

Bussage Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	115678
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	379122
Inspection dates	17–18 January 2012
Lead inspector	Ann Henderson HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Fern
Headteacher	Andrew Ferguson
Date of previous school inspection	18 September 2008
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Ann Henderson

Her Majesty's Inspector

Howard Dodd

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in seventeen lessons taught by eight teachers, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors carried out short visits to classes to focus on behaviour and safety and the quality of pupils learning in lessons. Discussions were held with parents and carers, pupils, staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and the chair of the governing body's standards and curriculum committee. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, and looked at school documentation which included the school development plan, safeguarding documents, information on pupils' attainment and progress, external monitoring reports and minutes of governing body meetings. Inspectors analysed 109 questionnaires from parents and carers and other questionnaires from pupils and staff.

Information about the school

This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well-below average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. Almost all pupils' first language is English. While the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is average, the percentage with a statement of special educational needs is well-below average. The proportion of pupils entering or leaving the school other than at the usual times is much lower than the national average for primary schools. The school exceeds the current floor standard set by the government, which determines the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. Pupils enjoy learning, which is reflected in their above average attendance. In this nurturing environment they feel safe and confident and this underpins their good behaviour.
- Parents and carers are very happy with the school. Their comments were overwhelmingly positive. One parent reflected the views of many by saying, 'The school has a very caring ethos and my children continue to grow in confidence because they feel safe and secure and well looked after.'
- The school has focused successfully on improving the quality of teaching to ensure pupils make good progress in most lessons and achievement is good. Teachers provide good feedback to pupils through marking. Pupils appreciate their comments and respond well to the 'green for growth and red for excellence' marking, which enables them to know what they need to do to improve their work. However, insufficient use is made of individual targets for pupils to enable them to monitor their own progress and know their future goals.
- Attainment data are used effectively to monitor pupils' progress and ensure teachers know when pupils are underachieving. However, on-going assessments do not sharply focus, in a timely manner, the day-to-day progress of pupils to ensure teachers plan work that accurately matches the learning needs of all abilities of pupils.
- Leaders and manager, including members of the governing body, monitor the work of the school and plan effectively. School self-evaluation is accurate. As a result, the priorities in the school development plan focus on the most important areas for improvement for the school. However, although the curriculum provides learning opportunities linked to the interests of pupils, school leaders do not have a clear map of the curriculum to ensure subject links are effectively planned to include interesting, memorable and challenging activities for all groups of pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on improvements made in raising attainment this year, and further

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accelerate pupils' progress to be consistently at least good, through more effective use of assessment by:

- ensuring teachers use regular assessments of what pupils know and understand to plan work that accurately matches the differing needs and abilities of pupils
 - providing sharply focused individual targets for pupils, to promote learning and help them to monitor their own progress.
- Further developing the curriculum to excite and engage pupils by:
- creating a whole-school curriculum plan which makes clear meaningful links and provides activities that are interesting, memorable and challenging for all groups of pupils.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils achieve well. Following a dip in attainment and progress for Year 2 and Year 6 pupils in mathematics and Year 4 pupils in reading in 2011, current school data and work in pupils' books show that pupils' progress is improving. Current attainment of most groups of pupils is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The school has focused on ensuring pupils have daily opportunities for reading in class. The phonics (linking letters with the sounds they make) programme is taught systematically and is successfully providing pupils with strategies to decode words and enjoy reading. As a result pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make good progress in reading. Current school data show that pupils' attainment in reading in all year groups is above average. Since September 2011, the school has worked effectively to address previous underachievement and the progress of pupils in Year 5 in reading is now good.

Pupils begin in the Reception class with skills that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. Their good progress during the Reception year enables them to begin in Year 1 with a good level of understanding. In lessons, pupils show a positive attitude to learning and have good levels of sustained concentration. All pupils work well together and are clearly engaged and involved in their learning. In a Year 6 science lesson, pupils collaborated well in groups to investigate a range of statements linked to evaporation and dissolving, devising their own experiments to prove their hypothesis. Good discussions and application of learning skills enabled pupils to work well together and successfully plan and perform their investigations. Their effective use of scientific language and their well-developed understanding of devising a fair test enabled them to make good progress in their learning.

The school has successfully implemented strategies to raise standards in writing. Pupils are provided with regular opportunities to write at length and use their speaking and listening skills to rehearse and explore their thinking prior to completing written work. As a result, early writing skills have increased and attainment in writing by the end of Year 2 has significantly improved and is above

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the national average.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is effective because of the positive, caring relationships between all adults and pupils. Teaching assistants play a full part in this and form good relationships with teachers and their pupils. Their carefully planned roles ensure that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are fully engaged and challenged appropriately. Teachers plan learning objectives and set out a list of criteria which pupils use to judge whether their learning has been successful in lessons. Teachers are increasingly using a wealth of assessment information to plan lessons. However, in some lessons, activities do not match closely enough to the pupils' learning needs. As a result, opportunities are lost to provide suitable challenge for more-able pupils. Pupils' work is regularly marked and marking is of a high quality. Pupils have a clear understanding of what they have successfully achieved and are provided with effective guidance on how to improve their work through the colour coded marking system which is used consistently throughout the school. However, targets for pupils to work towards are not comprehensively established to challenge pupils. As a result, they are unclear of their longer-term goals.

Teachers have good subject knowledge and in the best lessons use effective questioning skills to develop pupils' understanding. Lessons are planned to meet the interests of pupils and engage them in wider learning opportunities. During the inspection the school took part in the 'Big School Bird Watch'. Pupils were fascinated while watching for birds through the 'viewing windows' set up to enable them to observe a range of birds visiting the school's conservation area. This made a positive contribution to their spiritual awareness.

Most parents and carers feel their children are taught well. One parent commented typically, 'I am entirely satisfied with the rounded education my children are receiving. They are given opportunities to learn in lots of different ways both in and out of the classroom.'

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave well in lessons. They are considerate to one another and are polite and courteous to adults. The school is a harmonious and cohesive community, where pupils feel valued and supported well. Pupils are keen to attend school, as reflected in the above average attendance rates. Punctuality is good. A very large majority of pupils say they feel safe in school and that the school helps them to understand how to keep themselves safe. Pupils of all ages are regularly taught about how to manage risk, including when using new technologies. During playtimes pupils behave sensibly and older pupils are keen to support younger pupils. Those choosing to sit on the 'friendship bench' are quickly supported by others and included in their games. However, pupils are less positive about lunchtimes, partly due to the adult support and particularly during the winter months when there is a limited range of playtime equipment and play space is more

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restricted. Nevertheless, behaviour during lunchtimes and playtimes is good. Discussions with pupils and scrutiny of behavioural records show that this is the norm.

Incidences of bullying in any form are rare and pupils know that should inappropriate behaviour occur it is swiftly dealt with and addressed. Pupils and parents and carers agree. As one parent commented, 'I would feel confident that the school would deal with bullying, although I have had no experience or heard of any cases of bullying.'

Leadership and management

Leaders and managers, including the governing body, have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The governing body has a high level of involvement in the strategic aspects of management and are proactive in ensuring further improvement. Their monitoring is assiduous. Good use is made of their professional knowledge and expertise to evaluate the work of the school and to hold school leaders to account. The headteacher and senior leaders, through their focused monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, have effectively eradicated inadequate teaching. Staff are dedicated and keen to improve their practice even further and willingly participate in training. All are ambitious for the future which demonstrates the school's good capacity for further improvement.

The curriculum is good overall. It is broad and balanced, and promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, which is also good. Pupils display a strong sense of right and wrong through their mature social skills. Their spiritual development is fostered through thought-provoking assemblies and opportunities to experience the awe and wonder of the world around them. Further improvements to the organisation and breadth of the curriculum are necessary to ensure there are plenty of opportunities for high-quality learning for all pupils.

Robust steps are taken to safeguard pupils. Thorough recruitment and vetting checks are carried out and all staff have received appropriate, up-to-date training to fulfil their child protection responsibilities. Staff and the governing body work hard to sustain a welcoming school community in which equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination are well secured. There are strong partnerships with neighbouring schools to further drive improvement. Parents and carers are extremely positive about the school. Good relationships with parents and carers are promoted through the parents' forum, which enables parents and carers to share their views and contribute to the future developments in the school.

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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



19 January 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bussage Church of England Primary School, Stroud GL6 8AY

Thank you for welcoming us to your school, and special thanks to those of you who took the time to talk to us. We found you extremely interesting to talk to and very polite and helpful. You spoke enthusiastically about your school and how much you enjoy learning. Yours is a good school.

These are some of the things the school does really well.

- Your parents and carers have an extremely positive relationship with the school.
- You make good progress in your learning and achieve well.
- You behave well and feel safe in school and know there is always someone to talk to if you have a problem.
- Your teachers support your learning well through their very clear marking of your work. You respond well to their comments which help you to improve even further. The results of your questionnaires also confirmed that you think teaching is good.

We have asked the school to work on two things to make your school even better.

- Build on your good achievement by using the assessments teachers make of your learning in lessons to challenge you in your next steps in learning, and provide you with sharply-focused targets to help you to monitor your own progress.
- Map the curriculum carefully and provide you all with more memorable and rich experiences to challenge and prepare you for the future.

It was a real privilege to visit your school. Continue to work hard and, most of all, enjoy your learning! Thank you again for your help.

Yours sincerely

Ann Henderson
Her Majesty's Inspector

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