

Baston CE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120514
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	327299
Inspection date	6 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Sue Hall

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	163
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Paul Colam
Headteacher	Mrs Frances Dicker
Date of previous school inspection	11 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	103a Main Street Baston Lincolnshire PE6 9PB
Telephone number	01778560430
Fax number	01778560430

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- whether all groups of pupils make at least good progress and achieve as well as they can
- if staff make best use of assessment information to provide challenging activities
- whether the monitoring of the work of the school is sufficiently evaluative to identify where improvement still needs to be made.

Evidence was gathered from observations of parts of lessons and discussions with the headteacher, senior staff, governors and pupils. Inspectors also scrutinised the parents' questionnaire responses, school documentation and a sample of the pupils' work. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail. Inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average primary school in a rural area of Lincolnshire. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is very low. While the school population is becoming increasingly diverse, there are fewer pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds than found nationally and very few are in the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The school holds Activemark, Healthy Schools, Rooted in Reading and Quality Mark awards and is a leading school for work in the social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL). The headteacher took up post in January 2007.

There is provision for additional out of school care that is not managed by the governing body. This is subject to a separate inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. There are outstanding features in pupils' personal development, which is promoted through excellent care, guidance and support. Standards in pupils' work are outstandingly high. The large majority of parents are very pleased with the quality of education provided and note in the inspection questionnaire that 'children are very much treated as individuals and not numbers'. Several rightly commented that the new headteacher 'has moved the school forward in lots of ways'.

Children enter the Reception class with skills, knowledge and understanding which, while very varied, are slightly above national expectations for their age. In Years 1 to 6 pupils make good progress and a growing number make very good progress. Teachers' assessments at the age of seven show that over several years standards have been significantly above national averages, especially in reading. Standards at the age of 11 have also been consistently well above national averages. Recently received but unvalidated results from national tests in 2009 indicate that pupils have done even better in most areas. This information confirms the inspection findings that standards are exceptionally high. Within this picture of overall success, not as many pupils achieve the higher than expected Level 5 in their writing as they do in other areas of their learning. For instance, this year more than 80% of pupils in Year 6 reached Level 5 in their reading, whilst less than 30% did so in writing. The proportion of pupils doing well in mathematics and science has improved due to a school focus on extending opportunities to solve problems and carry out investigations. Overall boys and girls of all abilities achieve well.

The personal development of the pupils is outstanding, as is their behaviour. Most are very keen and enthusiastic young learners, as reflected in very high levels of attendance. They enjoy the company of others and have strong relationships with the adults around them. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is outstanding. School assemblies provide a strong spiritual focus, which is further supported through the provision of both indoor and outdoor areas specifically dedicated to developing pupils spiritually. This reflects the school's commitment to the SEAL programme. Pupils' cultural development is good, although the leadership recognises it needs to do more to help pupils prepare for life in a multicultural society. There is excellent provision to support active and healthy lifestyles and pupils have very high levels of understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. There are good opportunities for pupils to make a positive contribution to the school community and clear plans to extend these further into the local and wider community. Pupils grow in social confidence and understanding of the needs and rights of others, which help prepare them exceptionally well for their futures.

Teaching and learning are good overall, with examples of outstanding practice in each key stage. Where teaching is particularly effective there is a very high level of challenge provided that moves pupils' learning forward at a considerable pace. For instance, young pupils are provided with lengthy and extended texts that are read aloud by able pupils and explained by the teachers, enabling all abilities to recognise how to identify key elements of passages in a story. Where teaching is not so effective, staff do not use assessment information well enough to set really challenging work. This has a particular impact on the progress of more able pupils, including their progress in writing.

The curriculum is good. The school has worked successfully to enrich learning through a valuable programme of visits and visitors to the school. All pupils in Key Stage 2 are now able to take part in residential activities, which impacts positively on their personal development.

Occasionally, curriculum planning does not ensure that work is demanding enough, resulting in pupils of all abilities having the same or very similar activities, including worksheets that do not improve writing skills well enough.

The care, guidance and support of pupils are outstanding. Some elements of the organisation of information are a model of good practice. For instance, information regarding the checks on those who help in school, of first-aid qualifications and risk assessments are very effectively managed. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements. Staff know and care for the pupils and their families very well. There are good links with a range of external agencies to provide additional help where appropriate and the support of those with additional needs is very effective. Pupils' work is marked well and there are some excellent examples that indicate to pupils exactly what they have to do to improve. The school has worked with success to improve the frequency and accuracy of the assessments of pupils' progress. Such information is well organised and where teaching is most effective, this is used very well in subsequent planning.

Leadership and management are good. Key to much of the recent improvement is the excellent leadership of the headteacher. She is a driving force and has a very clear understanding of what works well and where further improvement is needed in what was already a successful school. She has worked with purpose and determination to improve provision in many areas, including assessment routines and the overall quality of teaching and learning. The assistant headteacher and the new team of senior and middle managers, including those in subject leadership roles, ably support her. Governance is good with some skilled and knowledgeable governors able to act as 'critical friends' and challenge the school. Governors are keen to develop their programme of focused visits to extend their first-hand knowledge of the school further. The school works well in uniting groups in the local community and recognises the need to develop a wider perspective, including a global dimension to its work. The school has a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good, with some excellent features. The school assesses children's skills carefully but some assessments are too cautious and do not always identify that children's skills are often above what is typical for their age. Children make good overall progress and for some it is excellent. They become keen and very enthusiastic learners and want to do what their older friends and siblings do. Teaching and learning are good, with some excellent features. The experienced Reception class teacher is well supported by able and well-briefed teaching assistants who offer individual and group support that ensures children get a very good level of help and encouragement. This leads to their excellent personal development. Occasionally, staff do too much for the children. For instance, children become reliant on using wordbooks in which adults spell words for them at the expense of developing emergent writing skills of their own. The welfare of the children is a clear priority and is exceptionally well promoted through safe practices. The very attractive indoor and recently improved outdoor environments provide lots of interesting and exciting opportunities that support learning very well. Leadership and management of the provision are good, although monitoring and evaluation of provision have not always highlighted the sometimes small areas for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that assessment information is used effectively by all staff to set challenging activities for the more able so that they make the best possible progress, particularly in their writing.
- Ensure that pupils develop a more thorough understanding of the diversity of modern society and issues that affect the wider world.

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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?	2
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which 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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
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?	1

Leadership and management

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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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

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

7 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Baston CE Primary School, Peterborough, PE6 9PB

Thank you very much for looking after Mr Storer and me when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed speaking to you in and around school and meeting some of you in lessons, in assembly and when we spoke to the school council.

These are some of the best things we found.

- The standards you reach in your work are excellent and you do particularly well in your reading.
- Your headteacher is driving the school forward and understands really clearly what is working well and what else needs to be improved.
- Most of you behave very well, try hard with your work and make good progress.
- You develop spiritual awareness and value each others' talents, skills and abilities so that you develop strong relationships with everyone.
- The support and guidance you receive are excellent because the school checks thoroughly that you are well cared for.

Yours is a good school. To help things to improve further we have asked that:

- staff provide activities that challenge you more so that you can make even better progress, especially in your writing
- teachers plan additional activities that enable you to find out more about life beyond your local area.

To help your school to do even better, please continue to be enthusiastic and try hard with your work. We hope you enjoy your end of term activities.

Yours faithfully

Sue Hall

Lead inspector