO12 6NQ

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the other inspectors and me when we visited your school. We really liked hearing about all the interesting things you do in school. This letter is to tell you what we found out.

You go to a good school, but some things are outstanding (that's another 'wow' word meaning really, really good). You told us how safe you feel in school, how kind the adults are in school and how the school helps you to stay healthy. Lots of you act as helpers, either in the playground or in the classroom, and this is helping you to grow up into thoughtful young people. Teachers make lessons very interesting for you and we saw this in how well you behave and work in lessons.

I have asked your headteacher to do these things to make your school even better:

- make sure you all attend school regularly
- improve the paperwork that goes with making sure that you all do well in your work.

You can help by attending school as often as you can and being the delightful children you are today.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Robert Jones

Lead inspector

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