

Bignold Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134955
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	381762
Inspection dates	10–11 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Nick Butt

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	422
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Susan Brookes
Headteacher	Adrian Day
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2008
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspection team visited 27 lessons or part lessons taught by 15 teachers. Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils, and spoke informally to parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at a selection of documentation, including planning, evidence of monitoring such as lesson observations, and analyses of pupils' work and other assessment information. The inspection team scrutinised inspection questionnaires returned by 110 parents and carers, as well as those from staff and pupils.

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

- What is the school doing to raise standards in mathematics?
- What is the impact of the school's new tracking system on how well teachers use assessment information?
- To what extent has the school sustained improvement with changes to subject leaders and the governing body?

Information about the school

Bignold is a large primary school. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Nursery. The large majority of pupils are White British. A small minority come from many different minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is average. The school has Healthy Schools status.

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

3

Main findings

Bignold is a satisfactory school. It has a caring ethos which ensures pupils feel safe and confident that they can turn to staff with any worries. Pupils' personal development is good and they behave well. From below expected starting points they make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, but the pace of learning slows to satisfactory as they move through the school, especially in Key Stage 2. This is because there is inconsistency in the use of assessment and target-setting to show pupils the next steps in their learning. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is broadly average overall and higher in English than in mathematics. The school has seen some improvement in writing following steps to make it more engaging for pupils. A new calculation policy is being introduced to ensure pupils learn mathematical skills incrementally, but sometimes there is not enough challenge for pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding.

The impact of teaching upon learning is satisfactory. Recent changes to staffing mean that there are more good elements to teaching, and questioning is often good and thought-provoking. Teachers make lessons generally interesting and make good use of technology to engage pupils. However, work is not always matched precisely to pupils' abilities to enable them to make the best possible progress. The curriculum has a positive impact on pupils' personal development and enjoyment of school. Whole-school topics, such as a recent one on Norwich, give pupils opportunities to discover their local area and use their basic skills across a range of subjects. The school's revised curriculum has only just been implemented in Years 4 to 6 and it is too early for changes to have had an impact on pupils' academic outcomes, although there have been positive signs in Key Stage 1, where the new curriculum has been running for longer.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy; they take a full part in sporting clubs, enjoying success against other schools on the hockey field. They contribute well to the school and wider community, taking on responsibilities such as being members of the school council and playground buddies. The choir often performs for the community. Pupils raise funds for charities at home and abroad by running stalls and organising events.

Leaders and managers have successfully maintained the school's good pastoral care since the last inspection, and the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved significantly under its exceptional new leader. There has been less progress in developing the roles of middle leaders, partly because of staff changes. A new

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tracking system has only just been introduced and leaders are still learning how to make the best use of it, but it is providing detailed and relevant information about the progress of individuals and groups. Regular monitoring takes place, but sometimes results in self-evaluation that is too generous. The governing body has seen many changes recently and is finding new direction under the guidance of its new chair. Members of the governing body have identified that they have relied too heavily on others for the interpretation of data in the past and are keen to develop their own skills so that they can provide more support and challenge in this area. The school has made satisfactory progress overall since its last inspection and has a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in mathematics to at least match those in English by:
 - fully implementing the calculation policy
 - providing sufficient challenge for all pupils
 - building on the work to improve mental mathematics.
- Improve the use of assessment information to accelerate pupils' progress by:
 - matching work to all pupils' needs, especially the most able
 - setting individual targets for all pupils in reading, writing and mathematics so they understand the next steps in their learning.
- Strengthen the school's drive for improvement by:
 - ensuring most teaching is consistently good or better
 - developing the monitoring roles of middle leaders further
 - ensuring the governing body makes effective use of detailed and accurate information about pupils' progress and attainment to provide full support and challenge.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils enjoy learning, particularly when lessons actively challenge and involve them. Year 6 pupils fondly recalled trying to build a tower out of marshmallows and spaghetti to hold an egg. Pupils work together well in groups and are also able to concentrate on independent work. They have a thirst for knowledge and pick up technical terms quickly. Year 5 pupils could talk about alliteration and simile when writing a character description and Year 6 pupils about personification in the opening of a story. Pupils make satisfactory progress but are not always given sufficient information about how to improve, particularly in the form of clear targets. The work usually meets their needs, but sometimes is too easy for the most able pupils. In a

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large group of pupils learning about the sounds that letters make, some struggled to keep up, while others fidgeted because they knew all the answers.

Children in the Nursery and Reception make good progress, but all other groups achieve satisfactorily. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. While there is good one-to-one support for pupils with particular needs, provision for other pupils varies. Occasionally the support does not pinpoint exactly what they most need to make rapid progress.

Pupils have a good knowledge of e-safety, and parents and carers agree that pupils are kept safe at school. Pupils contribute well to improving the local environment and designed an award-winning playground for a local park. They take part in local cultural projects, such as opening up the school as an art studio, and working with a local theatre to produce an opera. Attendance has been low in the past, but has improved significantly this year and is now average. Pupils are more aware of how important it is not to miss school. Their spiritual, moral, cultural and social development is good. Pupils from all different backgrounds work and play harmoniously together. A good example of this is the multicultural summer celebration, when pupils, parents and carers and the local community come together to celebrate the food, customs, costumes, music and dance of many cultures.

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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching has improved this term and is having a more positive impact on pupils'

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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learning, but inconsistencies mean that the pace of learning is still no better than satisfactory. In particular, pupils are not always clear what exactly they have to do to make the next steps in their learning, either in lessons or from their books. In the best lessons teachers take full account of pupils' prior learning and plan work that meets individual needs well. These lessons run at a brisk pace and include high-quality discussion about learning. Where teaching is not so strong the pace is more varied, with some activities taking too long to complete. Some teachers give pupils opportunities to comment on their own and others' work, sometimes using specific guidance to help them, but this is not consistent. Marking generally follows the new policy and includes plenty of praise, but is uneven in showing pupils how to improve.

The curriculum includes some good links across subjects, as when pupils wrote tourist guides for a city walk in Norwich. It is enriched well with visits and visitors, such as an 'evacuee day' at a local historical centre. Art and design is a strong feature of the curriculum and there are attractive displays of pupils' work, including portraits of the Norwich 'blitz'. The curriculum contributes well to pupils' understanding of keeping healthy and safe. However, its implementation is too recent in Key Stage 2 to raise academic standards in any sustained or significant way. Pastoral care of pupils is a strength of the school, particularly in supporting those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. A daily 'nurture group' gives pupils opportunities to develop in a safe and supportive environment. The school's newly appointed parent-support adviser has already made a real difference in working with families who have struggled to get their children to school, with rapid improvements in punctuality and attendance.

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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and deputy headteacher work together well to promote the school's positive ethos, which parents and carers value. A typical comment was, 'Bignold is a very welcoming school at which my child has been very happy and developed well'. Several staff are new to their roles as middle managers and are beginning to make a difference to the quality of teaching and learning, with steady improvement since the last inspection. They have not had sufficient access to detailed and reliable performance data in the past, although the new tracking system is starting to change this and teachers are being held more to account for the progress of pupils. The school's view of its own performance has been higher than the evidence shows, and some of the monitoring has lacked rigour to provide the necessary challenge to

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leaders and managers. Strategic planning identifies areas to improve such as raising standards in mathematics, but does not always set measurable targets by which progress can be judged. The effectiveness of the governing body is satisfactory. Its members have a good knowledge of the school and reflect increasingly upon the impact of their monitoring arrangements. They are asking more probing questions and are keen to inform themselves better about progress data.

The school engages with parents and carers and a range of partners well. It communicates effectively with parents and carers and arranges a wide range of events for them to become more involved in their children's education, such as the 'reading cafe'. Good partnerships with local schools, sports organisations and the university contribute well to pupils' personal development in particular. The local cluster of schools organises without charge a holiday activity programme. The school promotes equality of opportunity satisfactorily, analysing the performance of different groups and helping pupils to close gaps in attainment, particularly in reading and writing. Inclusion is a particular strength. Safeguarding arrangements are good, with high-quality training for all staff and meticulous record keeping. The school promotes community cohesion well, having a good understanding of its local community and reaching out to different groups. Pupils have also established links at home and abroad. For example, Year 2 pupils spent a day at a small rural school to experience life in a contrasting location.

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	3
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	3
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	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Significant improvements since the last inspection mean provision is now good, with children making good progress in an attractive and spacious learning environment. The space is well organised and enables children to access a wide range of resources

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to promote their independence. Clearly designated learning areas such as the writing area with helpful displays of letters and words encourage children to develop an interest in writing. There are good opportunities for learning through play, such as in the 'police station' outside. Children enjoyed making their own special police badges.

Much emphasis on developing basic literacy and numeracy skills gives children a good start to their education and they learn freely both inside and outside. Staff make careful assessments of their progress and record these in attractive 'Learning Journeys' that build up a clear picture of each child. They take full account of children's interests when planning topics. Outstanding leadership has brought together a very skilled team that understands how young children learn. Self-evaluation is meticulous and rigorous. For example, the leader has identified how adults can engage even more with children to make the most of their learning, especially when they are outside. She ensures that children's well-being is paramount and that they are cared for extremely well. Excellent relationships with parents and carers ensure children settle quickly into the Nursery and Reception. 'Stay and play' sessions, when parents and carers spend time with their children taking part in activities, are supported well. Children make particularly good progress in their personal and social development, learning to take turns and get on well with one another. Many meet the expected early learning goals in most areas by the time they leave Reception, although writing is not quite as strong.

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	1

Views of parents and carers

A smaller proportion of parents and carers returned questionnaires than is found in most primary schools. Of these, most feel their children enjoy school and are positive about many aspects of the school's work. Written comments often praised the school, but a few parents and carers felt behaviour could be better managed and that their children could be challenged more. The inspection team found that staff manage behaviour well. While pupils make satisfactory progress overall, inspectors found that not all pupils are sufficiently challenged.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bignold 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 110 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 422 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	72	66	33	30	2	2	2	2
The school keeps my child safe	59	54	45	41	4	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	49	45	54	50	5	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	48	44	47	43	12	11	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	61	56	40	37	4	4	2	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	52	48	46	42	8	7	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	47	43	57	52	1	1	2	2
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)	39	36	50	46	3	3	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	43	39	49	45	10	9	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	35	32	52	48	11	10	3	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	46	42	45	41	7	6	4	4
The school is led and managed effectively	48	44	45	41	5	5	6	6
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	64	59	39	36	1	1	4	4

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 8 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.



14 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bignold Primary School, Norwich, NR2 2SP

Thank you for making us welcome when we visited your school recently and for sharing your views with us. Your school provides a satisfactory standard of education. It does some things well and there are areas it could improve. We are glad you feel safe at school and enjoy going on visits and taking part in clubs. Here are some other strengths of the school.

- The youngest children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- You have a good understanding about how to keep healthy.
- You are very willing to take on jobs to help the school and the local community.
- You get on well with pupils from all different backgrounds.
- The school cares for you well.

Standards in mathematics are behind those in English so we have asked your teachers to raise them by giving you the skills you need to improve. We have asked them to make sure that work always challenges you and makes you think, and to show you exactly what steps you need to take to make good progress in your learning. We have also asked the school's leaders and the governing body to check carefully how well you are doing so that the school continues to get better.

You all can help by working hard and making sure you come to school every day.

Thank you once again for your help and our best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Nick Butt
Lead inspector

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