

Bitterne Manor Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116089
Local Authority	Southampton
Inspection number	379199
Inspection dates	2–3 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Melvyn Blackband

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 of pupils on the school roll	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Penny Holliday
Headteacher	Karen Mellor
Date of previous school inspection	12–13 January 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 16 lessons and nine teachers. Meetings were held with pupils, staff, members of the governing body and parents and carers. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at the school's documentation regarding safeguarding of pupils and the curriculum, the data on the pupils' progress and a range of development planning and policies. They also took account of 90 questionnaires from parents and carers, 93 pupils' questionnaires and 20 staff questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are learning English as an additional language, are making progress and how effectively this is recorded and monitored by the school.
- The impact of the curriculum on pupils' personal development and their enjoyment of learning and whether the curriculum is adapted to take account of the learning needs of each pupil.
- Whether the quality of teaching is consistent across the school and how far this has a positive impact on the pupils' progress.
- The effectiveness of the school's leaders and the governing body in monitoring, evaluating and improving provision.

Information about the school

Bitterne Manor is average sized and draws pupils from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. Most pupils are White British. Almost one third of pupils are from a minority ethnic heritage. A small number of pupils are at the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average as is the percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. Since the previous inspection, there has been a change of headteacher and a restructuring of the leadership team. The headteacher has been in post for two years. Two thirds of the governing body have been appointed since the previous inspection.

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

Bitterne Manor is a good school. The headteacher has reversed a downward trend in the pupils' performance and through her energy and expertise has ensured that for the last two years the achievement of most pupils has risen sharply to above average. An enthusiastic senior team has supported her. The pupils' good progress has been underpinned by rigorous monitoring and tracking of their performance and by excellent provision for their safety and for the care. The pupils enjoy school and have positive attitudes to their learning. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly happy with the school's provision and with the strength of the relationships which exist between home and school. Pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress in a range of personal skills and good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As a result, the school is a harmonious and cohesive community.

School leaders regularly and consistently review how well the pupils are doing and act quickly and effectively to provide focused extra support where a child is not reaching expected levels of progress. As a result, the performance of each individual and group has been raised. For example, the progress of girls in mathematics was identified as a concern and intervention put in place which has raised the girls' attainment above national expectations. Groups of pupils who are in circumstances that make them more vulnerable, such as the small number who speak English as an additional language all benefit from tailored support. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make outstanding progress and this gives them a flying start when they enter the main school. The pupils continue to make good progress through the school. For instance, in 2011, almost half of pupils in Year 6 achieved higher Level 5 in reading and mathematics in national tests.

Teaching and the assessment of pupils' work are good. Teachers have consistently high expectations of the pupils' progress and the pupils respond with good levels of concentration, good behaviour and above average attendance. The curriculum is outstanding because it has been very well adapted to take account of the learners' needs and interests. Most pupils try hard and succeed in reaching the challenging targets set for them at the start of each lesson. The school has worked hard to embed this practice which has had a positive impact on the pupils' progress. On some occasions, however, targets are not tailored to challenge higher attaining pupils enough or are not broken down precisely enough into small steps for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, sometimes these pupils are unsure how much progress they have made or how to improve their work further.

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This slows down the pace of learning.

Leadership and management are good and the school's self-evaluation is effective. Leaders thoroughly monitor, evaluate and seek to improve each aspect of provision. The governing body, although most members are relatively new, provides a good and rapidly improving level of challenge to the school. The impact is seen in the significant rise in pupils' achievement over the last two years. All of this demonstrates that the school has a good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate rates of progress for all pupils, particularly the higher attainers by:
 - providing activities which are precisely targeted to their learning needs and abilities
 - ensuring the pupils clearly understand how much progress they have made and how to improve their work further.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

From their individual starting points, almost all pupils, including those with additional difficulties, make good progress as they move through the school. The proportion of pupils attaining nationally expected standards or above is higher than average and represents good achievement. Due to clear and effective intervention strategies, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those new to the country and at an early stage of learning English and other vulnerable groups make good progress also. As a result of good teaching and the outstanding curriculum, pupils enjoy their lessons and they are enthusiastic learners. This was seen, for example, in a Year 3 mathematics lesson on two- and three-dimensional shapes where the teacher moved from group to group, using humour, clear instruction and much constructive praise, such as 'Wow, you are a star!' to ensure pupils felt confident in their learning. As a consequence, pupils' motivation was high, they tackled the new learning with enthusiasm and they collaborated effectively with the group on their table. They made outstanding progress in their mathematical understanding, their language and their social skills.

The pupils feel safe and have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. There is very little bullying or poor behaviour. Pupils are happy and courteous, they make friends easily and learn together in harmony. For example, they make full use of a display board to write complimentary messages about their friends. Teachers and other staff provide clear directions for and expectations of good standards of behaviour. This contributes to the pupils' good spiritual, moral and social development. Their good cultural understanding is enhanced through visits to places of worship for different faiths and through their tolerance of and interest in their

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fellow pupils who come from a range of ethnic backgrounds. This plays a positive role in extending their knowledge and sympathy with cultural diversity and significantly impacts on the cohesiveness of the school. They make a further good contribution to the school community through the school council and by taking on responsibilities as 'Eco-warriors', helping others to be more environmentally aware. They have an excellent understanding of the benefits of exercise and what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. They take part in the many sporting activities making full use of the local sports partnership as well as a full programme of physical activity at lunchtime and after school. As a result of well-planned transition programmes, their daily experiences of working in classroom teams and their good progress in applying basic skills, they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

The good teaching is characterised by warm relationships which provide a good platform for learning. Lessons are well planned and resourced and teachers exude enthusiasm. The teaching is lively and proceeds at a good pace. Pupils respond well to this, make sure they are punctual to lessons and give their teacher full attention. The well-trained teaching assistants support small groups and individuals well and play a significant part in working with pupils identified as needing extra support. Teachers do not always use the detailed assessment information they collect effectively to provide every pupil with precisely tailored learning targets. As a result, pupils are not always clear about their progress and are not always confident in

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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knowing how to improve their work further.

The outstanding curriculum is rigorously monitored by subject leaders and senior staff to ensure it consistently meets the needs and interests of pupils and is helping drive improvements in their progress. Activities are very well adapted for the pupils' differing abilities. Pupils' learning is strongly supported by the focused intervention groups in every classroom to help those who are not making expected progress. The imaginative topic-based scheme of work, 'themed days' such as a pirate day or an Ancient Greek Olympics Day, excellent provision for literacy and numeracy skills integrate different subjects very well so that pupils gain a well-rounded understanding of the themes they study. There are very effective programmes to help pupils develop their personal, health and social skills and to foster their emotional development. The many visits are very well integrated into the pupils' activities. This gives them first-hand experience of such places as the Imperial War Museum, the dockyards and the Mary Rose.

Every pupil is well known to staff. Adults work closely together to provide extremely high standards of care and support for individuals. The range of extra provision such as the nurture room, the pupil playground rangers, ensuring boys and girls play happily, and the 'praise board' illustrate the determination of the staff to ensure each pupil is well cared for and made to feel special. There are very good procedures to monitor and encourage the pupils' attendance. Vulnerable pupils receive a high level of support and this extends to those facing bereavement or schoolphobia. Relationships with parents and carers are excellent. As a result, the school works in very productive partnerships to prioritise the pupils' well-being.

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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's effective leadership has led to high staff morale, a successful culture of continual critical self-review and a consequent rapid improvement in the pupils' achievement. Together with the senior team, she has spearheaded the successful drive to improve teaching and to use effective systems to monitor provision and outcomes. Self-evaluation and development planning are used well and senior staff are closely involved in evaluating and improving provision to raise the level of pupils' progress and well-being. The systems, for example, to assess and track pupils' performance are thorough and well used to ensure that most pupils achieve well. These systems quickly reveal any difficulties pupils may be having and

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this has a good impact on the provision of equal opportunities for all pupils. Discrimination is not tolerated and pupils are helped and encouraged to treat others with respect. Teaching standards are very regularly monitored as are teachers’ plans and assessments. Continuing professional development, coaching and the provision of regular updates to training for teachers and other staff is a high priority in the school. As a result, the minority of new staff have quickly settled and teaching standards continue to rise. The school makes good use of outside bodies such as the local sports partnership and in sharing expertise with other groups of local schools to analyse and moderate the pupils’ progress.

There are excellent arrangements to safeguard the pupils. Staff are regularly trained in child protection issues, there are very secure vetting procedures for all adults who visit the site and parents and carers have every confidence in the school’s ability to keep their children safe. The school acts immediately on any concern brought to the notice of staff. The governing body robustly checks all aspects of safety through a nominated governor who gives regular reports. The governing body maintains close links with the school and has a good understanding of the school’s strengths and weaknesses through monitoring its work closely. The friendly, tolerant and supportive ethos of the school makes a good contribution to community cohesion in the school and local community. Pupils have a developing understanding also of wider aspects of diversity because of links with a school in Tanzania.

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	2
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	1
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	1
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 achieve very well. They make good and often outstanding progress in their

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communication, literacy and numeracy. Outstanding teaching ensures they learn effectively during every aspect of their day. The children are clearly happy and come into school full of enthusiasm. They engage extremely well with activities and are pleased to share their successes. They benefit from a highly stimulating environment and an interesting and regularly changing range of activities. Their progress is scrupulously assessed and tracked by teachers and other staff who have a secure knowledge of early years’ educational practice.

The children are safe and very well cared for. Staff work in close partnership with parents and carers to promote the progress and well-being of the children. There are, for instance, excellent procedures involving all the adults concerned with the children as they move into the main school. The leadership and management of the provision are outstanding. Staff have an excellent knowledge of the children and their progress; there is very good teamwork and all this results in the children making an excellent start to their education.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

In an above average response, almost 50% of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. It showed that parents and carers overwhelmingly support the school. Evidence from the inspection supports parents’ and carers’ views that their children are safe and well cared for. They are confident that their child enjoys school, that there is good teaching and the school is managed well. A few parents and carers had concerns about the progress their child was making and whether the school met their child’s needs appropriately, but these concerns were not borne out by the inspection evidence.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bitterne Manor Primary 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 90 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 211 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	66	73	22	24	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	73	81	17	19	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	56	62	32	36	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	47	52	34	38	7	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	53	59	34	38	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	42	47	43	48	3	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	49	54	39	43	2	2	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)	50	56	34	38	5	6	1	1
The school meets my child’s particular needs	47	52	35	39	8	9	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	48	41	46	4	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	46	51	35	39	8	9	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	46	51	40	44	4	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	53	59	31	34	5	6	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 all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



4 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bitterne Manor Primary School, Southampton SO18 1DP

Thank you for looking after us so well when we recently visited your school. It was a pleasure to talk to you and look at what you were doing in your classrooms. We also enjoyed looking at all the examples of good work we saw around the school. We were all impressed by the board outside the dining room where you write nice things about your friends.

You go to a good school. Here are some of the things which the other inspectors and I thought were especially good:

- You make good progress in English and mathematics and a range of other topics.
- You develop good personal skills and an excellent understanding of how to keep safe and appreciate the value of a healthy lifestyle.
- You behave well and are very friendly towards all the other children. Your attendance is above average also.
- Teachers plan lessons which are lively and interesting.
- All the adults take very good care of you
- Children in Year R (Reception class) make really good progress because they are very well taught and the adults look after them so well.

To make the school even better we have asked your teachers to look carefully at the targets you get for each lesson. We want the teachers to challenge some of you to even harder work in your 'mega challenges' and to help some of you who find work more difficult by giving you targets which are broken down into smaller bits. In that way we hope you will understand more clearly how well you have done in each lesson and how to improve your work even more.

You can help by always working hard and behaving well.

Yours sincerely

Mel Blackband
Lead inspector

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