

North Road Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109025
Local Authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	288256
Inspection date	19 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Lorna Brackstone

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	101
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Margaret Marshall
Headteacher	Mark Handley
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2001
School address	North Road Yate Bristol BS37 7LQ
Telephone number	01454 867788
Fax number	01454 867788

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This small school serves a mixed socio-economic area where most pupils come from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below the national average. There are four classes, three of which have mixed age groups. The numbers in each year group are small. Attainment on entry into Reception varies considerably from year to year but is currently below the expected level and much lower than it has been in previous years. This is because a significant minority of children start school with communication, language and literacy skills that are below expectations for this age group. The headteacher has been in post for just under two years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

North Road Community Primary provides a satisfactory quality of education and is improving. After a dip in the achievement of the Year 6 pupils in 2006, current Year 6 pupils have made satisfactory progress and achieved above average standards.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Teaching is good when lessons are well organised and practical and where resources are used to good effect. However, not all teachers make it clear what they want the pupils to learn. The pace of lessons is inconsistent and, when it is slow, some pupils disengage from their learning. The curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils are motivated by the good range of enrichment activities which one parent described as 'impressive'. However, some of the day-to-day curriculum activities in class fail to enthuse all of the pupils. Although many parents consider that their children are 'happy and comfortable within their school environment', not all pupils enjoy learning and a small number are negative about aspects of school life.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, is satisfactory. Although pupils often behave well, there are a few occasions when they struggle to maintain a positive attitude. They eagerly take on responsibilities, such as acting as peer mediators and school councillors, but a significant minority feel that there are not enough opportunities for them to share their views and concerns with staff. The overall care, guidance and support that pupils receive are satisfactory. The pastoral support the pupils receive is sound but some parents and pupils are concerned about the inconsistencies in the way behaviour is managed. Targets for literacy and numeracy are helpful to pupils in giving general guidance on how they can improve their work. However, when their books are marked, the teachers do not consistently give the pupils specific guidance on how they might reach the next step of their learning.

The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are good and parents are impressed by its 'friendly atmosphere and the way it is extremely well run'. The Reception children are well taught and enjoy an interesting curriculum. The school works satisfactorily in partnership with others to promote the learners' well-being. For example, links with the local university's Faculty of Education ensure that pupils benefit from additional help in the classroom.

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. Initiatives to check pupils' progress and monitor teaching and learning have been successful in improving achievement. The senior managers have an overview of what is happening in classrooms but there is not a sufficient focus on ensuring consistency across the school and improving key areas such as academic guidance. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and generally shows a sound awareness of strengths and areas for development. A more balanced approach to the curriculum to include subjects other than English and mathematics is an improvement since the last inspection. There is satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- make sure that teachers share learning intentions with their pupils to involve them fully in lessons and provide guidance on how they can improve their work
- ensure that all lessons move at a good pace and engage all pupils
- ensure that behaviour management is consistent and that all pupils feel part of the whole school community.

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 the next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage and most of the current children are on course to achieve the expected level by the time they are ready to start Year 1. This is because the teaching is good and the curriculum encourages the development of all areas of learning. Current standards across the curriculum in Year 2 are broadly average and reflect satisfactory progress. Current standards in Year 6 are above average, with pupils having achieved satisfactorily from their above average attainment in Year 2. This represents a good improvement from last year, where standards were below average because boys underachieved. Effective action has been taken to ensure that this does not happen again. Pupils' progress is now being tracked and the curriculum has been developed to ensure that activities that interest boys are included. Pupils make satisfactory progress through Years 1 to 6. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make satisfactory progress because they receive sound support from teaching assistants.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Children in Reception settle quickly into school routines and their personal, social and emotional skills develop well. The recent steps taken to reduce holidays in term time have had a positive effect on attendance and it is now good. Whilst behaviour is satisfactory, not all pupils and parents feel that certain behavioural issues are dealt with fairly. There is discontentment amongst some older pupils who feel that lunchtime playground problems are not always addressed fully by the adults on duty. Not all pupils enjoy school because they find lessons uninteresting and some feel that boys are not treated as well as girls. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of eating healthily, keeping fit and most pupils adopt safe practices. Involvement with schools in Sicily and Poland helps pupils to appreciate how people's lives may differ. Through participation of events in Yate, such as gardening competitions and choral festivals, pupils contribute well to their local community. Pupils are confident in their use of basic key skills and this, together with their experience of organising sales to raise money for charities, ensures that they are well prepared for future economic well-being. Whilst the school council meets regularly and opportunities are provided for pupils to share concerns in class, not all pupils are confident that their views and opinions are valued.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning in Reception are good because the teacher has a very secure knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children. In Years 1 to 6, teachers' subject knowledge is secure and their explanations are generally clear. Teaching is most successful when the pupils are actively involved in their learning through good use of resources such as interactive whiteboards. However, learning opportunities are missed because teachers do not always make it clear what they intend the pupils to learn and do not fully engage them in the planned

activities. On occasions, the pace of lessons slows down and pupils drift off task. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities learn satisfactorily because suitable activities are planned to meet their specific needs.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Reception children experience a well-balanced range of activities in an exciting environment, which helps them to make good progress in all areas of learning. The school acknowledges that there is a need for further development of the outdoor area in order to provide more opportunities for learning. In Years 1 to 6, the curriculum is broad, and satisfactory links between literacy, numeracy and other subjects have been recently introduced. The school is introducing more activities which captivate the interest of the boys. For example, boys are encouraged to write for a specific purpose such as compiling weather reports and there are more practical mathematics sessions. However, these are not yet sufficiently well developed to fully engage all individuals and some pupils still feel that there is a lack of excitement to the content of some lessons. The curriculum is well enriched by visitors and a good range of trips out of school, including residential visits.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The Reception children are supported well in the playground by the older pupils. Procedures to ensure that pupils are kept safe and secure, including those relating to child protection, are fully in place and staff are familiar with them. A small number of pupils explained that they did not feel safe in school because their concerns are not always immediately acted upon. Pupils' academic progress is monitored carefully and the information is used to identify those needing additional support and set targets. However, although pupils have targets for literacy and numeracy, when teachers mark their work they do not provide specific guidance on how they are doing in relation to their targets. Sound support and guidance is provided for pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities. The school works closely with a range of outside agencies to ensure pupils always receive appropriate help. As one parent explained, 'Staff have taken on board suggestions from professionals and work together as a team'. This ensures that these pupils are all fully involved in the life of the school. However, the targets in their individual education plans are not always phrased in child-friendly language.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has successfully introduced regular use of data to check on pupils' performance and progress. This has enabled teachers to put strategies into place to boost pupils' achievement and ensure that individuals do not fall behind. Recently- introduced arrangements to monitor the quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory and are resulting in an improved understanding of the areas needing to be developed. The range of activities that subject leaders are involved in enables them to develop a clear understanding of achievement, standards and the quality of provision across the whole school. However, some weaknesses are yet to be tackled, such as the inconsistencies in the academic support given to pupils. The governing body fulfils its duties satisfactorily. Governors are fully informed about all aspects of school

life and are supportive. They are beginning to challenge the school and become more involved in future planning.

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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the 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

¹ Grade 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.

Annex A

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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Dear Pupils

Inspection of North Road Community Primary School, Yate, BS37 7LQ

Thank you for making us welcome at your school and for talking to us so willingly. It was interesting joining you in your lessons and we particularly enjoyed chatting to the group of pupils from Years 5 and 6.

We think your school is doing a satisfactory job in helping you to learn and staff are working hard to make it even better.

Here are some good things that we found out:

- children in Reception are provided with a good education
- your attendance has improved recently and is now good
- you understand the importance of keeping healthy and fit.

We have asked your headteacher and governors to improve things by making sure that:

- teachers make clear what you are learning and help you to get better at your work
- all lessons move at a good pace and include activities that you are all involved in
- everybody is expected to follow the same rules and you have opportunities to express your concerns and feel confident that your views are valued.

We know that you will play your part in making the school a better place for learning.

Lorna Brackstone and Christopher Shaw The Inspectors