



Bourn CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110782
Local Authority CAMBRIDGESHIRE
Inspection number 288772
Inspection dates 15–16 January 2007
Reporting inspector Geof Timms

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Riddy Lane
School category	Voluntary controlled		Bourn, Bourn
Age range of pupils	4–11		Cambridgeshire CB3 7SP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01954 719282
Number on roll (school)	150	Fax number	01954 718335
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr John Elcox
		Headteacher	Mrs Christine Page
Date of previous school inspection	11 March 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors

Description of the school

The school is smaller than average. Pupils come from the village of Bourn and surrounding villages. Their attainment when they start in Reception varies from year to year due to the small size of the cohorts, but is broadly in line with that expected. The number entitled to free school meals is below average. The majority of the pupils are from a White British background with few from other heritages. A very small proportion has English as an additional language. The number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average, but high in some year groups. There is an above average number of pupils who join or leave the school at times other than normal. The school has Healthy Schools status, an Active Sports Mark and a Basic Skills award.

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 staff work very hard to ensure pupils receive an effective education. There are a number of outstanding features and the school has shown such a strong capacity to address perceived areas of weakness that it clearly has an excellent potential for further improvement. Above all, the school is an extremely happy and caring place, while still maintaining sufficient challenge to encourage effective progress in pupils' learning. The links with parents are exceptionally strong and this is reflected in their positive views about the school's work. One said 'I couldn't wish for more from a primary school. The children are catered for magnificently in every aspect of their school day.'

The quality and achievement of the children in the Foundation Stage has much improved since the last inspection and is now excellent. The standards achieved by the time pupils leave the school are above average in English, mathematics and science and this represents good progress from their attainment on entry. The standard of music is very high and a lot of the pupils learn to play an instrument. Pupils' achievement is not consistent throughout the school, due to differences in the abilities of cohorts and inconsistencies in the teaching, although this is good overall and occasionally outstanding. In particular, the school has accurately recognised the need to provide more opportunities for pupils to use and develop their thinking skills in various ways such as solving problems.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They have excellent attitudes towards school and clearly enjoy being there. Their cultural awareness has improved greatly since the last inspection, through events such as the European language day. Their awareness of how to keep healthy and safe is exceptional. They have tremendous opportunities to contribute to the school and wider community, to develop good basic skills and to work together in teams.

Teachers plan very effectively for all pupils in their classes and they are well supported by the teaching assistants. The curriculum provided for pupils is outstanding and offers them excellent opportunities to extend and develop their knowledge and understanding in all subjects, including a modern foreign language. All adults in the school are very caring and this is appreciated by the pupils. One said that 'You get a lot of attention' if they approached adults with a problem. The very good assessment systems, together with some excellent marking of pupils' work, enable teachers to provide a high level of academic and personal guidance for pupils.

Leadership and management are good overall, and this is shown by the good teaching and high standards, even though there have been significant staff changes. The headteacher offers outstanding leadership and, together with the assistant headteacher, is focused on the school's educational direction and raising standards. The school's self evaluation is accurate and based on a clear analysis of strengths and weaknesses. The governing body is aware of these and has good systems in place for managing the school. Together with the staff, they ensure that the school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the consistency of the teaching by spreading existing good practice
- Provide pupils with more opportunities to develop their thinking skills and solve problems.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal and social development, their communication skills and their knowledge and understanding of the world are good when they enter the school. Their physical and creative development and some mathematical skills are often below average. However, they make excellent progress through the Reception year and when they enter Year 1 almost all children are achieving levels above those expected. Progress through the rest of the school varies but usually standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above average. In 2006, standards in Year 2 were lower than usual, largely due to a high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties. There are no significant differences in achievement between different groups of pupils. The school works hard to ensure that all abilities, and pupils from all backgrounds make equally good progress. Standards in music are above those expected and the pupils' singing and use of instruments are major strengths.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils are polite, well behaved and friendly. They enjoy school and say 'learning is fun'. Attendance is above average. Social skills are very well developed through a wide range of sporting, musical and other extra-curricular activities. Residential visits develop independence, confidence and initiative through challenging activities such as climbing high ropes and raft building. Pupils plan successful fund raising activities which benefit both the local and international community. School council representatives take their responsibilities seriously and influence what happens in school. Pupils say that they feel very safe and any problems are dealt with quickly and effectively. They eat healthy foods, drink lots of water and take regular exercise. They understand the dangers of smoking, and solvent and drug abuse. Pupils' positive approach to learning prepares them well for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching in the school is good overall although it is inconsistent. Some is outstanding, especially in the Foundation Stage and Years 5 and 6. The inconsistencies are largely due to significant staffing changes that have taken place

over the last two years. The school has recognised the need to continue its good programme of in-service training. Even so, the current teachers make a strong team and recent improvements to the curriculum, especially information and communication technology (ICT), and to the buildings are having a positive impact on standards.

Teachers have very good questioning skills and the opportunities given to pupils to talk ideas over together are very effective in helping their learning. Teachers have recognised that they need to provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their thinking skills and to solve problems. The school makes very effective use of teacher expertise when providing teaching in music, physical education and swimming. Teachers' skills in managing pupils vary but they are very honest and willing to evaluate their work, always looking for continuous improvement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The outstanding curriculum is broad, balanced, interesting and stimulating. All pupils have the opportunity to learn French and Year 6 pupils learn Spanish. Where possible, teachers link subjects to make learning more enjoyable and relevant. Special projects and weeks devoted to a specific subject enable pupils to extend and develop their knowledge, skills and interests to a high level. Detailed planning ensures the curriculum is well matched to the needs of pupils of different abilities and ages. The range of enrichment activities, enjoyed by large numbers of pupils, is outstanding. It caters for a very broad range of interests. Residential visits are particularly appreciated by the pupils who look forward to the challenges they provide. Numerous activities are organised to challenge gifted and talented pupils and many are enjoyed by other interested pupils. Strong links with the secondary school enhance the curriculum and ensure a smooth transition.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The welfare of the pupils is central to the work of the school. A very caring and supportive ethos results in happy, well motivated pupils who clearly love their school. The support provided for vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties or disabilities is very effective. Parents speak highly of the help they receive. Teaching assistants are knowledgeable and supportive and their help is valued by pupils. Rigorous procedures are in place to ensure the safety, security and health of the pupils. Pupils have individual learning targets which are well matched to their ability and are regularly reviewed. Marking is of a high standard throughout the school. It is detailed, recognises achievement and often suggests how to improve. Assessment is very effective and enables teachers to accurately track pupils' progress. Parents receive weekly reviews which give them information about the curriculum and their child's progress. They find these helpful and informative. Very effective induction procedures ensure a smooth transition into reception and into the secondary school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management is good overall, but there are a number of important outstanding aspects. These result in the excellent personal development, curriculum and care for pupils. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and, together with her assistant headteacher, shows a determined intent to raise standards and help all pupils achieve their best. One parent said 'We feel that the school is very well run.' Subject leadership is good and improving, although a number of the staff are very new to the school and have not yet developed all aspects of their roles. The senior staff monitor the work of the school effectively and the data is well analysed to help identify areas needing improvement which the school then works hard to address. The governing body has a good awareness of strengths and weaknesses and is effective in holding the school to account. Improvements made since the last inspection, especially to the Foundation Stage provision, show that there is an outstanding capacity to improve further.

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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	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
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	1
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?	1
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	1
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

17 January 2007

Dear Children,

Bourn CE Primary School, Riddy Lane, Bourn, Cambridgeshire, CB3 7SP

Thank you for the way you welcomed us to your school recently. You were all very polite and helpful and willing to share with us how happy you are at the school. We agree with you that it is a good school with a lot of excellent things going on. We especially enjoyed listening to the choir and the orchestra. The teachers and other adults all work very hard to help you learn and also to teach you how to keep yourselves healthy and safe.

Your parents also told us how happy they are with the school. Not one of them had anything they were really unhappy with.

You are clearly very proud of your work. We could see that in the Class 5 assembly when they showed how much they had learned recently (and what good Spanish accents they had!). You keep your work very neat and tidy and carefully presented in your books. The school council explained how well the teachers' marking helps you to get even better at your work. The school is very good at offering you a lot of interesting and exciting things to do, in lessons and as clubs, or on trips and visits.

Although the school is good, and Mrs Page and her staff have lots of ideas for making it even better, we think there are two things in particular that will help:

- Spreading round good ideas to help all of the teachers make their lessons as good as the best.
- Giving you more chances to work together to solve problems.

Thank you again for your help during the inspection. Enjoy your time at Bourn and keep working hard!

Yours sincerely

Geof Timms

Lead inspector