

Bocking Church Street Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114809
Local Authority	Essex
Inspection number	357621
Inspection dates	16–17 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Graham Preston

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	190
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Mann
Headteacher	Rosalind Welch
Date of previous school inspection	8 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 8 teachers in 17 lessons. Meetings were held with governors, groups of pupils and staff. Different aspects of the school's work were observed and documentation scrutinised, including that relating to safeguarding practices, the school's self-evaluation and development planning, as well as 48 returned questionnaires from parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following;

- The rigour of the school's systems for tracking pupils' progress and setting challenging targets.
- The consistency of teaching in ensuring that pupils learn well in their lessons and improve their basic skills, particularly in writing.
- The effectiveness of its inclusion practice in ensuring less-able pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress.
- The extent to which the school's care and support arrangements promote pupils' personal and social development.
- How well governors and school leaders have coped with recent challenges and worked together in promoting school improvement.

Information about the school

This is an average size primary school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and there are a few pupils learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average as is the proportion of those known to be eligible for free school meals. The school shares the site with a special school with which it has close professional links. The school has gained National Healthy Schools status and Activemark and is a Forest School committed to pupil development through the use of a woodland environment.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Bocking Church Street is a satisfactory and improving school with good features. Since the last inspection, the school has been able to substantially improve its learning environment with refurbished classrooms; a new hall and much enhanced outside play areas. It is in the process of overcoming a recent fall in pupils' standards and now ensures that the great majority of pupils achieve appropriately and develop well in terms of their personal and social growth.

The school has taken some time to adjust its teaching and other provision to a more socially diverse intake with younger pupils having below average standards on entry. This adjustment has been most effective in Years 1 and 2 where current school tracking shows pupils making often good progress. This is particularly so in reading and mathematics where pupils reach average standards. Teaching quality is more variable in later years so that pupil progress is more satisfactory than good. Consequently Year 6 pupils reach average standards in reading, mathematics and science but fewer than expected pupils attain higher levels in writing.

Other outcomes are stronger. All parents agree that the good safeguarding procedures around the school ensure that their children feel exceptionally safe. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good and pupils take advantage of the various opportunities both in school and in the local community to be actively engaged in their learning.

Most teachers are well organised, have clear expectations about behaviour and get on well with pupils. Most work hard to provide interesting activities including effective use of information and communication technology. The better teaching provides more challenging learning opportunities where pupils know what they have to do to succeed. Less effective practice lacks pace and does not provide a sufficient range of learning activities to meet the needs of the wide range of abilities in each class. Those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are usually well supported but there are missed opportunities to use learning support staff fully in whole class and group work. Teachers' marking is positive but does not consistently show pupils how they can improve work.

There is a strong school commitment to providing a relevant and engaging curriculum. A recent OFSTED subject inspection praised the school's provision for physical education and sports activities and as a Forest School children benefit from a range of woodland and other outdoor activities that contribute significantly to their personal and social development.

A further strength of the school is its effective care, guidance and support. This includes targeted support for those with particular needs and close working with its partners and agencies to help vulnerable pupils and others who have not succeeded elsewhere.

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All governors and senior staff have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and what is needed to bring about further improvement. They have been particularly successful in improving the school environment and establishing many links with the local community that enrich provision. They nonetheless recognise that as part of wider community cohesion, there is a need to develop links with different schools and communities across the United Kingdom and abroad. The headteacher has widened participation in school leadership and staff are fully involved in developing rigorous procedures for tracking pupil progress and developing means of accurately evaluating teaching and learning. The school is successfully focusing on those areas that will improve pupil progress and has significantly enhanced the school environment and maintained or improved some aspects such as the Early Years Foundation Stage, curriculum, inclusion and care. For these reasons the school demonstrates a good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure teaching and learning is consistently good, particularly in Years 3 to 6 by:
 - improving the challenge and pace of learning in some lessons
 - increasing the focus on writing in order to improve pupils' higher level skills
 - involving learning support staff more actively in whole class learning activities and group work
 - ensuring marking practice helps pupils know how they can improve against National Curriculum standards.
- Improve community cohesion by:
 - providing more learning opportunities and experiences that help pupils better appreciate the wider diversity within British society.
 - building on some of the current overseas links that help pupils' awareness of the wider world.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

A significant proportion of pupils come to the school with standards a little below for their age and make satisfactory progress to attain broadly average standards at the end of Year 6. Many pupils make better progress in Years 1 to 2, where there is considerable good teaching, and reach standards close to the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Good progress was evident for example, in a Year 1 numeracy lesson where an imaginative learning activity engaged pupils and pose questions and think through possible answers. Pupils make slower progress in Years 3 to 6 where the quality of teaching is more variable. Work seen in lessons and pupils' books is average in most years though writing continues to be weaker than reading for older pupils. Observations and the school's data indicate pupils are making good progress up to Year 3 and the school is working hard to further improve provision in later years in order to sustain this. Lesson

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observations and data indicate that those with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve as well as others and the majority of higher ability pupils reach their targets.

The great majority of pupils enjoy school reflected in their good attendance rates and positive attitudes to learning. They behave well and appreciate opportunities to take responsibility. The School Council is very active and pupils have helped shape the use of outside facilities, participated in anti-bullying events and supported various charities. Pupils act as monitors, play leaders, librarians and house captains and are closely involved in various village, church and community activities including the 'May Fayre'. Healthy lifestyles is also a strong feature with pupils participating fully in various sports and outdoor play activities and actively promoting healthy eating. For example, in setting up a fruit tuck shop and supporting 'healthy lunchboxes'. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and this is reflected in pupils' positive and responsible behaviour and readiness to respond to the many opportunities for reflection. Cultural development is not as strong though pupils respond well to work in lessons on religions and other societies. Awareness of, and contact with, the wider British society is less evident though work is in hand.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

The school focus on improving practice has resulted in much of teaching being good and on occasion outstanding but some staff have not fully embraced and implemented this

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good practice. Examples of particularly good teaching were seen in a Year 1 physical education lesson where the enthusiastic teacher, actively supported by the teaching assistant, demonstrated and explained accurate throwing and catching ball skills. Pupils were thoroughly engaged and with expert guidance demonstrated vastly improved performance over the lesson. In a fast paced Year 6 English lesson the teacher used autobiography as an effective vehicle for extended writing and set challenging targets for accuracy and presentation. By contrast, less effective lessons, while often carefully planned and potentially interesting, lacked pace and varied challenge with excessive teacher talk and limited involvement of the teaching assistant.

Considerable effort has been made by staff working together, to develop an interesting and relevant curriculum. This has been helped by a donation of woodland for school use and the accessibility of ICT with the acquisition of suites of laptop computers together with the development of the school website to support learning in and out of school. There is a strong focus on improving literacy and numeracy, helped by the training and support of local authority consultants in the school.

As a community school its intake includes all abilities and needs, both the very able as well as a considerable number with behavioural concerns and learning needs. The Network Family Liaison Worker provides valuable support and as an inclusive school it has a successful track record of supporting vulnerable children and others who have not succeeded elsewhere.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and staff have established shared procedures for assessing and tracking pupil progress and accurately evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning across the school. These strengths have improved provision and pupil progress in Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 but have yet to ensure pupils make good progress in later years.

Most parents and carers are able to walk to school and meet the teachers at the start and finish of each day. The headteacher operates an open door policy and there is a website which contains much information and opportunities to contact the school. There is a very active Friends Association and the school makes full use of its liaison worker and other agencies to maintain contact with hard to reach families. The school has similarly good links with the community and the different support agencies that enable it to maintain its effective support and guidance. Effectiveness in promoting equal opportunities is generally good in terms of monitoring and responding to the needs of particular groups of pupils,

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notably those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, boys and girls and different ability groups.

The school benefits from well informed and very involved governors representing all aspects of the local community including the church, housing association, businesses, local authority and parents. Through these various links the governors provide valuable feedback to the school and are effective partners in school improvement. The headteacher and governors have carried out the community cohesion audit and recognise that despite very close involvement with the local community, pupils appreciation of other communities and cultures can be enhanced through wider national and international links.

All policies are in place and are reviewed regularly. Governors have been fully involved in the physical improvement of the school site and establishing a safe environment for both staff and pupils. This includes ensuring the site perimeter is secure and the considerable outdoor equipment is safe.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children come to Reception with widely different abilities and experiences and are helped to learn and develop well because of the good provision. The school currently has three intakes over the year and that means that a considerable number have limited time to develop their communication, language and literacy. Those that benefit from a whole year's attendance are able to show good progress in their literacy and mathematical development. However, most children quickly learn to listen attentively, follow instructions and readily respond confidently and appropriately reflecting good social skills and expectations. Close attention is given to safeguarding with children knowing how to keep safe. Children are happy and well behaved and there are good routines that support a healthy lifestyle such as handwashing before lunch.

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Provision has been massively improved by the rebuilding and remodelling of both the indoor and outdoor areas. These are now stimulating and attractive and allow children to move freely between different learning and play activities. Teaching is good and effective use of the interactive whiteboard is made when reinforcing learning of the alphabet and practising phonics. A child with special educational needs and/or disabilities was well supported in a lesson and in the combined Reception and Year 1 sessions, the learning activities were seen to be appropriately varied for the different ages and abilities. Time is well used though on occasion, children spend too long on the carpet listening to the teacher.

Regular observation and assessment by teachers and support staff are used effectively to ensure that work is well matched to children's needs.

Leadership and management of Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Learning is thoughtfully planned and thorough assessments plus external moderation confirms them to be accurate. There is a strong focus on inclusion and support for all children's needs and the Early Years leader has provided the vision that has shaped the rebuilding and development of this area. This includes active involvement in the Forest Schools initiative that has helped children develop their communication and language skills, awareness of the world and the personal and social development.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Of those who responded to the questionnaire, the great majority of parents and carers were very supportive and a significant number wrote about the help and extra support their children receive. There were a few concerns about pupil misbehaviour that may relate to previous years. Inspectors noted that there are a few pupils who need firm but positive support but found very few recorded instances of recent serious misbehaviour, and behaviour seen in lessons and around the school was good. Inspectors observed that the school provided opportunities for parents and carers to make contact at the start and end of each day and through the school website but noted that some parents and carers felt that more could be done to keep them informed.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bocking Church Street 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 48 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 190 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	26	54	20	42	2	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	28	58	20	42	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	20	42	22	46	4	8	2	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	20	42	23	48	2	4	2	4
The teaching is good at this school	20	42	24	50	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	42	25	52	2	4	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	42	25	52	2	4	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)	16	33	27	56	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	46	19	40	4	8	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	27	24	50	4	8	3	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	27	27	56	5	10	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	25	52	18	38	1	2	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	54	17	35	4	0	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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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.



20 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bocking Church Street Primary School, Braintree, CM7 5LA

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. Your school gives you a satisfactory and improving education, and ensures that most of you achieve as well as you should by the time you leave.

It was good that so many of you really like coming to school and feel it is a very safe place to be. We were pleased to see how well behaved you were and how you worked well together in lessons. We noted that many of you are involved in the School Council and others have responsibilities around the school, such as monitors, play leaders, librarians and house captains. Many of you eat healthily and are actively involved in different sports and clubs. We were impressed with the range of activities at the school and the opportunities you have for outdoor activities. You even have your own wood!

Very many of your parents told us how much you like school, and this is reflected in your good attendance. You get on with your teachers and like the opportunities to be actively involved in discussion and group work. We could see that your teachers plan different activities and visits that make your learning interesting. However, we think you could do even better if teachers set out what exactly they wanted you to learn in a lesson and matched classwork more closely to your individual needs to make sure you are all fully challenged. Your teachers mark your work regularly and often tell you how you can improve it. This is very important and we have asked them to do more of this.

We also noted that many of you are involved in your village activities including the May Fayre and some of you, through your teachers have some links with other schools in Britain and overseas. We think this is very helpful in helping you understand the wider world so have asked your school to develop more links.

The headteacher, the school governors and all the staff are working hard to improve the school further. You can all help by maintaining your good attendance and continuing to take an active part in school affairs. Thank you again for being so friendly and helpful on our visit.

Yours sincerely

Graham Preston
Lead inspector

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