

Robert Bakewell Primary School and Community Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119992
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	313472
Inspection dates	22–23 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Rajinder Harrison

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	
School	234
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Keith Thomas
Headteacher	Susan Powis
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2003
School address	Barsby Drive Loughborough LE11 5UJ
Telephone number	01509 231646
Fax number	01509 261230

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average-sized primary school. While the majority of pupils are of White British origin, the proportion from ethnic minority backgrounds is above average. A number of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English as a new language. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. In the last academic year the number of pupils who joined the school other than at the normal time was high, a few with little or no English.

The headteacher joined the school in September 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school but with features such as the curriculum and pupils' personal development being good. Pupils are very happy at school, form good relationships and trust all the adults who work with them. Pupils are kind to others and take on many responsibilities eagerly. They fully understand the importance of staying fit and healthy and enjoy the many clubs and activities the school organises. Parents are very positive about the school and all that it is doing to help their children succeed.

Children start school with knowledge and skills that are below the expected levels. Good teaching helps them achieve well. At the end of the Foundation Stage, most attain average levels in all their learning, although their literacy skills remain less secure. Pupils' progress in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. Progress is good in a few classes but in other classes, teachers do not match work to pupils' needs accurately enough to challenge all pupils sufficiently. Hence, progress is not as rapid as it could be. Following a slight dip in 2007, overall standards are now broadly average for pupils in Years 2 and 6. Standards have improved because the school is now checking pupils' progress more carefully, and improving writing has been a priority this year. Pupils who need additional help with their learning achieve well because they receive good support. In lessons where specialist support is available, pupils new to learning English achieve well. Where this expertise is not available, teachers' planning does not always ensure this level of good progress. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Where it is good, teachers challenge pupils well and learning is good, but too many lessons are not as demanding, particularly for the more able. With a good emphasis on making learning interesting and fun, and through a very good programme of enrichment activities, the curriculum is good. Pastoral care is good. Guidance and support are satisfactory. Pupils' progress is monitored very closely and pupils have individual targets, but teachers' expectations of pupils are not always high enough to raise standards.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Through the headteacher's good leadership, the decline in standards seen in 2007 has been arrested and standards are improving. She has instigated many improvements that are beginning to impact on pupils' progress, including more rigorous monitoring of teaching and standards. She has provided staff and governors with the guidance they need to keep a tight check on the school's performance and they have made a good start in doing this. Subject leaders are not as rigorous as they need to be in checking that the work pupils do in every class challenges them fully. The school is accurate in its self-assessment, and recent improvements, such as the rising standards in literacy, show that there is good capacity to improve the school further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Good teaching and a well-constructed curriculum that considers individual needs carefully help children achieve well in the Foundation Stage. Because children's personal and social skills and their literacy skills are particularly weak when they start school, provision here is particularly good. Children settle and adjust to school life very quickly, enjoy learning and have fun. They work and play safely together within a well-ordered environment. They experience a good balance of adult-guided activities and those chosen by themselves, and this helps them gain confidence and independence. Children's progress is checked very carefully and extra help is given to those who need it. The outdoor area, including the vegetable plot, is used well to promote independent learning, and frequent visits, for example, to the local shops, help children

experience the wider world. Good leadership ensures effective teamwork between teachers and support staff. All adults demonstrate good levels of care, which results in children feeling secure and happy.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve teaching so that all lessons challenge pupils fully, especially the more able.
- Ensure teachers use the assessment information to plan work that matches pupils' needs more accurately.
- Ensure leaders at all levels carry out their responsibilities rigorously.
- Ensure planning meets the needs of pupils learning English as a new language when additional support is not available.

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

Children progress well in the Foundation Stage and achieve average standards in all the areas of learning, although their literacy skills are the least secure. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 achieve average standards and their progress is satisfactory. In Year 2, standards in mathematics are slightly better than in reading and writing because of pupils' weaker starting point in literacy. To address the below-average standards in writing throughout the school in 2007, the school has given greater attention to developing writing and pupils have responded well. As a result, standards are now average. In Year 6, standards in science are a little above average because pupils enjoy learning through practical activities. Pupils make better progress in the classes where teaching is stronger and teacher expectations are higher. Standards have improved since 2007, but the more able pupils are still not challenged enough. Through good support, pupils who need additional help with their learning achieve well. Pupils learning English as a new language achieve satisfactorily but better when given additional help.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' good attendance reflects that they enjoy being at school and want to learn. Many activities and visitors give pupils a well-informed insight into the wider world of work and leisure. Through numerous cultural events and learning greetings in different languages, they gain a good respect for other cultures and traditions. They behave well, working sensibly with others and undertake many responsibilities, for example, as playground friends and in recycling projects. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Through assemblies that reiterate a good moral code, learn to respect others and consider what they can do to care for the world around them. School council members are involved in making decisions, for example, regarding playground facilities. Pupils support the wider community well by participating in many community events such as musical performances and fund raising for charity. Pupils have a good understanding about the need to stay healthy. Many select healthy lunches and attend sports clubs regularly. They know how to stay safe and who to go to if they are worried or upset. While pupils' personal skills are good, their average basic skills mean their preparation for the next stage of their education is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Although teaching is steadily improving, it is satisfactory overall. The best lessons are well-organised, challenge pupils, hold their interest and generate a real enthusiasm for learning. For example, lively discussions, the creative use of interactive whiteboards presentations that help pupils see information more clearly and frequent opportunities for them to share ideas help them learn more effectively. However, despite a number of good lessons, teaching is not good enough all of the time to ensure that all pupils make good progress. Too often, teachers' expectations are not high enough and work is not matched closely enough to the full range of needs in the class. There is often not enough challenge for the more able pupils and there are occasions when pupils do the same work regardless of their ability. The effective involvement of teaching assistants ensures pupils who need additional help participate fully and succeed.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Recent improvements have made the curriculum interesting, lively and relevant to pupils' needs. Through more practical approaches and better use of information and communication technology (ICT) to present lessons, pupils' progress has improved. Grouping by ability in literacy and numeracy and planning additional specific activities allow teachers to support those who are less confident achieve well. Pupils learning English as an additional language achieve well in the lessons where they receive specialist support but teachers' planning does not ensure this level of progress in other lessons. Provision for ICT is good and teachers plan for its use well. Themes linking subjects enable pupils to see how work in one subject helps them succeed elsewhere, for example, presenting data using ICT. The increased focus on writing has had a marked impact on raising standards across the school. A good programme for personal, social and health education supports pupils' personal development. Many visits, visitors and other activities add excitement to pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care arrangements are good. The procedures for child protection, health and safety and safeguarding are all secure. All staff know the pupils well and take prompt action should any problem arise. Pupils with specific social or educational needs are supported sensitively by external agencies such as Education Welfare Officers, where appropriate. Parents receive good information regarding their children's progress. Links with secondary schools are good and pupils in Year 6 feel well prepared for secondary school.

Procedures to monitor pupils' progress and identify quickly when pupils are falling behind and need additional help are now good. The setting of individual targets is a recent development. Pupils are not always sufficiently challenged by their targets. Teachers mark work regularly and offer helpful advice but do not check whether pupils respond to this advice in subsequent work in order to achieve their targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher, supported by all staff, ensures that the school runs in an orderly manner and that pupils feel happy and secure. She is clear about the improvements needed to raise standards and her determined and positive outlook has engendered a good team spirit amongst staff and governors. In partnership with the local authority, the headteacher has initiated many of the recent developments but now has a sound leadership team that is gaining confidence and expertise rapidly. Their self-evaluation is thorough and accurate and the weaknesses are being addressed effectively. Senior managers are involved in monitoring teaching and pupils' progress accurately, but have had insufficient time to raise everyone's performance enough to secure higher standards. Subject leaders regularly review their subjects but they have not been rigorous in checking that all teachers challenge pupils fully through their planning. Good financial management ensures that priorities such as staff training are adequately resourced. Governors see the school as an important part of the community and promote good links with other schools and organisations. While governors are very supportive, they have only this year recognised what they need to do to monitor the school's performance and hold staff to account.

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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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	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 disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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 the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

I am writing to tell you what we found out when we came to your school recently to look at the work you do and to talk to your teachers. It was lovely meeting you. Thank you for making us feel welcome and for being so friendly and polite. We enjoyed talking to you about the many interesting activities and events that happen in your school and how much you do to raise funds for charity. We particularly liked the way you greet each other in so many different languages, sing so beautifully in French and that you enjoy music.

Your school is satisfactory and there are many good things too.

- You are working at the standards we expect and make satisfactory progress.
- While many lessons are satisfactory, where teaching is good you really enjoy what you do, work hard and learn more.
- The activities teachers plan and all the visitors and trips and clubs are good.
- Your behaviour is good. You know about staying safe, fit and healthy.
- You make good friends and can go to someone if you are worried or unhappy.
- The headteacher and all the staff take good care of you and help you.

These are things we have asked the school to do to become even better:

- provide good lessons all of the time with challenging work, especially for those of you who could work harder
- make sure that teachers check what you can already do so that they plan work that best suits what you need to do to learn more
- ensure that all staff with responsibilities do everything they can to help the headteacher make your school even better
- give the children who are new to speaking English the help they need to do their work in every lesson.

There are things you could do to help too. For example, you could make sure you always do your best and ask for harder work if you need it.

I hope that you will all do well in the future.

24 April 2008

Dear Pupils



**Inspection of Robert Bakewell Primary School and Community Centre,
Loughborough LE11 5UJ**

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Yours sincerely

Rajinder Harrison
Lead Inspector