



# Bentley Heath Church of England Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 104088  
**LEA** Solihull  
**Inspection number** 277066  
**Inspection dates** 23 March 2006 to 24 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Lois Furness AI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Widney Close
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled		Solihull
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		West Midlands B93 9AS
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01564 772132
<b>Number on roll</b>	432	<b>Fax number</b>	01564 775708
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Peter Derrington
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	17 January 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Malcolm Evans

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 23 March 2006 - 24 March 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 277066
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This school is much larger than most primary schools. It serves an advantaged area of Solihull and few pupils are eligible for free school meals. Although most pupils are of White British origin, 12 other ethnic backgrounds are represented. There are no pupils at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, including those with a statement of educational need, is well below average.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 4**

The school is not effective enough and it does not give satisfactory value for money. Achievement is good in the Nursery and in Years 3 to 6, but it is inadequate from children's entry into Reception to the end of Year 2. Teachers in these year groups do not all expect enough of pupils and some work lacks challenge, particularly for the more able. Consequently, some pupils, mainly boys, lose interest and learning time is wasted. In spite of children's good achievement in the Nursery, quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are inadequate overall as too many children in Reception make insufficient progress.

However, there are notable strengths. By the end of Year 6, standards are consistently high. Pupils enjoy school and attendance is good. There is a strong commitment by the leadership of the school to ensure the personal development of pupils, which is good. The majority feel safe and well cared for, knowing there is an adult they can turn to if needed. Teaching is good in the Nursery and in Years 3 to 6. Parents are appreciative of what the school provides and value the staff team, whom they consider to be hard working and approachable. A good range of enrichment activities benefits pupils' learning.

Leadership and management are satisfactory and the school has the capacity to improve further. Weaknesses in provision have been identified correctly and improvements made, but the actions taken have not rectified the problems completely. This is because the expertise of key subject leaders is underused and advice to teachers on how to improve is not clear enough. The school judges itself to be better than it is because it gives too much weight to the good progress of the older pupils, and does not review the progress of pupils in Reception and Years 1 and 2 rigorously enough. Nevertheless, the school has addressed issues from the last inspection satisfactorily and effectively tackled the underachievement of pupils now in Year 3.

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it might reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to teaching and achievement in Reception and Years 1 and 2.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

Raise teachers' expectations of what pupils in Reception and Years 1 and 2 are able to do and ensure that challenging activities match the needs and interests of all pupils, especially the more able boys. Develop a more rigorous approach to checking if pupils are learning as much as they should in Reception and Years 1 and 2. Use the expertise of subject leaders more effectively to support colleagues.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 4**

Pupils' achievement is inadequate. Although children make good progress in the Nursery, this picture is not maintained throughout the Foundation Stage. The achievement of too many children in the Reception year is unsatisfactory.

In 2005, standards in the Year 2 tests were broadly average but few pupils attained the higher Level 3 in reading and mathematics. Pupils underachieved in these areas, although their achievement was satisfactory in writing. The assessments of pupils currently in Year 2 show improvements in standards and in their progress. However, considering the children's above average attainment on entry to the school, standards are not yet high enough. Boys do not achieve as well as girls, mainly because the activities do not capture their interest or match their learning needs well enough.

The leadership team has responded well to the underachievement of the pupils in Year 2, who are now in Year 3. Better use of assessment and the grouping of pupils by ability are leading to higher standards. In Years 3 to 6, good teaching results in good achievement. Over the past three years, standards by Year 6 have been consistently high. The challenging targets set for Year 6 pupils were exceeded last year, and pupils are on track to meet the targets this year. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities in Years 3 to 6 make good progress as do those in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 when supported by specialist staff. When working on their own, they make the same progress as their classmates.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

The personal development and well-being of pupils are good, as is their spiritual, moral and social development. Cultural development is satisfactory. Although improvements have been made since the last inspection there is still more to do to improve pupils' awareness of living in a multicultural society. Pupils share a mutual respect for each other and relationships are good. Members of the school council speak enthusiastically and with pride about how their ideas to improve relationships in the playground have been implemented. Enjoyment of learning is evident, and the majority of pupils are well motivated and keen to succeed. These positive attitudes are reflected in good attendance. Behaviour is good.

Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle, of keeping themselves safe and of living together in a community. Pupils are encouraged to use their initiative to raise money for charities. This helps them to realise there are many people less well off than themselves. Preparation for life in the future is good. Pupils' use of the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) is secure.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 4

Despite some positive features, teaching and learning are inadequate overall. Teaching in the Reception class and in Years 1 and 2 is still not strong enough to ensure that all pupils learn as well as they should. Although good relationships effectively promote pupils' confidence, there are several weaknesses. There is insufficient challenge set for pupils, especially those who are more able, and assessment is not used as well as it should be. In addition, some boys are not as positive about learning because the work does not capture their interest or meet their learning needs.

Teaching in the Nursery and in Years 3 to 6 is good. In the Nursery, children develop good learning habits which are picked up again in Year 3. Particular features of good teaching are the ways in which all groups of pupils are challenged and how teachers of parallel classes work together to plan interesting work. There are some specific strengths, for example in the teaching of literacy in Year 6 and art and design in Year 3. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are taught effectively. Within this strong picture, however, the quality of feedback to pupils about how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve is inconsistent.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils have good opportunities to use their ICT skills in other subjects. This shows clear improvement since the last inspection. To make the curriculum more interesting and relevant, good links have been developed between subjects. Grouping pupils by ability for literacy and numeracy in Years 3 to 6 enables teachers to provide a curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils. However, in Reception and Years 1 and 2, the curriculum is not as carefully planned. The lack of an outdoor area for Reception age children restricts their learning opportunities. A good programme for personal, social and health education helps pupils to make healthy life choices and develop life skills. Good enrichment activities, such as visits, visitors, opportunities to learn French and Spanish, music tuition and sport, effectively support pupils' learning and personal development.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 3

The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are satisfactory. The positive relationships between the staff and pupils make an important contribution to the positive ethos which promotes the pupils' self-esteem and consideration of others. The school puts the welfare of the pupils at the heart of its work. Suitable child protection procedures are in place and regular checks ensure that the school is safe. The school takes sensible steps to make sure that pupils adopt healthy lifestyles.

The quality of academic guidance varies. Records that track pupils' academic progress in Years 3 to 6 are securely in place. They are used well to check that pupils are learning as well as they should and set targets for improvement. However, tracking the progress of the younger pupils is not as rigorous so the guidance they receive is not as secure. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are supported well by specialist staff. The targets set for them in their individual programmes of work help them to catch up with their learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The leadership team is committed to making this school a happy and positive experience for pupils. This is reflected in good personal development and well-being and good care and support. The majority of parents are pleased with the school and are involved sufficiently well in its work.

The school improvement plan identifies the right priorities, and includes raising achievement by the end of Year 2. Following disappointing results in last year's Year 2 tests, the school took firm action to help the current Year 3 pupils catch up. This has been successful. However, the action taken to rectify the causes of underachievement and halt the declining trend in standards by the end of Year 2 has not yet been as effective. Although there has been some improvement, the checking of teaching and learning is not having enough impact because the advice given to teachers about how they can make their teaching better is not recorded in enough detail. The subject expertise of middle managers is not used sufficiently well to support other teachers in improving teaching and learning.

Detailed checking of progress takes place in Years 3 to 6, but as yet it is not sufficiently established in Reception and Years 1 and 2. As a result, the school gives too much weight in its self-evaluation to the good progress in Years 3 to 6. Governors do not hold the school sufficiently to account for the progress pupils make. However, they are supportive and are involved in the life of the school and setting its direction. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection and has the capacity to improve further.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	4	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	4	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	4	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	4	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

We really enjoyed visiting you when we came to inspect your school. We are grateful for the friendly way in which you welcomed us and your help in finding out about the school.

These are some of the things we especially liked.

Many of you are very good at English, mathematics and science by the time you leave school in Year 6. You told us your views about school politely and enthusiastically. You clearly want to make the school better and are eager to become involved in doing this, for example as school councillors. You are well cared for. You feel safe and know that staff will listen to you if you have a problem. You have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles, including the need for regular exercise.

We think these things should be worked on next.

We have asked the teachers of the children in Reception and Years 1 and 2 to plan activities which interest you and make you all think very hard. We have also asked your headteacher and governors to keep a more careful check on how well you are learning. If they find out that some of you could learn even more, then we have asked them to help your teachers to make sure this happens. Some of your teachers know a lot about different subjects such as English and art and design. We think that they should help each other more to make learning exciting for you all.

We hope that you will do all you can to help your teachers when they are working hard to improve your school. Next year, inspectors will come back to check that the things we have asked your teachers to do have made a difference to how well you are all learning.