



Bishop Parker Catholic Combined School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110481
LEA Milton Keynes LEA
Inspection number 278443
Inspection dates 6 December 2005 to 7 December 2005
Reporting inspector Keith Sadler AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Barton Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Bletchley
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Milton Keynes MK2 3BT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01908 372129
Number on roll	200	Fax number	01908 645031
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr John Scott
Date of previous inspection	11 October 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Colette Donohue

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Bishop Parker is a one form entry combined school serving an economically and socially mixed area of Bletchley. It has 200 pupils on roll; an additional 27 pupils attend the nursery on a part-time basis. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is less than half the national average. 17 pupils have been identified as having special educational needs. About a quarter of pupils speak English as an additional language, which is about three times the national average. Almost all of these are at an early stage of acquiring English.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Although the school's view is that the overall effectiveness of the school is good, inspection findings are that it is satisfactory and the school provides satisfactory value for money. The pupils enjoy school and their progress is satisfactory in most year groups. Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. At age seven, attainment is significantly below average in writing and mathematics. At 11, standards are close to national expectations although fewer pupils reach the high levels, particularly in English. Although there are strengths in the quality of teaching and learning, pupils' progress, especially in English, is hampered because teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. This is particularly the case for more able pupils where work set does not sufficiently match their learning needs. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of all aspects of the school. In particular, they say that their children are safe, well cared for and enjoy school. Inspectors agree with these views. The quality of care and support are very good. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides very good leadership in the areas of ensuring that the pupils are well cared for and the development of a strong and positive atmosphere. She recognises that there is a need to improve standards and strengthen the quality of the school's provision, particularly in providing more consistency in teaching and learning and developing the curriculum. Although there has been some monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning, the impact in terms of gaining consistency has been limited. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and there is sufficient capacity to secure the necessary improvements. The school has the committed support of effective governors.

What the school should do to improve further

* Improve the progress made by more able pupils, particularly in English* improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that teachers consistently match work well to the needs of their pupils* strengthen the quality of the curriculum by making stronger links between subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

When children enter the Foundation Stage they have skills and knowledge that are below that typical of three-year-olds, particularly in the area of communication, language and literacy. This is because a high proportion of the children are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. Due to the sound provision, children make steady progress in the Foundation Stage. Standards attained in national tests for seven-year-olds are below expected levels. The proportion of pupils gaining and exceeding nationally expected levels is small. National data and inspection evidence shows that standards are broadly in line with national levels at the age of 11 in both mathematics and science. In English, particularly in writing, standards are below the national average because too few pupils gain nationally expected levels and too few

reach the higher level. The school is on course to achieve its challenging targets for 2006. Pupils generally make sound progress throughout the school. However, their achievement is hampered by inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning, particularly for the more able pupils whose progress is limited because teachers sometimes set work that is too easy for them. Pupils' progress is strongest in science. In mathematics progress is broadly average. It is in English where progress is particularly slow. The progress of all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, matches that of their peers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school and have positive attitudes. The excellent relationships and pupils' well developed social skills contribute strongly to the very positive atmosphere in the school. Pupils have a good awareness of what it means to have a healthy lifestyle and to keep safe. The great majority are confident and have high self-esteem. There are good opportunities for pupils to contribute to the local community, such as their participation in Parish masses on feast days. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. In a religious context, pupils' spiritual awareness is excellent and they show a very good awareness of the feelings of others and of their own emotions. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong, and their behaviour is generally excellent. Pupils' work in fundraising and attracting sponsorship gives them a good insight into the importance of economic awareness. Attendance is good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and adequately meets the needs of the pupils. The strongest elements of the teaching are the excellent behaviour management, very good relationships and the skilled work of teaching assistants. The school is keenly aware that the weakest element is that teachers don't always match work accurately enough to meet the varying learning needs of pupils of different abilities, particularly in English and for more able pupils. This limits pupils' progress. The quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent. In the best lessons, teachers ensure that the pupils have a clear understanding of what is to be learned and what the teachers' expectations are. However, this is not always the case. The school has placed an emphasis on providing structured opportunities for pupils to be more directly involved in their own learning. This is paying dividends in Years 1 and 6 where this project has been initiated. Here pupils work more independently and enjoy taking greater responsibility for their learning and progress. Pupils with learning disabilities and difficulties benefit from satisfactory teaching.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory range of activities for its pupils. It is starting to plan links between subjects to make learning more relevant and purposeful, but teachers' planning shows that some are better at doing this than others. A good feature of the curriculum is the emphasis placed on motivating pupils through other activities, such as visits, to help make learning more attractive. For instance, all pupils enjoyed art sessions with visiting specialists who then mounted and exhibited the pupils' work. A further good feature is the emphasis placed on helping pupils to understand the importance of keeping safe and leading healthy lifestyles through an effective personal, social and health education programme. This helps pupils to grow in confidence and understand that they have a useful contribution to make to the community. Arrangements for pupils with learning difficulties and those with English as an additional language are satisfactory. Pupils who are gifted and talented have been identified. A programme of extra help for them has been devised, but is not yet fully implemented.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school is good at caring for its pupils. Child protection procedures are secure and rigorous. The guidance provided to help pupils improve their work is satisfactory. However, discussions with pupils showed that they do not always have a clear understanding of precisely what they need to do next to make their work even better. This occurs because of variations in the quality of teaching and learning. The school is a very orderly, calm and friendly community where pupils are learning happily. The school deals very effectively with rare incidents of bullying or misbehaviour and pupils feel safe and confident. Checks on possible risks to pupils' safety are carried out regularly. Parents are fully involved in the life of the school and in their children's learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides very good pastoral leadership and ensures that the school's vision for developing high quality care and support is well met. She is acutely aware of the need to quicken the pupils' progress. Self evaluation processes are satisfactory, though the impact of these are limited because there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning and more able pupils do not make enough progress in their learning. The headteacher is supported well by the leadership team and the acting deputy head, though new to the school, has already made a positive impact. This group works closely together to oversee the suitable range of improvement projects that have been initiated. There is sufficient capacity to ensure that the weaknesses are removed. A particularly strong feature is the way the school consults parents for their views. These views contribute

appropriately in the development of the improvement plan. In addition, a high priority is placed on the development of all staff. The learning support staff in particular have benefited from this policy and their skills are well used in their deployment. The work of the Senior Teaching Assistant is outstanding. Governance is good. Communication between governors and the school is good and they have a good understanding of the variability of its achievements.

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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>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	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	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
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
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
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
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
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
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
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

You may remember that two inspectors came to your school recently to find out how good it was and how well you were doing. Thank you for being so friendly, for talking to us and telling us so many interesting things. We are writing to let you know what we found out.

You told us how much you like school and described the interesting things that happen there. You told us that you generally like your lessons and some of you, though not all, had a good understanding of what your targets are. We were particularly impressed with the Year 6 learning journals. We were impressed by your excellent behaviour and how you care for each other. We know that people in the school take good care of you and are teaching you to be confident and responsible members of the community. You develop a clear understanding of right and wrong and how to develop your understanding and love of the Catholic religion.

You told us that you enjoy many of your lessons, but some were not as interesting as others. We agree with you and we have asked your teachers to make some improvements so that you will make more rapid progress during your time at Bishop Parker, particularly in English and also for those of you who find lessons too easy. You are lucky to have such a caring headteacher as Mrs Donohue who is always concerned to make sure that you are happy and safe in school. We have asked the school to make sure that the teachers make good links between subjects in all classes so that your work is even better than it is at present.