



Bearwood Primary & Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 113749
Local Authority Poole
Inspection number 289712
Inspection dates 15–16 November 2006
Reporting inspector Geoff Burgess

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Barons Road
School category	Community		Bearwood
Age range of pupils	4–11		Bournemouth BH11 9UN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01202 590703
Number on roll (school)	277	Fax number	01202 590703
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Geoff Thompson
		Headteacher	Wendy Govan
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2002		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4–11	15–16 November 2006	289712

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a medium-sized primary school with an integral nursery in the suburbs of Poole, bordering on Bournemouth and Dorset Local Authorities. The school also provides a wide range of extended services such as Breakfast, After-School and Holiday Clubs, plus 'Sure Start' and a Homework Club. The number on roll has fallen steadily over the years because of the age profile of the local population. Almost all pupils are of White British origin and almost all speak English as their first language. Few pupils have free school meals, although more are eligible. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is low. Pupil mobility was high but has now settled down to broadly average levels.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school which has coped well with significant changes made necessary by steadily falling numbers. A very positive factor has been the way the school has used the opportunity to develop the building and grounds to create a rich learning environment. The impact of this is most obvious in the Foundation Stage, where the very good facilities are used very well to give children a good start to their education. One parent commented about her reception-aged son that she has 'total confidence in the school for his future'. Good teaching, imaginative activities and the active involvement of parents are making it possible for children to make good progress. Their good personal development is particularly noteworthy, especially so early in the school year.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, sustaining improvements made over the past few years. Children start school with low standards in most areas of learning. Throughout the school, standards are below average overall. They are higher in English, especially reading, than in mathematics and science. Girls continue to achieve better and reach higher standards than boys. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Mainly good teaching in Years 1 and 2 has resulted in pupils making good progress. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6 but, with a mix of experienced and inexperienced teachers, the quality is inconsistent. As a result, progress among older pupils is satisfactory.

The school provides a good quality of care, support and guidance. Academic guidance is particularly strong and good systems are in place to ensure that pupils are safe in school. Parents and pupils are very pleased with the extended services the school provides. Behaviour is an area of particular concern to parents, pupils and the school. However, the inspection revealed that this involves a small minority of pupils and that measures to support staff in helping these pupils are working. As seen in assemblies and around the school, the great majority of pupils behave very well and really enjoy their time in school. Pupils are well aware of the need for a healthy lifestyle, do what they can to help in the community and would like to do more. Their personal development is satisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory but aspects of pupils' personal development are not routinely included in planning and activities do not always match the needs or engage the interests of pupils, especially boys.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school's leadership has been effective in managing the changes made necessary by the school's falling roll and by regular changes of staff. The evaluation of strengths and weaknesses and planning for improvement are good. The school is already tackling the areas the inspection identifies as needing improvement. Many actions have been effective in improving provision. However, developments in some areas have been inhibited by a succession of staff changes. With all the necessary foundations in place, the school is now in a good position to move forward.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise levels of achievement among boys so that they can match the standards achieved by girls in writing, mathematics and science.
- Bring the quality of teaching in all classes up to the standard of the best.
- Develop the curriculum so that it stimulates learning, promotes personal development and better meets the needs and interests of boys.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Recent national test results have indicated that achievement improved each year over the four years to 2005 from weak to satisfactory and that this level was sustained in 2006. However, most of the improvement in achievement was by girls, who have made better progress than boys every year since 2003. This is confirmed by the analysis of the school's records and pupils' work, which shows that overall achievement is currently satisfactory. Good progress in the Foundation Stage is seeing more children achieving the early learning goals by the end of the reception year, especially in their personal development.

Standards have also shown an improving trend, with the school achieving its best ever national test results in both Year 2 and Year 6 in 2005. With more pupils with learning difficulties in last year's Year 2 and Year 6, results were not as good. Girls usually achieve higher standards than boys and with more boys than girls in each year group this has a negative effect on overall standards. Over the years, standards in English have always been better than in mathematics and science has been the weakest subject. The school has focused on improving the pupils' writing in the older classes, where it had been weak. As a result, standards are getting better but there is still some way to go, especially among boys.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding progresses soundly, though teachers do not always emphasise these aspects in planning. Behaviour and attitudes are satisfactory. Most pupils behave well and enjoy school but the disruptive behaviour of a small minority of older pupils still wastes time in some lessons. Pupils say behaviour is getting better, but worry that it might stop them enjoying playground activities, especially at lunchtimes. Attendance and punctuality are good. Pupils understand properly how to live healthily and keep safe and fit. Their involvement in the wider community, for example, through fund raising, is satisfactory. The School Council is not operating at present and pupils look forward to its return so that they can once again contribute to the school community. Pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology develop securely to give them a sound basis for future education and work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Good teaching in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 enables younger pupils to progress well and to enjoy learning, with teaching assistants making a valuable contribution. Most teachers manage their classes well and pupils' enthusiasm and good behaviour make a strong contribution to learning. However, in other year groups, time spent dealing with poor behaviour slows learning and lessens pupils' enjoyment of their work. Partners such as outreach workers work effectively with staff to support them in helping pupils to improve their behaviour. However, best use is not always made of teaching assistants in some older classes. Lessons are well planned but are not always sufficiently well adapted to meet the needs of all pupils. This results in some pupils losing interest and focus. Assessment and monitoring procedures are good. Marking is satisfactory but in some classes does not provide pupils with enough information to make day-to-day improvements.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Improvements to the curriculum have contributed to a gradual increase in the rate of pupils' learning year on year. This is most obvious in the nursery and reception classes. Work on planning the main school curriculum more creatively to capture pupils' interests is still in the early stages. Activities in literacy and numeracy are rarely approached through other subjects. Less tangible aspects of the curriculum, such as cultural or spiritual references, are seldom included in planning, so opportunities to focus on these are missed. As a result, many activities are not yet inspiring pupils as much as the school would like. The curriculum is satisfactorily enriched by a programme of visits, visitors, special events and extra-curricular activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good, with assessment and tracking procedures a strength. Records provide a clear picture of pupils' past achievement and current learning needs, which is particularly useful for the high proportion of new staff. These are well used in supporting pupils who need extra help. A parent commented that teachers are 'excellent at the support of children with SEN'. The school makes very good use of outside agencies to support it in its work in special needs. Success in this area with pupils who find conforming difficult often prevents potential exclusion. Procedures to protect pupils in school and on trips are robust and staff understand these properly. Staff do all they can to ensure the smooth transition of older pupils to their next schools, despite very complex transfer arrangements.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Recent outcomes indicate that leadership and management are satisfactory. However, the inspection revealed that the school is very aware of what needs to be done to make necessary improvements and has all the necessary structures and procedures in place to bring them about. Monitoring and evaluation have a high priority in the school, with all staff and governors involved. Subject and other leaders have clear roles and responsibilities and the time to carry them out. The Foundation Stage and special needs provision are particularly well led. The governing body feels the recently adopted new procedures to manage their workload and ensure that everyone is involved in monitoring and decision making are working well. At the core of all this is the headteacher who, well supported by the deputy, has provided the vision and resilience to make it all possible.

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?	3
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?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	2
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	3
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?	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?	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	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 really enjoyed our two days at your school and would like to say 'thank you' for being so friendly and helpful. We think the adults who were responsible for making all the changes to the inside of your school did a very good job in making it such a good place for you to learn in. Your school council also did well contributing to the improvements to the playgrounds. It's a shame the school council had to close down for a while but we know you will have lots of ideas when it starts up again soon. We think your school is satisfactory right now but has everything in place to get better.

This is what we liked most about your school:

- Everybody gets on well together.
- Children in Foundation 1 and Foundation 2 are doing especially well.
- You understand how important it is to have a healthy lifestyle and stay safe.
- The adults in the school look after you really well and make sure you are safe.
- Your headteacher and all the other teachers and helpers are working hard to make sure your time in school is happy and positive.

However, it's a pity that boys are not making the same progress as girls. Sometimes you find the things you do are too easy, too hard or not very interesting. In addition, some lessons don't work very well.

To make things even better, this is what we have asked your school to do now:

- Find ways for boys to catch up with girls in writing, mathematics and science.
- Try to make all lessons as good as the best. You can help your teachers in this by making sure time isn't wasted by them having to deal with bad behaviour.
- Make the things you do in class more interesting by working and looking at things in different ways. Maybe you have some ideas about how to do this.