

Bruton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123899
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	359546
Inspection dates	15–16 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Tony Shield

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	260
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sean OConnor
Headteacher	Anne Stephens
Date of previous school inspection	14 November 2007
School address	Higher Backway Bruton BA10 0DP
Telephone number	01749 812331
Fax number	01749 812816
Email address	sch070@educ.somerset.gov.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 16 lessons or parts of lessons, and 14 teachers were observed. Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, members of staff and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of school documentation, including the self-evaluation form, safeguarding and other policy documents, the school development plan and records of pupils' progress. A small number of parents were spoken to at the school gate. In reaching their judgements, inspectors took into account the views of 103 parents and carers, in addition to those of pupils and staff, expressed in questionnaires.

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

- Evidence that progress is improving, and is more consistent across all years and in different subjects, particularly mathematics.
- Whether teaching is challenging for all pupils, and learning and progress consistently good, especially in mathematics.
- The impact of strategies undertaken to improve outcomes and provision.
- The extent to which all leaders are making an effective contribution to school improvement.

Information about the school

Bruton Primary School is larger than most primary schools. Most pupils are from a White British heritage, with a small number from other ethnic heritages. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, although higher in some years. These pupils have a range of learning difficulties, including speech and communications difficulties. Some have emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school has several awards reflecting its commitment to promoting healthy lifestyles, a sustainable future and global awareness.

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

Bruton Primary is a good school. The headteacher leads with a sure touch. She is ambitious for the school and its pupils. Her vision is shared by governors and the staff. With a number of staff taking on important new roles, there is a fresh impetus for improvement, so that together, they make a strong team.

Attainment throughout the school is rising, particularly in mathematics, which has lagged behind attainment in both reading and writing. In the Reception class, children get off to a good start and make good progress. They are well prepared for entry into Year 1. While attainment in national tests at the end of Year 6 has varied, it has been consistently above average in English. It is now above average by Year 6, and pupils make good progress.

Pupils are friendly and kind to one another. Behaviour is good both in and out of classrooms. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and the local community and take their responsibilities seriously, whether as members of the school council, leading the Christmas service for the local community, or organising litter-picks and charity fund-raising. Pupils have a good awareness of a healthy diet and an active lifestyle.

In lessons, good teaching has been the key factor in this improvement. Teachers plan interesting activities for their pupils and there is a purposeful climate for learning in all lessons. Good questioning, a brisk pace and a good variety of learning strategies are common. Nevertheless, some inconsistent approaches in the classroom remain. Assessment data is often used well to match work to individual pupils' needs, but this is not consistent and tasks set do not always build on pupils' prior attainment. While the more-able pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well because tasks are well suited to their needs, this is not always the case for pupils in the middle of the ability range. Pupils say they do not always know how well they are doing, and the quality of feedback, both oral and written, given to pupils is inconsistent.

The curriculum has been reviewed and this too has been an important factor in improving progress. As a result, pupils show a keen interest in their learning, and understand with increasing confidence how to use and apply skills in different contexts. The school is rightly proud of its provision for music. Singing in assembly was joyful, Year 3 played 'Mr Cool' with confidence on their cornets, and the orchestra boasts some good quality musicians.

The school is strongly committed to the care and welfare of each pupil. Support and guidance are very well targeted and a culture of care is at the heart of the school's work. Policies and procedures are comprehensive and regularly reviewed to ensure best practice. As a result, pupils feel secure and safe, trusting their teachers to do their best for them.

The school works very successfully in an outstanding partnership with its parents and carers. Annual surveys ensure their views are taken, investigated and taken into account.

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Parents are very appreciative of the work their school does to keep them informed and stay in touch.

Effective self-evaluation is guided by a comprehensive analysis of performance data. School development planning is now more sharply focused than formerly, although leaders do not always take account of the impact on pupils' learning and progress of the action they take to improve provision. The school is ambitious and has mapped a clear way forward. Academic outcomes are improving and measures to accelerate progress further are having a positive impact. The school's capacity for sustaining its improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further raise attainment especially in mathematics and accelerate the progress of pupils, particularly those pupils of average ability by:
 - making sharper use of assessment at classroom level to set work which builds more precisely on pupils' prior attainment
 - raising teachers' expectations of what average pupils might aspire to and achieve
 - ensuring pupils know how well they are doing through both oral and written feedback
 - measuring the impact on pupils' learning and progress of action taken to improve provision and outcomes.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The declining trend in reading, writing and mathematics at Key Stage 1 has been reversed. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to achieve well in English and there are secure signs of improvements in mathematics.

Pupils write with imagination and a careful attention to spelling, punctuation and grammar. Attainment in mathematics is improving as the impact of measures to tackle underachievement take effect. For example, Year 6 pupils confidently responded to the challenge of finding 11 different ways of visualising a cube from a two-dimensional shape. They sensibly discussed solutions with their classmates and worked with enjoyment and at a good pace.

Although there is still some variability in the rate of progress through the school, this is being resolved. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress as a result of well-targeted support. More-able pupils also make good progress, but some average ability pupils do not always fulfil their potential.

Pupils work hard, and much of their learning is done in pairs and groups. This helps them develop good interpersonal skills and teamwork through discussion and negotiation. Alongside their confident use and application of basic skills in different subjects, this ensures pupils are well prepared for their futures beyond primary school. The enterprising development of the school site is providing an increasingly rich resource for pupils to develop their understanding of growing plants and vegetables and of issues concerning a healthy diet and global sustainability. Pupils have a keen awareness of the beliefs, feelings and values of others and the school's links with other schools in Swindon and Zambia

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provide opportunities for pupils to develop a different perspective on ethnic, cultural and faith diversity both in the United Kingdom and globally. Attendance is improving and is above average.

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	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	2
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?

Pupils achieve well because the teaching interests and motivates the pupils to do their best. Much teaching is of a high quality, with clear explanations, good pace and questioning, which encourages pupils to think for themselves. An emphasis on getting pupils to work together and talk amongst themselves to solve problems is paying dividends. However, although the gap is narrowing, some variability in the pupils' learning and progress remain. Teaching assistants work in partnership with the teachers to ensure pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. The school's recent focus on mathematics has ensured that teaching of this subject is increasingly confident.

The curriculum has been imaginatively and thoughtfully rewritten to encourage a more integrated approach in which pupils understand the links between subjects and are motivated by tackling interesting and relevant topics. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of visits, visitors and well-supported extra-curricular clubs, and in assembly Year 6 spoke excitedly of their experiences on a residential camp. The school provides good access to the specialist teaching of music and nearly half of the pupils are learning to play

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an instrument. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well-planned and thoughtfully delivered.

Outstanding care, guidance and support ensure pupils feel secure. They know their welfare is paramount. They make increasingly good progress because of well-targeted support geared to their needs. Intervention programmes, and particularly those organised in 'The Den', are carefully planned. This area provides both a haven and a jumping-off point for those pupils who have difficulty in coping with school and in joining in. Transition in and out of the school is very well managed. The school is expert at supporting children who are vulnerable due to their circumstances. Parents and carers have confidence in the school's ability to keep their children safe.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher leads with a clear sense of purpose and ambition. She has garnered the support of staff and a recent remodelling of leadership responsibilities has created a fresh purpose. The school is realistic in its self-evaluation, knowing there is more to be done before it achieves its targets. However, the school has a strong forward momentum.

The governing body fulfils its statutory obligations well and plays a key part in both strategic planning and monitoring. A group of staff, parents and governors were touring classes and interviewing pupils during the inspection. This approach to monitoring progress on one of the key priorities in the school development plan is innovative and a reflection of the extent to which governors and parents are involved in self-evaluation and school improvement. Parents and carers are seen as equal partners in their children's education and the school provides 'Inspire' sessions to help them help their children at home.

The school is assiduous in ensuring safeguarding policies and procedures are watertight. Staff are alert to issues of child protection and understand their responsibilities, and attend regular training to ensure they are kept up-to-date. The school has undertaken an audit of its social context and adapted a sensible programme to encourage community cohesion. Most notably, this has included the development of links with schools with a very different ethnic and social mix. The school is committed to equal opportunities, tackles any discrimination and looks to get the best from each pupil. Assessment data is carefully monitored and used by the literacy and numeracy leaders in pupil progress meetings to plan interventions and strategies to support pupils at risk of underachievement. As a result, gaps between the performance of boys and girls are narrowing.

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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	2
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 make good progress from their below average starting points because of the stimulating and well-resourced classroom and outside areas. The spaces are well organised to prompt particular learning; the Doodle Den, for example, was successfully established to develop children's writing.

Adults routinely record their observations of each child's progress and these are carefully logged in individual learning diaries and used to inform subsequent planning. A good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities ensures children have good opportunities to develop across the full range of a rich curriculum. Parents are kept closely in touch with all that goes on. Children talk confidently to adults, developing language skills well. They play in a responsible and safe manner and behave with consideration for others. They even put on yellow hats while they construct their own hotel! Relationships are warm and friendly and underpinned by good classroom and behaviour management. In one lesson observed, the teacher encouraged high levels of concentration while getting the children to recognise different mathematical shapes. Feedback to the children was clear and encouraging. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader works closely with the class teacher and together they have clear plans for further improvement, based on a realistic analysis and evaluation of current provision.

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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

The response rate from parents and carers to the Ofsted questionnaire was higher than the national average for primary schools. Those that responded were very happy with the school. Almost all parents and carers were happy with their child's experience at school and believe their children are happy at school. A very large majority of them responded positively to all the other statements. While a small number of parents and carers expressed some concerns, there was no pattern to their comments, and they were more than outweighed by positive comments. Typical of such comments were: 'This is a very happy school' and 'I am impressed with the commitment of the teachers'. Inspectors confirm these positive views expressed by parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bruton 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 103 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection, a higher than average response rate. In total, there are 260 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	59	57	42	41	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	68	66	31	30	2	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	34	33	62	60	5	5	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	39	38	60	58	4	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	45	44	54	52	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	42	41	54	52	6	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	41	40	55	53	6	6	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)	43	42	51	50	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	39	38	58	56	6	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	29	63	61	7	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	28	67	65	6	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	46	45	49	48	4	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	58	56	43	42	2	2	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 31 December 2010 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.



17 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bruton Primary School, Somerset BA10 0DP

Thank you for your help during the recent inspection of your school. We enjoyed meeting you and talking with some of you. In writing this report, I have taken account of what you told me. Your school is a good school and improving all the time. All the adults in the school are working well together to make the school better still.

Here are some of the main findings from the report

- The school takes especially good care of you. This means that you feel safe and are able to enjoy being at school. It was really good to see how hard you worked in lessons and how much you enjoyed the learning.
- Good behaviour and attitudes are key factors in the good progress you make.
- Children in the Reception class get off to a good start.
- The teachers make sure you have lots of interesting things to do in lessons, and out of school. We particularly enjoyed hearing about the adventures Year 6 had at Okehampton.
- Although most teaching is good, we have asked the teachers to make sure that tasks in lessons are always suited for every child. Some of you told us that you don't know how well you are doing, so we have also asked the teachers to make sure they tell you. If they don't, then ask them.
- The school works particularly well with your parents and carers. Everybody is interested in making sure you do your very best.
- You have a good understanding of how to live a healthy and active life. Many of you take responsible jobs in the school, helping out on the School Council.

Thank you once again for your help during our visit, and best wishes for your work in the future.

Yours sincerely

Tony Shield

Lead inspector

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