



# Berkeley Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 115503  
**LEA** Gloucestershire  
**Inspection number** 279609  
**Inspection dates** 13 September 2005 to 14 September 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Julia Coop RISP

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Marybrook Street
<b>School category</b>	Community		Berkeley
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Gloucestershire GL13 9AZ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01453 810254
<b>Number on roll</b>	191	<b>Fax number</b>	01453 811 416
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Tony Cullimore
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	9 October 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Martin Bragg

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 13 September 2005 - 14 September 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 279609
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors with the support and cooperation of Berkeley Primary School and the local education authority.

## Description of the school

This average size school serves the small rural town of Berkeley. Most pupils who attend are from the immediate, socially mixed, area with a minority from surrounding villages and hamlets. Almost all pupils come from white British family backgrounds. When the youngest children start school their attainment is below average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average, as is the proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs however, the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well above average in some year groups.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Berkeley Primary rightly sees itself as a forward thinking school that provides a good education for its children. The good leadership of the headteacher has effectively nurtured the skills of the staff so that the quality of education, including teaching, is good. As a result, the school has worked successfully to improve the provision in the Foundation Stage and has overcome weaknesses reported in the last inspection in Years 1 and 2. Children in the reception class make good progress and thrive. Pupils also make good progress in all other year groups. They make exceptional progress in science because teaching is exciting and challenging, but pupils, especially the boys, do not make as much progress in writing. Boys in particular find writing more difficult and are not doing as well as they could.

There has been a huge improvement in pupils' attendance which is above average. Pupils have good attitudes. They are well behaved and very polite young people. The school is highly successful in encouraging pupils to be healthy and active. Pupils really enjoy the wide ranging curriculum, including the international week and the exciting range of additional learning activities. Relationships throughout the school are warm, caring and supportive. Pupils' welfare is given a high priority and they are cared for well on a day-to-day basis. The pupils with special learning or behaviour needs are given the right sort of help. They are valued as individuals and are fully included in all school activities. Teachers know individual pupils well and set them challenging targets. However, these targets are not used as well as they might be to help pupils know what they need to do to improve. All staff work together as an effective team. They have set up good systems for checking how well the school is doing and making sure it gets better. As a result, the school is well placed to build on strengths and tackle weaknesses. At the same time, it recognises that more effective use should be made of the information it has on how well pupils do as they get older. The school uses all its resources well and gives good value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing, especially for boys, by ensuring writing activities capture their interests
- Make more effective use of individual target setting to improve the pupils' knowledge of their own learning
- Use information on the pupils' progress more effectively in order to raise standards further.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

In all year groups the pupils make good progress overall although there is some variation across subjects. The pupils make outstanding progress in science but in writing the boys make only satisfactory progress because not all boys like writing. However, the girls make good progress in developing their writing skills. In addition, the pupils say

they are not sure about what they need to do to make their writing better. This stalls the progress they make. Over the past five years, standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in English and mathematics have risen faster than they have nationally and have generally been significantly above the national average. At the end of Year 6 in 2004, standards fell significantly because more pupils than is usual had special educational needs. The pupils reach the targets the school sets, because teachers ensure the work they plan for them is challenging. Pupils' say that they really enjoy the challenging practical investigations in science and this spurs them on to do really well.

Children start in the reception class with below average skills. They make good progress and blossom within a supportive and stimulating atmosphere. New children in their first days of school are already settled and learning happily.

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

### **Grade: 2**

A strong supportive atmosphere is at the heart of what the school believes in. All pupils are valued, encouraged to do their best, and are happy and proud of their school. They like their teachers, who are "smashing", so they behave well, have good attitudes to learning and try hard to please even when they find a subject less interesting. The hard work of the school to improve attendance has paid off and attendance is now above average.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Many opportunities such as those for reflection or to explore the school's woods help the pupils to develop a sense of belonging and an awareness of the beauty of the natural world. Staff use praise and planned discussions effectively to raise pupils' self-esteem and develop respect for different points of views. The school has a strong moral code, which is promoted consistently. A recent and unusual incident of vandalism was denounced by the pupils. Without exception they considered "Two days suspension was not enough!". Links with schools in other countries provide a rich and exciting source for learning and successfully widen pupils' cultural horizons.

The school's promotion of healthy lifestyles is exceptional and pupils know they are cared for and safe. The pupils are very proud that their school has been awarded the Healthy School status. Many rich and varied initiatives encourage the pupils to be confident learners who are very well equipped to make sensible choices; such as the development of outdoor learning, the use of the school's swimming pool, healthy eating and an active pursuit of personal and emotional health.

All pupils are encouraged whatever their backgrounds or needs. The pupils know that they are valued members of the community and they are always seeking to help others. The school council is well established. It takes its responsibilities very seriously, resulting in improvements to the school grounds. Regular visits to local businesses and the mini business ventures of older pupils provide rich opportunities for the pupils to find out about the world of work. The ethos of reinforcement and care helps pupils become more mature and responsible young citizens.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is good. The headteacher has fostered a strong sense of team work among the staff and this has ensured that teachers and teaching assistants work well together for the benefit of all the pupils. Relationships are of a high quality and secure good discipline, contributing to a positive climate for learning.

From the reception class onwards, teachers use the outside learning environment, interactive whiteboards and a wide variety of resources particularly well to make learning interesting in most lessons. Basic skills, including literacy, are taught well. However, some pupils, especially boys, say writing is a "chore" and "too difficult", because not all teachers are successful at gaining the pupils' attention in literacy lessons.

Great emphasis is placed on giving pupils first hand experiences and enabling them to learn in a wide variety of ways. This is highly successful, especially in science where excellent teaching based on very good subject knowledge is inspiring the pupils to 'think like young scientists'.

Generally the teachers use their knowledge of how well the pupils are doing to plan effective activities and ensure that pupils are clear about what they are about to learn at the start of lessons. The ends of lessons are used successfully to help pupils check on their own learning. The use of 'partner talk' is an effective strategy that is helping the pupils to ask questions confidently. This is helping the pupils to make good progress because it is encouraging them to think carefully about what they have learned and to recognise what they are still unsure about.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is effective. It is adapted well to meet the specific needs of pupils. There is a strong emphasis on the teaching of English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) and this helps to ensure pupils make at least satisfactory progress in these basic skills. French and German are introduced in Year 6. This helps to prepare the pupils effectively for secondary school. Interesting links are made between subjects during lessons and recently revised planning is ensuring that pupils practise and develop their writing in more meaningful ways, although it is too soon to know whether this might be effective in raising standards in writing.

In Berkeley, all teachers teach pupils with special educational needs. They provide sensitive support for pupils' particular needs. As a result, the pupils are valued members of the learning community and are helped to make good gains in their learning. A particularly successful feature of the curriculum is the varied and interesting range of additional activities that are highly popular with the pupils. From felt making to pond dipping, sports galore to Spanish, pupils develop their social skills and confidence,

and, for many, significantly widen their experience of life beyond rural Gloucestershire. They are very proud of their newly acquired skills and delight in greeting visitors with a cheery 'Ola'.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The care of pupils is good and the health, safety and welfare of pupils are given high priority. This successfully promotes pupils' well-being and enables them to be good learners. Child protection requirements, risk assessments and safety procedures are firmly established and are understood by all staff. Pupils report that they feel safe and would quickly go to their teacher or teaching assistant if they were unhappy.

The school welcomes and effectively supports vulnerable pupils and those with learning or additional difficulties. It works effectively with outside agencies and good support is provided to ensure pupils' specific needs are met. Staff and pupils are sensitive to their needs and these pupils are not made to feel any different from their classmates. Parents praise the caring and sensitive support their children receive. Parents are well informed about how well their children are doing and work in an effective partnership with the teachers. The system for tracking pupils' progress is good. It is robust enough to identify any underachievement but its use could be sharpened to help the pupils to identify more clearly what they need to do to improve their work. Information is used to set whole school, class and group targets but individual learning targets that can be shared with pupils and monitored by them in a partnership with their teachers are not yet used to their best effect.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher sets the tone for the caring manner that filters through the school. His determination that all pupils will develop as confident learners is shared successfully with all staff, pupils and parents. The senior management team is committed to helping him to raise academic and personal standards. As a result, they support the headteacher effectively and make a good contribution to the strong sense of purpose in the school. They are effective in helping develop a climate where pupils, whatever their backgrounds or ability, can thrive.

The school knows itself well through its good monitoring systems. Governors provide good support. They effectively check the quality of the school's work and are influential in helping drive improvements. The views of pupils' and parents' are regularly sought, while well established systems provide the school with a wealth of data about how well it is doing. The information gained is used well and has led to improvements in many areas. Consequently, the school is well placed to continue to move forward. However, a finer analysis of the data on how well pupils are doing would provide the school with a more powerful tool with which to help the managers to improve the school's performance further.

This school is not content to stand still. The staff are forward thinking and the school is already well on its way to gaining Extended School and International School status. Well established links, joint projects and visits by staff to schools in Sweden and Hong Kong, among many others, not only inspire teachers to use new approaches in their teaching but also benefit the pupils by increasing their cultural development and enjoyment of learning in interesting and exciting ways.



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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>	2	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	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	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	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	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>	2	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	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	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

<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	NA
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**

Berkeley Primary School Marybrook Street Berkeley Gloucestershire GL13 9AZ

15th September 2005

Dear Children

Thank you for helping us to find out about your school when we visited and for being so polite. You told us a lot about your school and we agree with you that it is a happy and friendly school. We also think that there are many good things happening at Berkeley which we want to share with you:

We think that the teachers work hard and are good at teaching you new things, especially science, which they make very interesting for you.

We think that you behave well and look after each other. You are becoming sensible and caring young people.

The school is encouraging you to make healthy choices and we notice that you enjoy eating fruit at break times and are always running around and keeping active. Keep this up!

We especially liked all the interesting activities that the teachers plan for you on a Friday afternoon and at other times. We know that you really enjoy these and are proud of the Spanish words you have learned.

Your teachers care a lot about you and make sure that you are safe and well looked after.

Mr Bragg is a good headteacher. He has worked hard to make your school a good school. He is helped by all the teachers and the governors who support him well.

We have asked your teachers to make Berkeley an even better school. We hope that you will help them. The most important things are:

Making sure that you get even better at writing and make English lessons more fun and interesting.

Making sure that teachers set you individual learning targets, share them with you and help you to achieve them.

Making sure that teachers work at using all the information they have about your progress to help you learn even better.

Keep up the good work.

Yours sincerely Dr Julia Coop and Dr Alan Dobbins