

Bunbury Aldersey CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111344
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	378284
Inspection dates	23–24 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Allan Torr 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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr W Done
Headteacher	Mrs A Thacker
Date of previous school inspection	30 September 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. They observed 16 lessons taught by nine teachers and some specialist teachers. Inspectors held meetings with staff, members of the governing body, two groups of pupils and held informal discussions with parents and carers and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' work, data showing pupils' attainment and progress, documents regarding the care and protection of pupils (safeguarding) and school policies. Inspectors scrutinised the 42 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and those returned by staff and pupils in Key Stage 2.

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

- It considered whether higher-attaining pupils' attainment has increased since the previous inspection, particularly in science.
- It looked at the attainment and progress of summer-born pupils to see if they are similar to other pupils.
- It investigated to see whether marking and peer-assessment systems have a positive impact on pupils' achievement and their understanding of exactly what they need to do to improve their work.
- It evaluated whether curriculum and community cohesion arrangements enable all pupils to know about all forms of diversity and develop good cultural development.
- It assessed the governing body's effectiveness in supporting and challenging the school and whether it is effective in ensuring statutory duties are met well.

Information about the school

Bunbury Aldersey is a slightly below-average-sized primary school. A higher-than-average proportion of pupils are girls and a very low proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. Almost all pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is well-below average. The school has been successful in gaining a number of awards including the national Healthy Schools status, Artsmark gold, Basic Skills, Sportsmark, ECO green flag and International School (intermediate) award.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Bunbury Aldersey is an outstanding primary school. Pupils make outstanding progress from their starting points because of outstanding teaching and an exciting, highly-effective curriculum. Key drivers in pupils' outstanding achievement are their exemplary behaviour and attitudes to learning, their high level of attendance and their excellent spiritual, moral and social development. Pupils are mature, responsive, self-controlled and well-rounded young people.

Standards in the past have been well above average compared with other primary schools. Some parents and carers perceptively identified that there has been a slip in attainment recently particularly of higher-attaining pupils. This, in part, has been due to staffing turbulence yet standards remained above average compared with other schools. Inspection evidence indicates standards are high in music, English and art and design. One reason for this is the excellent partnership work with artists in residence, specialist music teachers and with theatre companies. Pupils' writing levels have increased since the previous inspection and a higher proportion of pupils attain the higher Level 5 in science. Pupils' attainment in most year groups is high in reading, writing and in mathematics but there could be an even greater proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in all subjects.

School leaders, including subject coordinators, regularly check teachers' and pupils' work. This system of monitoring is effective but would be improved if the monitoring was more focused on groups of pupils and on their learning and achievement. At the moment, for example, work scrutinies are concerned with ensuring consistency across the school and how well teachers meet school policies and procedures rather than how well pupils are progressing.

Since the previous inspection, there has been an improvement in governance. Members of the governing body are well-trained, knowledgeable and have the right skills to be able to support and challenge the school. They have improved the security of the site and have questioned differences between the interpretations of data regarding pupils' achievement. Some elements of meeting statutory duties are not as good as they could be, such as ensuring policies, procedures and the curriculum cover each of the forms of diversity protected under the 2010 Equality Act. As a result, the community cohesion action plan has not been fully evaluated to show how pupils' cultural development and knowledge of diversity have increased.

The good-quality action plan contains priorities for improvement based on a critical and accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and relative weaknesses. The school, since the previous inspection, has made improvements to governance, pupils' attainment in science, tracking pupils' progress and in the curriculum. New appointments to the school have strengthened leadership and management and improvements to the roles and responsibilities of subject leaders mean leadership is better distributed throughout the school. These factors indicate the school has good capacity for further improvement and provides outstanding value for money.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure all leaders, in their monitoring of the quality of teaching, focus on the impact on pupils' progress and learning.
- Increase pupils' awareness of the full range of diverse cultures by:
 - evaluating the impact of the community cohesion action plan on how well pupils understand diversity.
 - amending policies and procedures to take full account of the different strands of diversity: age, gender, transgender, disability, sexuality, faith and ethnicity.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils throughout the school enjoy lessons, are fully engaged and motivated by their learning. Children enter the Reception class with skills, knowledge and development which are typical for their age. Their skills are much lower in reading, writing and calculating. They reach standards that are above average by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. There is no significant difference between the attainment of girls, boys, and pupils eligible for free school meals. However, children born in the summer, at this stage, are significantly well behind their peers. This gap closes significantly throughout the school and leaders track summer-born and other groups of pupils to ensure they are on track to make two levels of progress by the time they finish in Year 6 to reach high standards.

Pupils with a disability and those with special educational needs also make outstanding progress. This is because expectations of staff are high and although pupils are provided with individual and specialist support, the expectations of two levels progress is the same as for other pupils.

Most parents and carers who returned a questionnaire and spoke with inspectors agreed their children enjoyed school, felt safe, were making enough progress, knew how to lead a healthy lifestyle and were very well prepared for their future. These views were also reflected in the opinions expressed by pupils. Pupils have a detailed understanding of how to be safe when using the internet and new technology and say there is no bullying in school. There is some inappropriate pejorative use of the word 'gay', for example, to mean rubbish, but pupils are adamant there is no name calling or racism.

Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school and local community through links with the church, the village and with community groups such as senior citizens. Pupils undertook an excellent and successful campaign, after undertaking a risk assessment, for a trip to the local wood, to stop dogs fouling footpaths. They are extremely well prepared for their futures, developing skills of performance, problem-solving, cooperation, collaboration, independence and skills in using information and communication technology.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	1
Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account:	1
Pupils' attendance ¹	
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching over time is outstanding. During the inspection, teaching was judged to be good in almost all and outstanding in over a third of lessons. Common successful elements are strong relationships with pupils enabling them to gain in confidence; high levels of teacher subject knowledge and high teacher expectations. Teachers maximise time to extend pupils' vocabulary and speaking and listening skills. Pupils are active throughout the lesson making notes on whiteboards or discussing answers with a partner in the class. The teaching is enhanced further by good-quality specialist teaching in French, music, sports and art. Some weaker elements of teaching are the use of some low-level worksheets in activities which hinder pupils' ability to think and to extend or apply their knowledge and skills.

Since the previous inspection, teachers have improved their feedback to pupils and also their marking. As a result, pupils know what they need to do to improve, are involved in assessing and setting their own targets and are involved in assessing and improving each other's work. In some younger pupils' books, teachers mark the work but the words are too complex for pupils of this age to read.

The curriculum is outstanding. A strong element within it is the involvement of pupils in suggesting things they want to learn about and shaping the structure of the topics. The curriculum meets pupils' needs and interests and has strong elements of global citizenship, sustainable development, speaking and listening and social and

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

emotional aspects of learning. The curriculum is enhanced further by a large range of trips and visitors to the school, challenges, theme days and extra-curricular activities.

Induction into the Reception class is good and enables children to get off to a good start. Transition into Year 7 in secondary school is outstanding with joint residential visits, fortnightly mathematics lessons, modern foreign language teaching and visits to and from the high school. The few pupils who have a disability, are known to be in circumstances that make them vulnerable or who have been identified as having special educational needs are very well taught and supported by staff. They have short, sharp targets within their individual education plans and have well-targeted extra teaching which is having a strong impact on their achievement.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders have a very clear vision and correct focus to put pupils first and to ensure pupils achieve as well as they can. They monitor the work of the school and teachers' work very well and have made improvements to teaching and learning and the curriculum. Subject leaders' monitoring of teaching and pupils' learning is good and is improving further. The scrutiny of pupils' work does not always follow up as well as it could to show whether areas for development the last time it was completed have improved.

The school works well and benefits from partnerships with parents and carers through for example, stay-and-play sessions in reception, workshops, and through a large number of helpers working in the school. There are plans in place to improve communication further and the involvement of parents and carers in shaping policies and procedures. A few parents and carers judged the school to be not well led or managed and a similar number of staff agreed. Questionnaires from staff indicate almost all are proud to be at the school, know what the school is trying to achieve, feel involved, are well-trained and believe that the school runs smoothly. Key areas of disagreement are communication to staff, visibility of the headteacher and valuing staff ideas and contributions. The inspection team investigated these aspects but judged these aspects to be good.

Staff do an excellent job in ensuring equal opportunities for all groups of pupils and making sure that barriers to learning, and gaps between groups of pupils in achievement are tackled. The outcomes of community cohesion policies are good. It is a harmonious school in which all pupils get on well together. Older pupils are buddies with younger pupils and play very positively with them at break times. It was a joy to watch how well they cared for younger pupils in the school. Although the governing body has ensured almost all statutory duties are met and they now do a

good job in supporting and challenging the school, there is room to have an improved and more rigorous system of checking how well it meets all its requirements.

The quality of caring for and protecting pupils (safeguarding) is good. It is a high priority within the school and health and safety systems, risk assessments and security measures have been reviewed and improved. Systems to check on staff and visitors meet government requirements.

These are the grades for the 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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
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	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

The leadership of the Reception class is outstanding. The teacher constantly reviews and evaluates the quality and the effectiveness of teaching and the curriculum on children's learning and development. She is very open to external moderation and monitoring. Staff who work in the class have a very good understanding of how children at this stage learn and are passionate and committed to their welfare. The teacher works hard to ensure all adults working in Reception have the training and skills they need to continually improve their practice. This results in high levels of teaching. There is a very good balance between observation and teaching so that time is not wasted in ensuring children move onto the next stage in their learning. Adults make good use of open questions, suggestions, resources and visual prompts to extend pupils' learning. Activities and parts of sessions are outstanding because they are based on children's own ideas, they extend children's thinking and all of the activities are connected. In the mini-topic of pirates, for example, a group of children extended their creative and fine-motor skills in making pirate money and one group used their skills of balance in walking the plank from the pirate ship they had made. In addition, adults prompted children's thinking and their speech by posing questions and scenarios about pirates.

Children's outcomes are outstanding. They make rapid progress in their reading, writing and calculating skills. They are aware of hazards and systems to ensure their health, such as hygiene rules, and they have high levels of independence, collaboration and cooperation. Staff work well with parents and carers, making note

of children’s activities via the home-school diary and building on these in class. Stay-and-play sessions are enjoyable and effective in enabling parents and carers to know how well their children are doing in this important first year in school.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Views of parents and carers

A relatively low proportion of parents and carers returned questionnaires so although the proportions for some questions are high the numbers of parents and carers are low.

The large majority of parents and carers are happy with their children’s experience at school and are particularly complimentary about the quality of the teaching and teachers and the school’s preparation for pupils’ futures. A significant minority of parents and carers raised important concerns. These included: a lack of communication and lack of frequent information about pupils’ progress, homework, the school governors not meeting statutory duties, staffing difficulties and a consequent slip in standards in Years 5 and 6. A few parents and carers expressed concerns about the leadership of the school. Evidence suggests school leaders have taken difficult and very effective decisions to stabilise staffing and return standards to being high. Inspectors spoke to members of the governing body to ensure they are fully compliant with all laws and regulations. They also spoke with leaders and managers to suggest improving consultation and communication with parents and carers and to provide more frequent updates and information about their children’s progress. Inspectors took all parents and carers views into account and this contributed to some judgements being good rather than outstanding.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bunbury Aldersey CofE 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 42 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 208 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	23	55	16	38	1	2	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	26	62	15	36	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	11	26	21	50	6	14	2	5
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	33	20	48	4	10	3	7
The teaching is good at this school	13	31	22	52	5	12	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	14	33	18	43	9	21	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	36	21	50	6	14	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)	17	40	19	45	3	7	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	13	31	22	52	4	10	3	7
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	11	26	20	48	6	14	3	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	9	21	19	45	7	17	3	7
The school is led and managed effectively	6	14	13	31	12	29	9	21
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	16	38	18	43	6	14	2	5

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

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

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



25 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bunbury Aldersey CofE Primary School, CW6 9NR

You may remember I came to visit your school with a team of inspectors. Thank you to those of you who took time to speak with us and to those who filled in and returned a questionnaire. It was a real pleasure speaking with members of the school and Eco councils. We took all of your opinions into account and this letter is to explain some of our findings.

You go to an outstanding school. The younger children in Reception get off to an excellent start. Your lessons are fun, practical and active which means you make outstanding progress. The standards you reach by the end of Year 6 are high particularly in English, music and art and design. Your rate of attendance is high and you are extremely well prepared for your next class and your future. We judged that your knowledge of how to be safe and healthy and how to contribute to your school and community are outstanding. We have asked teachers to think about how you can increase your knowledge and understanding about the full range of groups of people in the wider and world community. All inspectors were impressed with your behaviour in class and around school and with the fact there is no tolerance of name calling or any form of bullying.

The teachers and adults who lead and manage the school and the different subjects you study do a good job. We have asked them, when they check on your books and the quality of lessons that they follow through on any weaknesses they find which will improve your work or standards.

Yours sincerely

Allan Torr
Her Majesty's Inspector

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