



Bishop Bridgeman CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 105216
Local Authority Bolton
Inspection number 287161
Inspection dates 11–12 October 2006
Reporting inspector Alan Hardwicke

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Rupert Street Bolton
School category	Voluntary aided		Greater Manchester BL3 6PY
Age range of pupils	3–11	Telephone number	01204 333466
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Fax number	01204 333467
Number on roll (school)	332	Chair	Rev Canon M Williams
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Headteacher	Mr G Burrows
Date of previous school inspection	30 September 2002		

Age group 3–11	Inspection dates 11–12 October 2006	Inspection number 287161
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Bishop Bridgeman Church of England Primary School is a larger than average school, with 332 pupils on roll, of whom 52 attend the Nursery part-time. The school serves an area with high levels of social disadvantage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly in line with that found nationally. Over a third of pupils receive free school meals, which is well above the national average. About 6 out of 10 pupils have English as an additional language and almost one third are from minority ethnic backgrounds, mainly Pakistani and Indian.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Bishop Bridgeman Primary is a good school with some outstanding features. It enables its pupils to achieve well overall. Pupils are happy and behave responsibly. They have positive attitudes to their work, respect their teachers and grow to understand the difference between right and wrong. From very low standards on entry they make good progress overall and leave the school with broadly average standards. In the Foundation Stage, pupils get off to a flying start and make very good progress; in Years 1 to 6 they make good progress overall. This is because of good, and sometimes outstanding, teaching, an imaginative and enjoyable curriculum and high quality support. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make equally good progress because of the good support they receive. In Years 1 and 2, some pupils do not do as well as they could in writing and mathematics, although, as they move through Key Stage 2, pupils generally make good progress overall. Some groups, such as boys and more able pupils, do not do as well as they could. This is because the work is not always challenging enough for the more able pupils, and boys are not always given work which captures their imagination. The school has identified these areas and put improvement strategies in place.

The quality of teaching is at least good and sometimes outstanding. Outstanding lessons ensure that all pupils, whatever their ability, are fully included, challenged to do their very best and given a sense of fun and enjoyment in learning. This, together with the well-planned and enriching curriculum and the high level of care and support provided, ensures that pupils enjoy learning, make good personal development and achieve well. The school uses a good range of assessment procedures and knows its strengths and weaknesses well. Successful interventions, such as that for reading in Key Stage 1, have resulted from analysing assessment information. The basic curriculum is well enriched by the arts and music and by a rich variety of out of school clubs and activities. However, not enough attention is given to providing learning experiences that reflect the different cultures from around the world.

Pupils find their lessons fun and interesting, although they are not always given clear guidance on how they can improve. Sometimes teachers do not mark work consistently, so that children do not know what they need to do next to improve. The process of setting targets is also at too general a level. Although children have class targets, they do not have the benefit of more focused targets which would guide them more clearly and tell each of them what they need to do to move on to the next stage.

Leadership and management are good. The school's view of itself is accurate. Managers are quick to identify weaknesses and put suitable remedies in place. The school has good capacity to improve because of the many improvements since the last inspection, such as provision for information and communication technology and the good quality of its plans for the future. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the provision for pupils' cultural development by including curriculum activities which reflect more fully the rich variety of cultures from around the world.
- Give pupils a clearer picture of what they need to do to improve, by improving the quality and consistency of marking and by setting more focused individual targets.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

On entering the Nursery, children's skills and knowledge are well below those expected and significant numbers have English as an additional language. They make very good progress, so that by Year 1 they reach the standards expected for their age.

Teacher assessments in Year 2 show standards in reading have risen because the school has focused on this area. Standards in writing and mathematics, however, have slipped. The school has recognised this and effective strategies are now in place to improve standards and current Year 2s are making good progress. Through Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress overall, although some more able pupils could do even better if 'given their wings' to try things out for themselves. Evidence from the inspection shows that current standards in Year 6 are broadly in line with those found nationally.

The school has accurately pinpointed some pupils who could do better in English and mathematics. Action is being taken to boost their achievement and is proving successful. Underperformance in Years 4 and 5, due to staff changes, and among higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 2, have now been tackled so that pupils can progress better.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress throughout the school, as do those with English as an additional language, because of the high quality support they receive. In national tests, most Year 6 pupils reached expected standards in English, mathematics and science. This shows a marked improvement over the previous two years.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is strong. This is because of the school's strength as a caring community that has a clear moral code and high expectations of all its members. As they get older, pupils are given increasing opportunities to take responsibility and care for others. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The school does not offer enough opportunities for pupils to learn about and celebrate the range of world cultures.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to school are good and, in some lessons and aspects of school, are exemplary. This is because adults form good relationships with pupils, expect good behaviour and manage it well. Adults also show respect and understanding for the variety of ethnicity in the school and this promotes a high level of racial harmony. Attendance is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall and sometimes outstanding. Teachers are well-liked and trusted by their pupils and behaviour is very well managed. The work is well planned and classes are organised to meet pupils' needs, sometimes by effectively mixing pupils from different year groups. Good use is made of interactive whiteboards to make lessons more interesting and challenging, and pupils respond very well. Teachers are generally good at matching the work to the full range of pupils' abilities. In the best lessons, all pupils are fully included and teachers challenge and support them appropriately, for instance, by the way they use questions and give encouragement. In these lessons the teaching is excellent and enables all pupils to achieve their best.

Pupils say they like and trust their teachers which boosts their confidence and helps them achieve their best. In a minority of lessons, however, when teaching the whole class, some teachers aim their teaching at the average pupils so that the more able pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do not do so well. This has particular impact on the more able pupils, because those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported by skilled teaching assistants. Marking is sometimes insufficient so that pupils do not have a clear idea of what they need to do to improve. Teachers regularly assess their pupils' work and set class targets, but they do not, at present, give enough individual guidance on what pupils should do next.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school's curriculum is good. It is carefully planned to overcome the low levels of basic skills which pupils start with. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are well provided for and a range of exciting and enjoyable topics provide effective coverage of the rest of the curriculum. Much has been done to identify the needs of different groups of pupils and ensure that the curriculum meets those needs. The arts are well promoted and music is a particular strength. There is a shared vision to develop the curriculum to provide skill-based learning across the subjects. Fun and creativity are given high priority so that pupils can see the links in their learning. Recent innovations in the Foundation Stage curriculum have formed a model for the rest of the school. The focus on information and communication technology since the last inspection has led to impressive progress in developing and applying these skills. Work in the classroom is greatly enhanced and enriched by activities such as themed weeks, out of school clubs and activities, and many specialist visitors and visits. These have a positive impact on pupils' enjoyment and achievement.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This is a very caring school where pupils feel safe and happy and express high levels of trust in staff and each other. Children speak animatedly about what is offered - 'Don't you just love it?', 'There's so much going on and none of it's boring!' Parents are positive about the school; they have good relations with staff and this benefits their children. Procedures for safeguarding pupils match requirements and risk assessments ensure the safety of all who work in the school.

Teachers are developing procedures to monitor and track pupils' achievements. However, whilst good support is generally given in lessons, elements of assessment for learning need further development. Clearer guidance is needed in marking pupils' work and setting group and individual targets that show children how they can improve.

The school cares well for its pupils. This helps them to achieve well and develop their personal and social skills successfully. The daily life of the school clearly reflects its caring Christian ethos. Vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are positively supported by all staff. The care and support of the wide range of teaching assistants have a very positive impact on the pupils they work with, so that they are fully included in everything the school does.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has set a clear vision for the school, which has given a common sense of purpose and commitment to inclusiveness. Senior staff have focused well on raising standards by analysing pupils' performance and developing strategies for improving standards and keeping them high. Particularly in the Foundation Stage, managers have directed the curriculum to meet the range of complex circumstances found in an area of cultural diversity and social disadvantage.

Senior managers make good use of information gathered from the recently upgraded systems for checking on pupils' progress. They have identified groups such as more able pupils and boys in Key Stage 2 whose performance could be improved. Because these groups are at present not fully included the judgement for this aspect of leadership and management can only be satisfactory.

Governors are supportive and understanding of the school's needs. They act as critical friends and some are linked to different subjects. They visit classes to observe the pupils' work. Statutory duties are effectively carried out.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

We enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for talking to us and showing us the things you do. Yours is a good school.

These are the things it does well.

- In lessons you work hard and behave well, you make good progress and do as well as children of your age should.
- Most of you try your hardest and your teachers and other adults are good at making lessons fun and enjoyable, so that you want to learn more.
- You enjoy all the extra things you have to do such as after-school clubs, visits and the experts who come in to school to work with you.
- Mr Burrows, your teachers and the other adults are all good at making sure you are happy and safe in school. Some of you told us you really like school because, 'There's so much going on and none of it's boring!'

There are two things we asked the school to do better.

- Teach you more about how people live in different countries of the world.
- Tell you how you can do even better in your work, by the way your teachers mark your books, and by telling you what you have to do next to move on in your work.