

# Flax Bourton Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109194
<b>Local Authority</b>	North Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	288306
<b>Inspection date</b>	23 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Diane Wilkinson

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	85
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Nigel Sommerville
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jane Bennett
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 January 2005
<b>School address</b>	Station Road Flax Bourton Bristol BS48 1UA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01275 464468
<b>Fax number</b>	01275 464077

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Flax Bourton is a small village primary school. Most of the four classes have more than one year group. Standards on entry vary, but have been above average in the last two years. Currently the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is around average, but has been very much higher in the past. The number of pupils leaving at the end of Year 2 or joining the school during Years 3 to 6 is higher than in most schools.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Flax Bourton is a satisfactory and rapidly improving school, with strengths in some aspects of its work. The school's designation as underachieving no longer applies. The main strength is the determined leadership of the headteacher and effective support of staff, governors and the local authority to eradicate weaknesses and provide a high standard of education for pupils. Parents appreciate the hard work which has contributed to improvement and, typically, one wrote, 'The school has gone from strength to strength'. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the school's work and pupils' progress are very comprehensive, regular and robust. As a result, the school has an accurate picture of how well it is doing, allowing specific weaknesses to be pinpointed and addressed. There is evidence of success in all areas of the school's work, although the full effect of its improvement strategies has yet to be seen. This gives confidence that the school is well placed to improve further. Leadership and management are good and have led to improvements in the quality of provision and the eradication of underachievement. Governors are very supportive. They have a comprehensive knowledge of the school's work and fulfil their duties well. Subject leadership in this small school has been affected by lengthy staff absences. However, when able to, staff make an effective contribution to the school's work. During their absence, the local authority has played a key role in helping the school to move forward. The school also has productive partnerships with parents and other schools and agencies which enhance pupils' education and welfare. Care, support and guidance are good. Adults' good knowledge of pupils ensures they respond well to their needs. This, together with the effective personal, social and health education programme, contributes well to pupils' good personal development. Pupils enjoy school, behave well and relationships throughout the school are good. Parents say their children flourish in the school environment. The curriculum is good as the result of the school's determination to make learning relevant and interesting. This, together with the special programmes to help pupils who have made slow progress catch up, is helping to raise standards. Effective links between different subjects give pupils many opportunities to use their literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. However, pupils have fewer opportunities to use their numeracy skills. The many visits, visitors and after-school clubs enhance pupils' learning and enjoyment of school. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. They are good in Years 1 and 2 and in Reception. In these year groups, teachers have high expectations of pupils, who respond well, making good progress. The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are good. Although there is some good teaching in Years 3 to 6, it is too inconsistent and is satisfactory overall. This is because, on occasions, some pupils find the tasks too easy and mark time when they have completed them, which limits the progress they make. Achievement, including for those pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities, is satisfactory overall. It is good in Reception and Years 1 and 2. Standards are above expectations by the end of Reception and well above average by the end of Year 2. In the past, the high number of pupils leaving or joining the school after Year 2 and lengthy staff absences slowed the rate of progress in Years 3 to 6 and standards declined. However, over the past two years, progress has improved and is now satisfactory. Standards in Year 6 have risen and are above average in English and mathematics, and average in science. Progress in English is good. It is satisfactory in mathematics and science. Progress in mathematics, in particular, is limited by pupils having fewer opportunities to use their skills in problem solving and investigations.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching by consistently providing pupils with challenging work that helps them to make good progress.
- Raise the rate of progress in mathematics by giving pupils more opportunities to use their numeracy skills in problem solving and investigations. A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Standards on entry, although generally above average, are lower in some key literacy and numeracy skills. Good progress in Reception helps pupils exceed the standards expected by the end of the year. Good progress continues in Years 1 and 2 and, by Year 2, standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science. Over the past few years, standards in Year 6 declined. This is partly due to many pupils leaving the school at the end of Year 2 and their places being taken by others, some of whom have additional learning and behavioural needs. In addition, lengthy staff absences affected the continuity in learning in these year groups and slowed the rate of progress, leading to underachievement. More recently, improved provision and stability in staffing have raised the rate of progress. It is satisfactory overall, although more rapid in the older year groups. Standards are rising and the school is on track to reach the challenging targets it has set for the Year 6 tests this year. Progress is good in English, which has been a school focus for development. Although standards are above average in mathematics, progress is satisfactory because pupils do not do as well as they could in their problem-solving and investigation activities. Pupils make satisfactory progress in science and standards are average.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are thoughtful and reflective and recognise the wonder of things around them. A response to this has been their growing concern for the environment and determination to help improve it, for example, through recycling. This shows their positive contribution to the school and wider community. Good moral and social development results in pupils' good behaviour and relationships so the school is a happy and harmonious place to be. Pupils like their teachers and enjoy school. As one pupil commented, 'We would like to stay longer at this school'. Attendance is average. An effective range of activities such as the 'Magical Experiences' supports pupils' good cultural development and they have a good understanding of different cultures. Pupils have a good awareness of how to achieve a safe and healthy lifestyle. For example, Year 2 pupils are very clear about how they should behave in the school's pond area. Pupils' preparation for their future life is satisfactory. They work well collaboratively and are developing good literacy and ICT skills. However, they are not as good at using their numeracy skills in problem-solving situations.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

In Reception, teaching and learning are good. Activities to help children develop their literacy and numeracy skills are especially good and the teacher has very high expectations that they will do well in these areas. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is good because work is challenging and practical activities help pupils learn easily. For example, in a good science lesson, pupils were intrigued in finding out what made a plant stick to their clothes. One parent commented, 'My daughter's literacy has blossomed under her teacher's expertise'. There is some good teaching in Years 3 to 6, particularly in the older year groups, although it is satisfactory overall. Some lessons are highly challenging, for example, when pupils produced a short film promoting care of the environment. However, the level of challenge is not consistent. This is because, on some occasions, pupils work on the same task which the average and higher-attaining pupils complete easily and then waste time before they are given extra tasks. This limits the progress they make.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is rich, relevant and interesting and enthuses and motivates pupils well. An effective range of programmes to support pupils whose progress is slow, including those who have learning difficulties and disabilities, is bringing about improved progress and rising standards. The programme for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. Reception children are provided with an effective range of activities to support their good progress, although, until recently, they have had insufficient access to outdoor play. Links between subjects help pupils develop their literacy and ICT skills and the school recognises that pupils need more opportunities to use their numeracy skills in other subjects. The many visits, visitors and after-school clubs enhance pupils' learning and enthusiasm for school.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

In this small school, adults know all the pupils well and pay good attention to their welfare. Rigorous and regular health and safety checks, together with robust systems for child protection and the vetting of staff, mean pupils are well cared for at all times. Pupils receive good guidance and support in both their personal and academic development. They are encouraged to care for each other and to develop a strong sense of responsibility for their actions. In lessons, pupils have many opportunities to analyse how well they have done and suggest ways in which they can improve. Pupils are also encouraged to discuss how well they are progressing towards their individual targets. Marking is good and indicates how pupils can do better but it does not often relate to their improvement targets.

## Leadership and management

#### Grade: 2

The headteacher provides strong leadership and very clear direction. There is a shared vision amongst all staff and governors of what the school should be like and they are working hard to achieve this. Because of the very comprehensive, regular and rigorous systems for monitoring

the school's work and pupils' progress, the school has a clear picture of how well it is doing. Specific weaknesses are accurately analysed and are being successfully addressed. As a result, pupils' progress has improved and standards have risen, although the full effect has yet to filter through in every class. Staff with subject responsibilities are becoming increasingly effective in supporting school development. However, their work has been interrupted by lengthy staff absences. During this time, the local authority has provided very good support, particularly in helping to improve progress in English and mathematics. Governance is good. Governors provide effective support and challenge and their contribution to school monitoring and development is good. The school consults well with pupils and their parents, and partnerships with other schools and agencies support pupils' education and welfare well.

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## Annex A

## 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>
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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>	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	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	3

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

- 24 May 2007 Dear Pupils Flax Bourton C of E VC Primary School, Flax Bourton, Bristol BS48 1UA Thank you for welcoming us to your school and being so friendly, polite and helpful. I particularly want to thank the pupils who gave up their lunchtime to talk to us. You and your parents think your school is a safe and happy place to be and we agree with you. Currently, your school is giving you a satisfactory standard of education, but it is rapidly improving and some things are good already. This is what we thought was good about the school:
- Your headteacher is working hard to make your school even better and she is supported well by staff and governors.
- Staff take good care of you and give you good advice on how you can improve.
- You like your teachers, enjoy school and feel safe and secure there.
- Behaviour is good, you get on well with each other and are good at taking on responsibilities, such as for recycling.
- The activities teachers plan for you are good and you have lots of visits, visitors and clubs which help you enjoy school and make progress.
- Teaching in Reception and in Years 1 and 2 is good, so these year groups make good progress and standards are well above average by the end of Year 2.
- Progress is improving in Years 3 to 6 and is good in English. By Year 6, standards in English and mathematics are above average. What we have asked your school to do now:
- In some lessons, in Years 3 to 6, you are given work that some of you finish easily and have to wait for extra things to do. We have asked teachers to always give you work that encourages you to do your best. You can help by always trying hard.
- Help you to make good progress in mathematics by giving you more opportunities to use your numeracy skills in solving problems and in work in other subjects. You can help by thinking about what numeracy skills you can use when you are doing a project. Yours faithfully  
D Wilkinson Lead Inspector