



Bethany Church of England Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 113844
Local Authority Bournemouth
Inspection number 289743
Inspection dates 10–11 January 2007
Reporting inspector Peter Clifton

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Knole Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Boscombe
Age range of pupils	7–11		Bournemouth BH1 4DJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01202 302406
Number on roll (school)	307	Fax number	01202 391947
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Elizabeth Spreadbury
		Headteacher	Stephen Orman
Date of previous school inspection	19 November 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Bethany Church of England Junior School is a larger than average school. It was federated two years ago with the neighbouring infant school, having a joint headteacher and governing body. There are sharply increasing numbers of pupils coming to the school who speak English as an additional language. There are higher than usual numbers of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual times. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is average. Extensive building work has just been completed.

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 with good features. The headteacher has provided effective leadership in the junior school and in combining the expertise of the two schools. Overall development has been slowed because of much needed work to improve the accommodation. This has resulted in teachers not having access to the full range of resources.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning are strong features and have improved as a result of leaders' firm action. Pupils are polite, courteous and work well together in lessons. There are many opportunities for them to take on responsibility, which they relish. A large majority of parents support the work of the school and comment particularly on its caring atmosphere and inclusive nature. However, a small minority strongly feel that they are insufficiently included in school life and express concerns that their views are not taken sufficiently into account. There are good opportunities for pupils to express what they think. They enjoy school, say behaviour has improved and like meeting and being friends with new arrivals from other countries.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school accurately identifies strengths and weaknesses and has secure procedures in place to evaluate teaching, which is satisfactory. There are good aspects including some lessons which are lively and stimulating. However, there are occasions when pupils have to sit and listen passively for too long and this slows their learning. Teachers' expectations of what the more able pupils could achieve are not always high enough. The deputy headteacher tracks the progress of individual pupils, but the current system does not make it easy to share information. Class teachers have information about the progress of individual pupils but do not always use this sufficiently well in planning or providing additional help. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards are average. In English, the school's recent drive to improve writing has been effective in raising standards. In mathematics, weaknesses in problem solving are being tackled successfully, but more needs to be done. Standards in science are not high enough because of weaknesses in the curriculum and in the development of pupils' scientific enquiry skills.

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Most pupils know how to improve their work. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress because good leadership ensures that their needs are clearly identified and additional support is provided. Leaders monitor the progress of these pupils well. Whilst the overall curriculum is satisfactory, there are strengths in the provision to support pupils' personal needs. Pupils say that the school is 'calm and friendly'. Music is a strength and singing in assembly is an inspiring start to the day.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement and standards in mathematics and science through more imaginative teaching and the better use of assessment.

- Develop pupils' scientific enquiry and mathematics application skills more systematically by improving curriculum provision.
- Improve the system for tracking pupils' progress and the use of the information by class teachers so that action can be taken quickly to support pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils come into the school with average standards and make satisfactory progress in lessons to reach broadly average standards.

In 2005, standards in Year 6 national tests were average and pupils made satisfactory progress. In 2006, overall results were broadly average. Standards in English were better than in mathematics and science. In English, the school's drive to improve standards in writing, particularly for boys, has led to better progress. In mathematics, the school's targets were not met because the proportion of pupils reaching Level 4 was too low. In science, standards were below average, with too few pupils reaching the higher Level 5. Initiatives to develop pupils' skills of 'using and applying' in mathematics are beginning to raise standards.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress. The targeted teaching provided separately from the main class is particularly effective and support in lessons is usually good. Pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils' attendance has improved and is now average. Parents, teachers and pupils have all expressed concerns about fighting and bullying in the past. These concerns have been robustly tackled. Pupils confirm that the amount of bullying has greatly reduced and that they feel safe and secure in school. Behaviour both during lessons and in play is good. Pupils are happy and enjoy each other's company. They trust their teachers, who are good role models.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Assemblies are used well to help the pupils understand important values such as honesty and they think about the needs of others through prayer. Pupils grow in maturity and self-confidence as they move through the school, and willingly take on leadership roles. They understand the value of working together in teams. Pupils support newly arrived pupils, some of whom may be new to this country. Many are engaged in local activities and charitable events. Pupils have coped well with the disruption to classrooms caused by the recent building programme. Pupils take advantage of the sporting activities available, and have achieved well in local athletics events. Although pupils have a good awareness about healthy foods and eating, many packets of crisps are consumed at lunchtimes. They are well prepared for future challenges.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Pupils are managed well and relationships are good. Staff treat pupils with respect. In lessons the large majority of pupils listen well. They respond well when asked to contribute and work well together. Pupils are happy to work independently and help each other in lessons. In most lessons, teaching assistants work effectively, particularly with pupils who have learning difficulties. They keep careful notes about pupils' learning which help these pupils to make good progress. Music is particularly well taught because tasks are imaginative and stimulating and offer very good opportunities for pupils to evaluate how well they are doing.

Planning to meet the different needs of pupils in classes is satisfactory. It is less effective where assessment information is not used well enough and usually leads to more able pupils being given tasks which they find too easy. On a few occasions, teaching assistants are not suitably directed and as a result their time is not best used in supporting pupils. The school provides satisfactorily for pupils with limited English skills. However, lessons are not always sufficiently well adapted to meet their specific learning needs. Although the majority of lessons are interesting, there are a minority in which there are limited opportunities for pupils to contribute actively and these lack creativity.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum meets statutory requirements. Music is a strength and pupils often take responsibility for their own learning. Weaknesses in the science curriculum resulted in a few older pupils not having enough opportunities to learn all the appropriate skills and knowledge they required for the end of year test. In mathematics, there have been too few opportunities for pupils to apply skills and understanding. However, recent action taken is successfully tackling this and older pupils are becoming confident problem solvers, and plans are in place to improve science.

A satisfactory range of after school activities is available for pupils and these are satisfactorily attended. There is a good range of visits and also opportunities to participate in music activities such as the choir. Year 6 pupils are complimentary about residential visits and say they learn a lot about working together through them. The school has an effective personal support programme promoting good relationships.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Staff are strongly committed to ensuring that the pupils develop an understanding of living together harmoniously and not excluding anyone. Pupils with complex needs are given very good support. Those with English as an additional language receive

additional support outside of lessons. The arrangements for safeguarding pupils are carefully addressed; risks are assessed before trips and visits take place.

Good personal support, particularly from the family support worker, is making a significant difference to the lives of those pupils who otherwise might find it difficult to integrate into school life. She provides a good link with their parents and carers.

The academic guidance given to all pupils is satisfactory. Pupils have helpful targets in mathematics and English. However, these have not been in place for long and targets are not always referred to regularly enough and academic guidance systems are not as effective as they could be.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Since the headteacher's arrival the school has undergone significant change. Behaviour has improved markedly through the implementation of clear and consistent policies. Accommodation and information and communication technology (ICT) resources have been greatly improved. Temporary room arrangements did restrict the use of ICT for some time. The headteacher provides strong leadership; he and other leaders evaluate strengths and weaknesses accurately and use this as a basis to plan further development.

However, initiatives to raise standards introduced by senior and subject leaders have not yet had sufficient impact on learning in all classrooms. Monitoring has identified instances of limited learning approaches in lessons and curriculum weaknesses. The analysis of pupil progress information to compare different groups of pupils is restricted because of the way the system is currently set up. The progress made since the previous inspection and the capacity for further improvement are satisfactory.

The senior team have focused on inclusion by providing good levels of support for pupils with learning difficulties. The governing body provides a highly supportive role, being well informed regarding pupils' progress. However, governors are not yet confident enough in the level of challenge they provide to the school through, for instance, evaluating the outcomes of lesson observation.

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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	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	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	2

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	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	3
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?	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.

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

Thank you for giving us such a warm welcome to your school. We enjoyed talking to you in lessons and during your playtimes and were very impressed with how open and friendly you were. You gave us a lot of valuable information and this was a great help to us. We think your school is satisfactory with good features and it gives you a satisfactory quality of education.

What we most liked about your school:

- your good behaviour and attitudes
- changes that your headteacher has made to improve your school
- the way you work together, take on responsibility and welcome new pupils
- how adults care for you and make sure you are safe
- how well you do in music.

- We have asked your headteacher and others to work on:
 - helping you improve in mathematics and science through more interesting lessons and making sure your work is not too easy
 - helping you develop your scientific enquiry and problem solving skills
 - making sure that teachers use information about the progress you make so that you can be given extra help quickly if you need it.

We enjoyed the visit and hope your school continues to improve.