



Bathampton Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109060
Local Authority Bath and North East Somerset
Inspection number 288266
Inspection date 31 January 2007
Reporting inspector Alexander Paul Baxter

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Tynning Road
School category	Community		Bathampton
Age range of pupils	4-11		Bath BA2 6TQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01225 465229
Number on roll (school)	116	Fax number	01225 423637
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Steve Harper
		Headteacher	Peter Falkus
Date of previous school inspection	21 June 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This smaller than average primary school receives pupils from the village and other local areas. Very few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The overall proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those with a statement of special educational need is average, but there is some variation between year groups and it is above average in some of them. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average and there are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. Children's attainment on entry varies, but is mostly above the level expected for their age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school where pupils achieve well and learn very happily. There are significant strengths, not least the outstanding leadership of the headteacher. The excellent harmony evident in the pupils' singing in assembly and in their performance in the orchestra is clearly seen in the warm relationships throughout the school. Links with parents and other agencies are also very successful in sustaining the pupils' well-being. Other strengths include pupils' excellent personal development, nurtured by outstanding care, support and guidance. A parent summarized these in saying, 'We are delighted with Bathampton School. Teachers are caring and conscientious.' These qualities promote the pupils' excellent behaviour and positive attitudes to learning.

Provision for children in Reception is good and they make a good start to their education, particularly in their personal development. Standards from Year 1 to 6 are above average overall. Pupils of all abilities achieve well in relation to their capabilities, including higher-attaining pupils, whose progress in writing is being strengthened after a period when some instability in staffing led to lower standards being achieved. Standards are well above average in mathematics and science in Year 6. The improving progress in writing reflects the emphasis placed on this aspect through the school. Pupils' spelling is still a relative weakness. Higher attainers are still capable of achieving even more and, at times, pupils' handwriting is not good enough in Years 3 and 4.

Leadership and management and self-evaluation are good. Governors play a full part in the team approach to management promoted by the headteacher. The current emphasis on developing the roles of key stage leaders is promoting improvement by strengthening the use of assessments to raise expectations. However, their sphere of influence has yet to be developed to best effect, for example, in establishing consistent quality in the presentation of pupils' writing.

Teaching and learning throughout the school are good. Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is particularly effective in empowering pupils to take responsibility for their learning and in challenging pupils. Across the school, pupils' individual needs are being addressed more effectively by teaching in small groups. This is helping an increasing number of pupils achieve the challenging targets set for them. Teaching in Years 3 and 4, which involves a number of teachers, is not always as consistent and learning has been weakened by some instability in staffing. This is seen in the variable quality of how the pupils' work is presented compared to other parts of the school. The curriculum is good. It is enriched by well-attended clubs, good use of information and communication technology (ICT) and by outstanding opportunities and pupils' performance in music. Overall there has been good improvement since the last inspection and the school is well placed to continue this into the future.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' achievement and standards in writing, especially in spelling and, at times, handwriting, to match those in mathematics and science.

- Strengthen the consistency of teaching and learning in Years 3 and 4 so that it matches the good practice found in other parts of the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Most pupils, including those with learning difficulties, achieve well in relation to their capabilities. Most pupils are on course to achieve the challenging targets set for them. Standards are well above average in mathematics and science and above average in English. Children make good progress in Reception, especially in their personal, social and emotional development. Progress through Years 1 to 6 is mainly good as a result of effective teaching, often in groups, that builds on previous learning. Many pupils progress very well in Years 5 and 6 in response to thought-provoking learning opportunities. Although improving, spelling remains a weaker aspect of pupils' writing and a few higher attainers should achieve even more. These are rightly being targeted by the school. Pupils' handwriting is not always good enough in Years 3 and 4 and reflects inconsistency in teachers' and pupils' expectations. The quality of the pupils' singing and the instrumental skills shown by members of the orchestra are outstanding. Pupils use and develop their ICT skills well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils enjoy being at school. This is evident in their good attendance and the joy on their faces as they arrive each morning. One pupil encapsulated the views of others when he said, 'This is a happy school where we can depend on each other and on our teachers.' Behaviour and relationships are excellent because pupils feel valued and respect each other. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school's warm, family ethos underpins its work. Children value and celebrate each other's achievement. Assembly themes, visits and visitors enhance the pupils' understanding of different cultures and secure their clear awareness of what is just. Pupils make good contributions to the school and to the wider community. They undertake a variety of responsibilities seriously, for example, as 'Playground Friends' giving comfort to other pupils at breaktimes. The school council is a well-established and respected body through which the pupils contribute wholeheartedly to their school, for example, in setting up the healthy tuck-shop, which also reflects their very good knowledge of how to adopt safe, healthy lifestyles. The pupils' very good social skills and good literacy and numeracy skills prepare them well for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Throughout the school, teaching and learning are good. Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is particularly challenging and is strengthened by pupils taking a greater responsibility for their learning. Pupils learn well by completing interesting tasks set by their teachers, for example, discussing and writing about balanced view points. Teaching is enriched by the warm and respectful relationships shared between teachers, learning assistants and pupils. This is a particular feature of the good teaching of children in their Reception year. Teaching is typified by the sharing of learning objectives clearly with pupils and meeting pupils' needs by teaching them in small groups. Learning in Years 3 and 4 has been weakened on occasion by some instability in staffing. At times a degree of inconsistent practice remains, for example, in the extent to which neat handwriting is promoted and pupils are involved in self-evaluation. In all classes, learning assistants give good support, especially to pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. Teachers use interactive whiteboards effectively to reinforce basic literacy and numeracy skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum and other activities are good. Pupils' academic and personal development is enriched by a good range of clubs and visits. Close links with the community also extend their learning opportunities, for example, through taking part in activities linked with the 'Mayor's Charities.' Pupils have their confidence and interest boosted by team-working exercises throughout the curriculum. This is especially the case in music, where pupils experience a genuine 'feel-good factor' in their learning. Pupils' singing in assembly and their performance in the orchestra is outstanding. Children in Reception sing number and other rhymes with real joy. Pupils have good opportunities in physical education which promote their understanding of how to stay healthy and safe. Pupils say, 'This a healthy school where we are always busy.' Teachers and their assistants support pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and challenge higher attainers well. However, pupils do not always have enough opportunities to learn by initiating and following their own lines of enquiry.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. All pupils receive excellent pastoral support and guidance for their personal development. As a result, pupils feel good about themselves and grow in confidence in a welcoming, caring community. Staff are diligent and extremely effective in ensuring the pupils' safety and well-being in school and on trips. Staff work very effectively with parents to sustain this. This is evident in the way parents confidently bring their children into school each day and in the warmth

of their relationships with staff. Activities linked with the 'Healthy School Award' develop pupils' attitudes to healthy lifestyles very effectively. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are supported well. The oldest and youngest pupils receive good academic guidance. It is not as consistent in Years 3 and 4, for example, where differing teachers do not always set equally high expectations of pupils' work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and senior managers provide very good leadership. Their pastoral support of staff and pupils is exemplary. Governors give strong and appropriately challenging support. Staff at all levels feel part of a team, and work together towards shared goals. They evaluate the performance of the school well and sustain pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being. Procedures for monitoring standards are well established. Although new key stage leaders are helping to sharpen the evaluation of pupils' progress, they have not yet had time to impact fully. The school has improved well since the last inspection, especially in developing pupils' ICT skills. With its current impetus and the willingness of staff to embrace change, the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

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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?	1
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	2
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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?	1

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	2
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	2
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

I really enjoyed my visit to your school and would like to thank those of you who took the time to talk to me about the school. A number of you told me that yours is a good school and I agree with you. These are the main things I found out about your school:

- Your behaviour and the way you care about each other are superb.
- Most of you are making good progress, and the standards you reach in Year 6 are better than in many schools.
- The way you are cared for at school is outstanding.
- Your school is led and managed well and the leadership of your headteacher and deputy headteacher is outstanding.
- You have a very good understanding of how to lead a healthy, safe lifestyle.
- Teaching is good and the teachers and their assistants are always looking for ways of making it even better.

It will not take much to turn your school into an extremely good school. To help the headteacher and staff do this, I have asked them to improve your writing, especially your spelling and at times your handwriting. This is because some of you are capable of progressing more quickly than you do at the moment. I have also asked them to make sure that teachers' expectations in Years 3 and 4 are always as high as in other classes. This will help you to develop your skills even more fully as you move through the school.

You already work hard and look after each other. If you continue to show the same enthusiasm and try to achieve your best, you will help the school to become even better.

Thank you once again and good luck in the future.