

Bovington First School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	113680
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	395506]
Inspection dates	9–10 July 2012
Lead inspector	Paul Garvey

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

Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martin Gething
Headteacher	Juliet Muir
Date of previous school inspection	12 June 2009
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Age group	4–9
Inspection date(s)	9–10 July 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Paul Garvey

Additional Inspector

Marion Hobbs

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors visited 12 lessons taught by eight teachers. A number of lessons were also visited for shorter periods to gather information. Additionally, the inspectors met with pupils, members of staff and members of the governing body. The inspectors listened to pupils read and analysed work in pupils' books. They took account of the responses to the online Parent View questionnaire in planning the inspection, observed the school's work and looked at a variety of documentation, including records of pupils' progress, school self-evaluation documents and external evaluations of the school's work. The 57 returned questionnaires from parents and carers were analysed.

Information about the school

Bovington First School is a smaller than average-sized school of its type which draws the majority of its pupils from the adjacent army training establishment. As a result, only a small number of children who enter the school in Reception are still attending the school by the end of Year 4. Most pupils are of White British heritage and few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action plus, or who have a statement of special educational needs, is above average. The school holds a number of nationally recognised awards, including the UNESCO Rights Respecting school at level 1 and the Eco Green Flag Award. There is a pre-school on site which is not managed by the governing body and is subject to a separate inspection. A new deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2011. The school will re-open as Bovington Primary School in September 2012 and will eventually provide education for the full primary age range.

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	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- Bovington First School is an outstanding school. All groups of pupils, including the large number of pupils from army families, make excellent progress and thrive in all aspects of their academic and personal development. Parents and carers are extremely positive about the work of the school.
- Pupils achieve exceptionally well from starting points that are often low, and progress across the school to the end of Year 4 is outstanding. All groups make outstanding progress, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. There is also exceptional progress in reading.
- Teaching is outstanding. The skilled work of all adults ensures that all pupils learn at a rapid pace. In a small minority of lessons where teachers do not check the rates of progress of all individuals in their class frequently enough, learning for some pupils can be a little slower.
- Behaviour and safety in the school are outstanding. Pupils have exceptionally positive attitudes to learning. The rapid assimilation of new entrants to the school means that the needs of pupils with particular behavioural difficulties are addressed with alacrity. New pupils are not only nurtured extremely well by all staff, but they also benefit from the warm welcome and supportive care of their classmates and so feel very safe.
- The headteacher provides inspirational and visionary leadership. She is ably supported by high quality leaders at all levels. An experienced governing body has guided the school through its forthcoming conversion to a primary school. Teaching and staff performance are extremely well managed. A wide range of extra-curricular activities and visits extends the exciting curriculum and contributes extremely well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress even more by ensuring that teachers always check the rates of pupil progress frequently, so they can re-shape the learning of individual pupils as necessary.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the work of Bovington First School. 'I could not wish for a better school for my children' was one comment, typical of many. Pupils arrive at the school with skills that are generally well below expectations for their age. They settle into their new classes strikingly quickly and make excellent progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage.

All groups of pupils make rapid progress in all years, resulting in above average expected levels of attainment by the end of Year 4. Outstanding progress was seen in many lessons. For example, in a Year 3 numeracy lesson, pupils were measuring perimeter and area. Excellent questioning and support for each individual led to a sustained and focused learning experience for all. Tasks were expertly designed to challenge pupils of all abilities and thus engagement and progress were excellent throughout. Pupils make exceptional progress in reading. By the end of Year 2, all pupils know how to decode new words and higher ability readers were heard to display notable fluency in their reading. Their attainment is above average. When pupils leave the school, their skills in reading are well above those expected for their age.

The tracking and monitoring of pupils' progress are exemplary and this allows carefully targeted intervention to be put in place. As a result of outstanding teaching and skilled support from all adults, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make exceptional progress, as do vulnerable pupils. A small group of pupils was observed making excellent progress in doubling numbers using counters. This was due to the high degree of independence the teaching had instilled in them, so they could manipulate the counters successfully and come to their own conclusions.

One parent commented, 'I was amazed at how quickly my child's needs in writing were identified and since then he has made terrific progress.' Pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and the few pupils whose first language is not English make progress as rapidly as their peers.

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Quality of teaching

Detailed planning and careful deployment of talented support staff lead to excellent progress for all groups of pupils. In a Year 2 class, exceptionally good planning and very careful monitoring of pupils' progress by the teaching assistants and the teacher allowed all pupils to seize the chance to plan a series of inventive problems for other pupils to solve to crack a number code. In writing the problems, pupils were encouraged to apply their literacy skills and take care with punctuation and sentence structure. Thus the teacher was able to intervene appropriately to boost the learning of individual pupils and ensure remarkable progress for all. Where teachers checked less frequently upon the progress of individuals, the pace of learning for those pupils slowed, as they were not able to move on as quickly as their classmates. Teachers' marking is excellent and detailed teacher comments give pupils a clear indication of how to improve. The teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is highly effective and ensures that these pupils make excellent progress from their individual starting points.

Progress in reading is exceptional, due to the excellent teaching of sounds and letters from a young age and a seamless linking of reading and writing. In a Reception class, the children were learning to write letters to people of their own choice. After a swift practice of vowel sounds, pupils were encouraged to use 'brain buddies' to discuss what good words their letter would contain. Enthusiastic teaching and clever questioning produced excited learners, eager to read their letter from their whiteboards.

Teachers use the creative and highly engaging curriculum to good effect. In a Year 3 science lesson, pupils were observed enjoying testing materials with which to make a coat for 'Robo the Robot' about whom they had learned in their morning lessons. Chances for reflection about Robo's rusting predicament and collaborative work to provide a solution for him produced both excellent learning in science and the effective promotion of their social, moral and spiritual education.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The foundations upon which the school's success is built are the relationships between pupils and adults and the friendships that pupils quickly forge with new arrivals. New pupils are quickly welcomed into the school community, whether they stay from Reception to Year 4, or whether, as is the case for most, their stay is shorter. All parents and carers who returned a questionnaire feel that the school meets their child's particular needs and this is one reason why school has been recognised as a rights-respecting school by UNESCO. Pupils' immediate emotional security is paramount and a speedy and accurate assessment of their needs allows remarkably swift assimilation into the life of the school, a school which pupils described, on several separate occasions, as being 'special'. One parent commented, 'My son was made to feel safe and supported from day one.' As a result, attendance is above average.

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Where pupils have particular behavioural needs, the school works very well in partnership with a range of agencies. As a result, all parents and carers who replied to the questionnaire thought there was a good standard of behaviour in the school and all felt that their children were kept safe. Pupils said that they remembered few instances of poor behaviour and, when any did occur, their teachers always provided support very quickly. A group of Year 3 pupils proudly showed off their anti-bullying board, saying that they had received lots of information about different types of bullying and that instances of bullying in the school were very uncommon. All respondents to the parents' and carers' questionnaire said that the school deals with any instances of bullying effectively.

Leadership and management

The drive towards excellence is uncompromising. The experienced headteacher has been instrumental in creating a climate where her vision of success and achievement has become the goal in everything the school undertakes. This vision is reflected in the excellent work and high expectations of leaders at all levels. As a consequence, this is an extremely successful school where pupils feel safe and behave well, where achievement is high and where the pupils benefit from accomplished teaching. Leaders were seen to possess excellent abilities to judge the quality of teaching. As a result, the schools' monitoring of the quality of teaching over time, combined with successful professional development for staff, has shown improvement to the outstanding levels observed on inspection.

All groups of pupils achieve outstandingly well and there is an absence of discrimination; the promotion of equal opportunities in the school is excellent. The detailed monitoring of the progress of every pupil is exemplary and provides the school with an accurate picture from which to effectively tailor individual support. The governing body provides experience and acumen to guide the school, challenging the headteacher where necessary and supporting the school's work assiduously. Procedures for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements and are highly effective. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and the school has demonstrated a range of improvements from the last inspection. As a result, the school shows excellent capacity for further improvement.

A strong partnership with parents and carers underpins the excellent achievement by pupils. One commented, 'The support we have received is second to none'. There were many positive responses about the school's work from parents and carers to every question on the questionnaire. Staff said that they feel valued and that their professional development needs are well catered for. Changes to the curriculum over recent years have ensured that it provides memorable experiences for all year groups. A series of visits and a wide range of extra-curricular activities have been used to good effect to support pupils' cultural education. For instance, pupils visited Chinatown during a visit to London where they accepted their second place award in the national Eco awards. The school's environmental work has also led to the school being awarded the Eco Green Flag, of which pupils were very proud.

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Home learning has replaced more traditional forms of homework and has cemented the school's relationship with its parents and carers. Other fruitful partnerships have supported and extended pupils' learning. For example, sixth form pupils from the local secondary school have visited the school as 'teaching experts' to support the learning of Year 3 and 4 pupils. Provision for pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is built into all teachers' planning and this leads to numerous opportunities to extend pupils' education in these areas. A range of spiritual and cultural experiences in assemblies supplements this excellent provision in lessons. A whole-school 'memories' assembly produced discussion and joyful laughter amongst pupils as the school community sang and reminisced together about the last few days of Bovington First School and looked forward to the future as Bovington Primary School.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

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

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

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

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

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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



11 July 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bovington First School, Wareham BH20 6LE

We would like to thank you for helping us during the inspection. You made us very welcome and were always very polite, and you told us of the many things that you enjoy at school.

Yours is an outstanding school, where you achieve outstandingly well. You all contribute a great deal to this by making the many new entrants to the school, from army families or other families, so welcome into your classes. You told us that you feel very safe in your school. This is a result of the excellent care you receive and the care that you give to others. Behaviour in your school is excellent and you attend well. We enjoyed talking with you and listening to you read so well. Your parents and carers are extremely pleased with the school.

You have an inspirational headteacher and your school leaders give the school excellent direction. You benefit from outstanding teaching and you told us how much you enjoy your lessons. We saw you relishing taking part in your exciting curriculum topics and you told us about the many extra activities that teachers put on for you. We were particularly impressed by your wonderful singing in an assembly where pupils, headteacher and staff were looking forward together to being a part of the new Bovington Primary School.

To help to make the school even better, we have asked your teachers to check frequently on the progress being made by each one of you during your lessons, so that your work can always be tailored for you. You can help in this by making sure someone knows when you are stuck so they can then help you to move on.

We hope you all continue to make excellent progress in the future.

Yours sincerely

Paul Garvey
Lead inspector

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