

# Bibury Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115611
<b>Local Authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	290275
<b>Inspection date</b>	20 March 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Patricia Davies

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	28
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Michael Cheeseman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Trudy Lines
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 November 2002
<b>School address</b>	Bibury Cirencester GL7 5NR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01285 740268
<b>Fax number</b>	01285 740610

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Bibury is a very small village school. It is organised into two small classes, each containing pupils from more than one year group. Most pupils are from White British families and a very small minority are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below average. As year groups are very small, attainment varies widely, but is broadly as expected when children first join the school in the Reception Year. The school is currently led by an acting headteacher and governors are seeking to appoint a permanent headteacher.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Bibury is a good school where pupils achieve equally well in their personal qualities and academic accomplishments. The school holds a special place in the village and is held in high regard by parents. The key to much of its success lies in its strength as a small 'family' group where staff and pupils know each other well. This factor is a significant component of its good care, guidance and support. As a result, there is an exceptionally strong sense of community. Pupils of all ages and backgrounds mix happily together. The outstanding features of pupils' good personal development and well-being are their excellent behaviour and considerable understanding of how to keep healthy and safe. Pupils are quick to point to the many trips and visits as a particular source of enjoyment within the school's good curriculum. The best possible use is made of the school's limited accommodation, and of local facilities to ensure pupils do not miss out on sporting activities.

Teaching and learning are good. Different age groups and the varied range of ability within each class are managed skilfully during lessons. Careful assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding during each day allows activities to be modified for the next. Provision for children in the Reception group is good and standards are broadly above expectations by the end of this first year. Having achieved well over the course of their time at the school, pupils reach significantly above-average standards by the time they leave at Year 6. Nevertheless, the school's assessments and national test results show some variations in pupils' progress. The school has started to make improvements to assessment practices so that they can tackle this issue, but is not yet identifying the National Curriculum level each pupil should reach. Therefore, there is no goal to aim for in order to ensure that every pupil is moved along as fast as possible to reach their full potential.

Good leadership and management mean that the school has an accurate understanding of its overall effectiveness. Well-targeted action to improve writing and mathematics shows the school is well placed to bring about further improvement. Staff members work as a close-knit team, each cheerfully and effectively bearing many roles and responsibilities. Governors are well informed and all play an active part in monitoring the school's work.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Identify the National Curriculum level each pupil should reach in order to ensure that every pupil progresses as fast as possible to reach their full potential.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

All pupils achieve well, including those with learning difficulties. As a result, standards are significantly above average at Year 2 and by the time pupils leave the school at Year 6. The standards reached in national tests have been rising at Year 2 over the last three years to exceptionally high levels in 2005 and 2006; those at Year 6 have been steadily maintained at significantly above-average levels.

Where there are variations in test standards, these are partly caused by differences in the attainment of individual pupils within very small year groups. Nevertheless, mathematics results have been relatively weaker than other subjects. The school is quick to identify weaknesses in attainment. Successful action to resolve specific shortcomings in pupils' understanding is

reflected in increased standards in mathematics in the 2006 tests at Year 2 and Year 6. A substantial focus on improving writing has also proved very beneficial. Standards in the current Year 6 indicate that English results will return to their previous high level, following a fall in results last summer.

The school is now paying the same close attention to the rate of progress. Test data at Year 6 shows some decline in progress over the last three years related to variations in the progress of individual pupils. The school's assessments also indicate that, within the overall picture of good achievement, some pupils could be making more rapid gains than they are. The school is in the process of resolving this issue through improvements to its assessment practices.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enjoy the friendly, personal atmosphere of their small school. Relationships are strong across and between the year groups. The 'family' nature of daily life is captured in the chat and laughter when the whole school sits together – picnic-style – to eat lunch after their swimming trip. Newcomers report that they are quickly made to feel at home. A firm understanding of the importance of community life and care towards others are telling examples of pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are exceptionally polite and well behaved. Most are confident and keen to share their views and ideas. All these qualities, together with their good basic academic skills, prepare them well for later life. Attendance is just above average and the school is now taking further steps to discourage holidays taken during term time.

Through their school council, pupils take responsibility to represent the views of others and make changes for the better. They also contribute to local events in the village and at the church and join in sporting activities with other schools. Their knowledge of other localities and cultures is growing through a visit to an International school and studies of other countries.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teachers are adept at managing the different groups and activities made necessary by the wide range of ages and abilities in each class. Careful planning and considerable flexibility make this possible. So, too, does the close teamwork among all members of the teaching staff. The judicious use of teaching assistants enables individual pupils in particular to be closely supported with their separate tasks. This adaptable approach encourages much independence and maturity among even the youngest children. Pupils change tasks, groupings and location without a fuss and readily get on with their work.

Teaching with the whole-class group is generally pitched well to accommodate all abilities, although, sometimes, more confident pupils dominate discussion and quieter pupils are not drawn in. Occasionally, the pace of the lesson slows. When this happens, pupils become restless and lose some of their good attention.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The wide range of experiences on offer to enrich pupils' experience is captured in the view of one parent, who wrote of the school's broad and balanced curriculum, 'with lots of things going on'. This is true. Pupils cook cottage pie, fajitas and pasta, with an exceptionally knowledgeable eye on healthy ingredients and the benefits of vegetables. Cycling proficiency training and safety talks leave pupils with an impressive understanding of how to keep safe in the dark and on Bonfire Night. The school does all it can to ensure pupils have plenty of exercise through weekly swimming, daily 'Huff and Puff' and specialist sports coaching.

A 'topic' week on healthy eating, and another about ecology, drew on a range of subjects and had pupils doing English and mathematics almost without noticing it! This cross-curricular approach is also found in everyday work, and the school is keen to develop it further. English, mathematics and science are well planned and modified to take account of the areas where pupils are finding particular difficulty. Improvements to the outdoor area for Reception-aged children are also valuably enjoyed by pupils in Years 1 and 2.

Assemblies are often led by local clergy, and themes about compassion and forgiveness foster pupils' sensitivities towards others. Good use is made of the local environment, particularly in learning to appreciate the qualities and beauty of the area. A planned residential trip to the coast and looking at life in an Indian village are ways in which the school is expanding pupils' experience of localities further afield.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The greatest strength of the school's good pastoral and academic support lies in its knowledge of individual pupils. In addition to the benefits of its small and close community, the school takes every necessary step to ensure pupils' trust, safety and security. Parents are readily welcomed into school at the start of the day or to work with pupils. Care is offered before and after school for the pupils whose parents have to travel a distance to work.

Pupils are offered good academic guidance through written comments about their work. Individual short-term learning targets are shared with pupils so that they can judge how well they are doing and what they need to do next. It is in the longer-term tracking of pupils' progress that there are relative shortcomings. Improvements are already underway. Teachers use National Curriculum levels well as a benchmark when checking the progress of pupils and in determining where additional support is required. They do not, however, set individual targets which specify the National Curriculum levels which each pupil should be aspiring to achieve. That prevents even sharper assessment practice when ensuring that each pupil is progressing as rapidly as possible.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Staff and governors share considerable commitment to the school's well-being and effectiveness. They are rewarded in pupils' enjoyment of their education and in the high level of parents' satisfaction. Attainment information in particular is carefully examined and monitored. This has allowed the school to select key priorities, such as weaknesses in writing. The sophistication

of pupils' vocabulary and the liveliness and variety of their written work show the resolve and good capacity of staff to bring about improvement. The acting headteacher is successfully maintaining the school's many strengths, but is also securing further improvement, particularly to assessment.

Governors are well aware of the issues arising from Bibury being a small school and they have formed a committee to plan for the school's future. Finances are well managed. All members of the governing body are closely involved in examining and discussing the school's work and are, therefore, well informed. Key governors are aware that governor visits to the school should now target the outcomes of academic initiatives as closely as they do the improvements to pupils' personal development.

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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>	2
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>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<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	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<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	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

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

Thank you very much for welcoming me to your school. I enjoyed talking to so many of you and hearing about your work and what you especially like about your school. Yours is a good school and, from the comments I received, it is clear that you and your parents think so too. Those of you who talked to me at lunch time particularly mentioned how much you liked the trips and visits. You also said that you liked the school being small because everyone knew each other and you could do things together as a whole group.

Here are some other important things about your school

- You are all well taught and this means you are making good progress, which prepares you well for life when you grow up.
- Your behaviour is excellent and all the year groups mix together really well in lessons and at other times.
- You have an extremely good understanding of how to keep safe and healthy, and clearly enjoy your cooking sessions!
- All the adults in school take good care of you and you take good care of each other too.
- Your school is well led, and staff and governors work hard and successfully to make improvements.

This is what your school has been asked to do to make things even better

- Look ahead and identify the level each of you could reach in order to make sure that you progress as fast as you can and achieve your very best.