

Bakewell CofE Infant School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 112797 |
| Local Authority | DERBYSHIRE LA |
| Inspection number | 311009 |
| Inspection date | 19 November 2007 |
| Reporting inspector | Joanne Harvey |

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

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| Type of school | Infant |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 4-7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 72 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mrs Kath Naylor |
| Headteacher | Mrs Patricia Outram |
| Date of previous school inspection | 7 July 2004 |
| School address | Bath Street Bakewell Derbyshire DE45 1BX |
| Telephone number | 01629812322 |
| Fax number | 01629812322 |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: whether all pupils achieve as well as they can in all subjects, whether teaching is equally effective throughout school, what has been the impact of leadership and management since the previous inspection and the accuracy of self-evaluation. Evidence was collected from discussions with the headteacher, senior staff and governor representatives. In addition, there was observation of parts of several lessons, scrutiny of school information and its self-evaluation, samples of pupils' work, parent questionnaires, and discussions with pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified. Where appropriate, these have been included in this report.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average size school serving the town of Bakewell and surrounding Derbyshire villages. An average number of pupils are entitled to claim free school meals. A very small minority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and almost all the pupils speak English as their first or main language. Fewer pupils than in most schools have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, although more than average have a statement of special educational need. The school has a Basic Skills Award, a Gold Artsmark Award, a Silver Eco Schools Award and an intermediate Anti-Bullying Commitment Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstandingly effective school, which provides excellent value for money. Standards are high, often exceptionally so, and pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make extremely good progress through the school. Its arrangements for children in the Reception class are good.

The school's success arises from the clear vision and direction given by the headteacher to a remarkably energetic, caring and committed staff. Everyone works extremely hard as a team, in partnership with governors and with the community to achieve their vision: 'Working in Partnership, Building Better, Building Brighter'. This produces a very nurturing, lively and challenging environment, so pupils become very well rounded individuals. As a result, all pupils achieve outstandingly well academically and personally. It is not surprising that parents are highly appreciative of the school. One wrote, 'You would have to travel a long long way to find a school better than this one, but if you claimed you had found one, wild horses wouldn't drag us away from Bakewell Infant School'. This comment represents the views of many. Pupils echo it, saying, 'School is exciting. The teachers do interesting things in ways that help you remember them well'. This tremendous enjoyment is also reflected in the high level of attendance.

Pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding and reflects the school's Christian ethos well. Behaviour is exemplary, so not a moment is lost maintaining discipline. Pupils are encouraged to express their opinions and to accept responsibilities as often as possible, so they grow in confidence. They demonstrate a good understanding of how to keep themselves and each other safe. They love to be active and have a good understanding of how to make healthy lifestyle choices. The combination of very good literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology skills and highly developed personal skills equips pupils exceptionally well for the next stage of education and adult life. The extremely good pastoral care offered, includes systems for ensuring the health, safety and welfare of pupils and safeguarding procedures that comply with requirements. Systems to provide academic guidance are not yet quite as strong. Some pupils do not know their learning targets well enough and do not receive enough opportunities to evaluate their own work.

Pupils have benefited from effective teaching for some time. There have been significant staffing changes recently and new appointments. However, the headteacher has expertly nurtured and developed new teachers and teaching assistants to ensure that teaching and learning continue to be good with some very good features. Teachers inspire pupils with their high levels of energy and enthusiasm and ability to make learning fun. Lessons are planned, based on careful assessment, to take pupils' learning forward from whatever level each individual has reached previously. Occasionally, teachers do not make it clear enough to pupils what they are expected to learn. Similarly marking does not always explain to pupils how to improve. Those who find learning more difficult get excellent support from able teaching assistants and achieve extremely well.

The outstanding curriculum ensures learning is active with lots of practical activities such as science experiments or 'design and build' projects. Visits out, visitors to school, and themed days and weeks all add interest, enjoyment and lasting memories. One parent wrote, 'There always seems to be something extra happening at school. The staff go to tremendous efforts to cover topics in interesting ways. I wish I could join in sometimes.' Pupils enjoy exploring

themes through the visual arts or historical events. These give them many opportunities to practise their basic skills and help them to achieve very high standards. Pupils enjoy an impressive range of activities in lunchtime and after school clubs that go beyond the required subjects. A high degree of staff commitment ensures that pupils both benefit from and contribute well to the surrounding community.

The headteacher took over an already effective school. She wasted no time in identifying and embracing existing strengths, while recognising and tackling areas for further improvement. Systematic procedures to check accurately how well the school is doing are used constantly. Consequently, there is a clear vision and strategic direction and the school has continued to go from strength to strength. Governors are supportive and offer challenge though many are new to their role. Similarly, many staff are new and leadership has therefore not yet been fully devolved. Some curriculum leaders have not yet had time to demonstrate their full impact on school improvement. However, expectations are high and challenging targets are set and achieved. Consequently, achievement and standards are outstanding. Pupils make very good progress from broadly average starting points to achieve well above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave the school. For some, achievement is exceptionally good.

Issues from the previous inspection have been addressed successfully, and an excellent capacity to continue to improve is evident.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children do well in the Foundation Stage. They settle quickly into this happy and stimulating environment. This is because of the good support and knowledge of staff, who make children and their families feel highly valued. Children are secure, confident and ready to learn. They enter with the level of skills broadly expected for their age. They thrive and make good progress in all areas. Individualised learning programmes are based on careful assessment, which contributes to good teaching and strong support from teaching assistants. Consequently, by the time children enter Year 1, they achieve the goals expected of them and many surpass them. There are plans for work to improve access to the attractive outdoor area. This is because at present, the quality of the curriculum offered to children outdoors, though satisfactory, does not match the good quality that children experience inside.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all pupils are even clearer about what they need to learn, the targets they need to aim for and how to check on their own success.
- Devolve leadership and management fully, so everyone can extend their contribution to quickening the pace of school improvement.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

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| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 1 |
| 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? | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 1 |

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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|---|---|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 1 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 2 |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 1 |
| The attendance of learners | 1 |
| The behaviour of learners | 1 |
| 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 | 1 |

The quality of provision

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|--|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs? | 2 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 1 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 2 |

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

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| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 2 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 2 |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 1 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 1 |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money | 1 |
| 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 |

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

20 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bakewell CofE Infant School, Bakewell, DE45 1BX

Thank you for making me so welcome when I came to inspect your school recently. This letter is to tell you what I thought about your school and how it could be even better.

I think you are lucky to go to such an outstanding school. You told me that teachers make learning fun and that you do exciting things in lessons. I saw some of this myself when looking around the school. You also told me that behaviour is excellent and that everyone gets on together very well. This was certainly the impression I got as I saw you working hard in classes, having lunch together quietly and sensibly and playing outside. You make excellent progress in your learning because the staff look after you so well. You also have adults to go to if you ever get worried and upset.

To make the school even better I have asked that teachers always make it clear to you what it is they want you to learn and that you know the targets you are aiming for. Also that you get even more chances to check on your own work to see for yourselves how successful you have been.

I have asked your headteacher to share the leadership of the school more fully so that everyone can play their full part in helping to make further improvements as quickly as possible.

I am sure your headteacher and the other staff will continue to work hard to make the school an exciting and interesting place for you. You can do your bit by continuing with your excellent behaviour and hard work.

Yours sincerely

Joanne Harvey

Lead inspector