

Berry Hill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115549
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	290252
Inspection dates	6–7 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Stephen Lake

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	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lewis Howard
Headteacher	Gail Jones
Date of previous school inspection	20 May 2002
School address	Nine Wells Road Berry Hill Coleford GL16 7AT
Telephone number	01594 832262
Fax number	01594 832262

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Berry Hill is an average size school set in a small village. More pupils than average have learning difficulties or disabilities. The school is seeking 'Extended School' status and has already introduced after school care facilities. The senior leadership team is newly formed this year following staff changes.

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 because overall pupils achieve satisfactorily. It has some outstanding features as a result of the headteacher's good leadership and strong commitment to pupils' personal development. The governors support the school well. Through well targeted initiatives they have made a tremendous improvement to the school environment and the facilities, such as the breakfast club and after school care, which support the personal development of pupils. Parents really appreciate this aspect of the school. As one said, 'I have always been satisfied with the standard of education, care and commitment demonstrated by the staff'. Nevertheless leadership and management overall are satisfactory. Strategies to improve standards by age 11 are only recently in place as new subject leaders develop their roles. Although there has been great improvement in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, it is too early to see the impact of some initiatives designed to improve achievement at Key Stage 2. Children enter the school with skills below those normally found. The outstanding provision in the Foundation Stage enables them to enter Year 1 with skills that are above expectations. The effective leadership of the headteacher and senior managers has ensured that progress in Key Stage 1 has improved significantly since the last inspection. Standards at age 7 are significantly above average. However, standards attained at age 11 are no more than average for two reasons. First, the older pupils in Key Stage 2 did not start it with such high levels of achievement as those currently being secured by the end of Key Stage 1. Second, progress in Key Stage 2 is no better than satisfactory. This is because the teaching has less pace than in the younger years and does not use assessment information well enough to plan lessons that challenge all pupils, especially the more able, to achieve their very best. Therefore, teaching overall is no better than satisfactory. The good quality curriculum places a high emphasis upon creative arts and is a key reason why pupils enjoy school so much. The excellent art work in the school was one of the reasons for the award of 'ArtsMark Gold'.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good because of the good provision for this within the curriculum and the good quality care, support and guidance that they receive. Pastoral guidance is a real strength of this school, with care of children central to the school's philosophy, which is a major reason why behaviour is outstanding. Academic support and guidance are good in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 but satisfactory overall. Through its rigorous procedures for evaluating its own effectiveness, the school has identified that marking in Key Stage 2 is inconsistent and does not always give pupils enough guidance on how to improve their work. Although the school has detailed records of individual pupil progress, this is not used consistently at Key Stage 2 to plan lessons that challenge all pupils enough, especially the more able. The data available are not presented in a way that makes it easy for senior managers and governors to check upon the effectiveness of the school year by year. The school has recognised this but has yet to develop more effective ways of checking and reporting progress at Key Stage 2. Nevertheless the significant improvements in standards at Key Stage 1 since the last inspection, the continued improvement in the provision for pupils' personal development and the senior leadership's accurate evaluation of the priorities for improvement indicate that the school has a good capacity for improving further.

What the school should do to improve further

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- Ensure that teachers in Key Stage 2 use information on pupils' attainment better to plan well paced lessons that challenge all pupils, especially the more able, to achieve their very best.

- Ensure that marking in Key Stage 2 makes it clear to pupils what they need to do to improve their work.
- Develop better ways of looking at the data available on pupils' attainment to give a clear picture of how the school is performing year by year.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The outstanding provision in the Foundation Stage ensures that children make exceptional progress, especially in their personal and creative development. Children therefore get a splendid start to their education and enter Year 1 really ready to learn and with skills above those normally found. The school is particularly good at teaching pupils to read. This helps them learn effectively in other subjects and contributes to the excellent progress that results in significantly above average standards at age 7. Progress, especially of the more able, is slower in Key Stage 2, because teaching is not as effective as in Key Stage 1. Together with the lower starting points that older pupils had on entry to this key stage, the result is that standards at age 11 are in line with but not above the national average. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make good progress throughout the school as a result of good support. Information and communication technology (ICT) skills are above those normally found and contribute well to pupils' creative development in art, music and literature.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is central to their good personal development. Their outstanding moral development can be seen in their excellent behaviour, politeness and strong self-discipline. Pupils much enjoy school and make a strong contribution to the school community through such responsibilities as prefect duties and the school council. The skills pupils gain from this alongside strong ICT skills contribute well to the good preparation for their future economic well-being, although this is limited a little by the low aspirations that some of them have. Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle, as shown by the Healthy Schools award, and most choose to eat healthily and engage in sport. They are trustworthy and responsible for their own actions and so able to take full advantage of the facilities on offer to them in school. For example, they know well how to play safely both in groups and independently and to respond to potential dangers in a sensible way.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The high quality teaching in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 ensures that outstanding learning takes place and is responsible for the significantly above average standards attained by age 7. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities receive good support from teaching assistants and this enables them to be fully included in the lessons and make good progress. Throughout the school, teachers' good management of behaviour and guidance to pupils ensure good attitudes to learning. Teachers make good use of ICT to support learning and motivate pupils. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is improving as a result of school initiatives but these are not yet fully embedded. Consequently, the quality of teaching is inconsistent and limits the progress that pupils make. Too many lessons are not planned well enough to challenge

all pupils, especially the more able, and many lessons lack pace. Pupils say that in many lessons they think that they could do more. Marking is particularly inconsistent in Key Stage 2. Although good examples can be found, in the majority of books, not enough attention is given to helping pupils understand how they can improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage curriculum provides a wide range of activities that stimulate children's interest and desire to learn. The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 contains many activities that enrich learning and contribute well to pupils' personal development and enjoyment of school. This is particularly evident in the excellent provision for the creative arts. Good partnerships with artists help pupils to express themselves in a variety of media, both two-dimensional and three-dimensional. Their work is celebrated in many high quality displays that enhance the school environment. A partnership with the local secondary school is enhancing literature through ICT by developing pupils' skills in such activities as making short animated films. Links with schools in other countries help pupils to gain a good understanding of traditions and cultures different from their own. Educational trips, including visits overseas and visitors to school, are particular strengths of the curriculum and have resulted in remarkably high quality art work by pupils throughout the school. The school has identified the importance of improving the way lessons in Key Stage 2 are planned to meet better the needs of all pupils, especially the more able. Changes have been planned to the way the curriculum is to be taught next term to deal with this.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are given high priority because the school recognises the impact they have on learning. Pupils themselves say they feel well looked after. Of particular note is how well the school encourages independence and promotes self-discipline, even in the youngest pupils. The school guides pupils towards leading a healthy lifestyle and adults are especially skilled at helping pupils to recognise for themselves potential dangers and make sensible choices to deal with any risks. The school works well with other agencies to support vulnerable pupils, such as those with learning difficulties or disabilities, and they make good progress because of the support that they receive. Nevertheless, academic support and guidance across the school are inconsistent. Procedures to check on how well pupils are achieving are good. Information gained is generally used effectively to set targets for younger pupils, but the targets set for older pupils, especially those who are more able, are not always challenging enough.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school's notable improvement since the last inspection is as a result of the good leadership of the headteacher. She shares her very clear vision with the new leadership team. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is excellent and the good practice found here is now being shared throughout the school. Some subject leaders are quite new to their post and have not yet had enough time to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects. Where this has been done, for example in English, good quality professional development has been put in

place to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Senior leaders have a good grasp of the school's overall strengths and weaknesses but the high emphasis given to each individual pupil's progress is not present in systems to monitor overall school performance. This is limiting the way in which the detailed impact of whole-school initiatives can be judged. Governance is good. Governors visit the school regularly to check on its the work. They have supported a large number of initiatives to improve the school, especially the development of breakfast clubs and after school care that contributes greatly to pupils' personal development and pastoral care.

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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>	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	1
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	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	1
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	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?	2
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.

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	2
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

7 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Berry Hill Primary School, Berry Hill, Coleford, GL16 7AT

Thank you for helping us find out about your school when we visited. We were really pleased that we were able to talk with so many of you.

We think that your school is giving you a satisfactory education and at age 11 standards are similar to those in most schools. There were many things that we really liked about your school.

- You make an excellent start to school because of the outstanding Foundation Stage and you continue this rapid progress in Key Stage 1, where you attain standards that are significantly above those found in other schools.
- The school cares for you really well which is why you told us that you feel very safe.
- Your personal development is good and your behaviour is excellent. You are a credit to your school. Well done.
- The school gives you a lot of interesting things to do that help you stay healthy and help you enjoy your education. You told us that you really like art. We think that your art work is outstanding. You should be very proud of what you do.
- Your school is getting better all the time because of the good leadership of your headteacher.

To help make your school even better we have asked your teachers to do the following things.

- Make sure that the lessons in Key Stage 2 give you more to do and challenge you to do your very best. You can help by telling your teachers what it is that helps you learn.
- Find different ways of marking your work in Key Stage 2 so that you know exactly what to do to improve it. You can help by telling your teachers when you do not know how to make a piece of work better.
- Use all the good information that they have on how well you are doing in a different way so that the teachers and governors can see easily how the school is getting better.

Thank you again for your help.

Stephen Lake Lead inspector