

Blagdon Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109091
Local Authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	288278
Inspection date	21 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Susan Orpin

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	87
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Murphy
Headteacher	Paul Packwood
Date of previous school inspection	16 September 2002
School address	Bath Road Blagdon Bristol BS40 7RW
Telephone number	01761 462416
Fax number	01761 462416

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than average and pupils are mainly White British. No pupils from minority ethnic families are at an early stage of learning English. Fewer pupils than in most primary schools are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion that has learning difficulties or other disabilities is broadly average. Children's attainment on entry to the Reception class is above the level expected.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and at the end of Year 6 standards are above average. Even though achievement is satisfactory, there is some room for improvement. Standards and pupils' progress are relatively better in English than in mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6, particularly for the most able. The more able pupils could be challenged still further by the end of Key Stage 1 in English and mathematics. Nevertheless, their overall acceptable rate of progress means that pupils are prepared for their future lives in a satisfactory way.

Teaching is satisfactory throughout the school but it is inconsistent. The teaching of English in Years 3 to 6 is more stimulating than in other years and the effective use of assessment means all pupils are suitably challenged. However, some other teaching is less well planned, with too little expected from the more able pupils. The curriculum is satisfactory and provides well for pupils' personal development from entry to Reception to the end of Year 6. Pupils benefit from a good range of visits and trips and varied after school clubs. However, apart from in English in Years 3 to 6, too few opportunities are planned to make sure that the more able pupils are fully challenged.

Care, guidance and support for pupils are satisfactory and, for example, help children to settle well in Reception. Procedures to ensure pupils' safety are good. Although good attention is given to pupils' personal development, not all pupils are given sufficient guidance about how to improve their academic performance. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good and their behaviour both in lessons and around the school is outstanding. Attendance has improved well and is now satisfactory.

The school is satisfactorily led and managed. The headteacher and governors have a broadly accurate picture of the school's effectiveness. This has led to improvements in attendance and accommodation. The governing body asks challenging questions to help the school develop. However, data about pupils' performance are not analysed fully to provide a more precise picture of the school's successes and areas to improve, particularly in teaching. Consequently the objectives the school sets itself are not always sufficiently specific to ensure that all pupils do their best.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve achievement in mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6, and ensure that more able pupils always do as well as they should.
- Improve teachers' use of assessment to plan lessons that are stimulating and interesting with more expected from pupils of higher ability.
- Make sure that all pupils are provided with clear guidance to help them to improve their academic performance.
- Use assessment data more effectively to identify precise areas for school improvement, particularly in teaching.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children join the Reception class with standards that are above those normally found at this age, particularly in their personal and social development.

They make satisfactory progress so that standards remain above the level expected at the end of the school year.

Most pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, make satisfactory progress through Years 1 to 6, so standards in Years 2 and 6 are maintained at a level that is above average. A few more able pupils in Key Stage 1 could be further challenged in English and mathematics.

In Years 3 to 6, standards are higher in English than in mathematics and science and pupils make relatively better progress in English than in mathematics and science. This is because the teaching and the curriculum are better and more interesting in English than in mathematics and science. In particular, the achievement of some more able pupils in mathematics does not reflect their better success in English. Despite their better achievement in English, pupils' overall rate of progress means that preparation for their future lives is only satisfactory.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good and they have enthusiasm for learning, in particular for the exciting range of activities additional to daily lessons, so they enjoy school. In the Reception Year they take turns, listen to each other and play together well. The behaviour of all pupils in lessons and around the school is outstanding. Pupils are very friendly and welcoming and their relationships with adults are very good. Their self-confidence is particularly well developed. They readily take on responsibilities, such as being 'playground buddies', a system through which older pupils help younger children play together so that nobody feels left out.

Pupils have a good understanding of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of life. In particular they develop this awareness through assemblies and opportunities to discuss issues of concern to them. Pupils feel very safe at school and report no known instances of bullying. They have a good knowledge of how to stay safe and healthy. Since school meals have become healthier, more pupils are buying them. Pupils know the importance of physical activity and participate well in the varied opportunities for sports, dance and games. The school council makes an effective contribution to improving life at school, for example, influencing the decision to improve the toilets before replacing the heating system. Pupils are very active in supporting local organisations and raising money for charities such as Children in Need and Jeans for Genes. Attendance has improved well and is now satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory but inconsistent. In the Reception Year, children are organised and routines established effectively. In lessons when the focus of activities has been planned well, for example, a lesson about the life cycle of frogs, children learn well. However, when the range of activities is less well structured, they behave well but achieve less.

In Years 1 to 6, the good relationships between teachers and pupils create a climate supportive of learning. Teachers use information and communication technology (ICT) well to demonstrate and explain ideas. The teaching of English in Years 3 to 6 is relatively more effective than other teaching. For example, in a Years 3 and 4 lesson about the composition of opening paragraphs, the teacher made the purpose of the lesson clear, used questions effectively to develop pupils'

understanding and maintained a brisk pace. As a result, pupils were keen to work, settled quickly and completed the task well. All pupils, including the more able, were provided with suitable challenge in their work.

In some other lessons, teaching is not stimulating enough to involve all pupils and the purpose of the lesson is not clear enough. Assessment information is not always used well enough to ensure that the more able pupils are given work that is hard enough, especially in mathematics. Pupils' work is marked regularly and there are helpful written comments in some books but not all. Pupils are given individual targets in English and mathematics, although they are clearer about how to improve their performance in English than in mathematics.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. In the Reception Year, children learn from a broad range of experiences and activities well supported by a good variety of resources. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 experience the required range of subjects and the programme for personal, social and health education contributes well to their personal development. Pupils also benefit from satisfactory opportunities to learn about other cultures including through links with a school in Ghana. Although all pupils benefit from well planned activities in English that are stimulating and interesting, the provision in other subjects does not generate the same level of enthusiasm. ICT is provided in a satisfactory way so that all pupils are developing their skills adequately but there are not yet sufficient opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills to help them learn in other subjects.

The curriculum is enriched well through a wide range of trips and visitors, and a variety of clubs, such as sports, dance and chess. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, for example, visited a local farm during the inspection.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. There are good procedures to ensure that pupils are safe. They are supervised well during breaks and lunchtimes. Pupils say they feel safe commenting, for example, that 'there's always someone there to help you'. The school promotes healthy lifestyles well, recently improved the quality of school meals and gained a Healthy Schools Award. There are good arrangements to help children settle at school and pupils transfer to the local secondary school confidently. The school's procedures for improving attendance are effective.

Although there are satisfactory records that show pupils' individual achievements, not all pupils receive sufficient academic guidance to help them improve their work. Guidance is better in English in Years 3 to 6 than in other subjects and years.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has a secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the school's self-evaluation is satisfactory. Some actions taken since the last inspection have led to good improvement, for example pupils'

attendance and the quality of accommodation. However, improvements in the school's monitoring and the use of data to support planning for the school's development have been slower. Although assessment data are used to track individual pupils' progress, they are not yet analysed sufficiently to give a precise picture of what needs to be improved, particularly in the teaching. As a result, some teaching is not as effective, such as mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6, and the reasons for this have not been clearly identified. Subject leaders are beginning to take responsibility for their subjects but there are not sufficiently rigorous systems in place for them to monitor and ensure that teaching improves.

Governance is good. There are a number of new governors and the governing body is now supportive yet also challenging. Through asking challenging questions, it is helping the school to focus more on how to make improvements in pupils' achievement. The school has set itself challenging targets in English, although those in mathematics are less ambitious for the more able. It is likely to achieve the targets set. Improvement since the last inspection and capacity to improve further are satisfactory.

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Annex A

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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

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	1
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	3

The quality of provision

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

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
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	3
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

Thank you for making us welcome in your school. We enjoyed talking with you and were impressed by how friendly, polite and confident you are. Your school is giving you a satisfactory education.

- This is what we found was best about your school:
- Your work in English is good, especially in Years 3 to 6.
- Your behaviour is outstanding and you enjoy coming to school.
- You work and play well together and know how to stay safe and healthy.
- All the adults look after you well and make sure that you are safe. We found that a few improvements are needed and have asked your teachers to work on these things:
- Make sure that you do as well in mathematics and science as you do in English, and that those of you who could do harder work are always challenged well.
- Make sure that teachers plan interesting and challenging work in all lessons.
- Give you clear guidance to help you to improve your work.
- Look carefully at the information that is kept on your progress to see how the teaching can be made better for you. Thank you once again for your help and for welcoming us to your school.