

Bishopswood Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116035
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	290403
Inspection dates	3–4 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Bernice Magson

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	162
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Spencer
Headteacher	Mrs Margaret Brackenborough
Date of previous school inspection	15 October 2001
School address	Barlows Road Tadley RG26 3NA
Telephone number	01189 812836
Fax number	01189 817782

Age group	4–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Bishopswood Infant School is situated in the centre of the town of Tadley. There are significant differences in the numbers of boys and girls in some year groups. Almost all pupils are from white British backgrounds. A very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. Extended services are provided on the same site.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

'Bishopswood Infants is a wonderful school that caters for all children's needs. My child loves to attend' commented one parent, and others overwhelmingly agreed. Inspectors support their judgement that this is a good school providing a good quality of education. The headteacher, staff and governors share a common goal to provide a caring, friendly environment in which all pupils can succeed. They strive continuously to raise standards and there is good evidence of recent improvements in performance. From below average starting points on entry, most pupils attain average standards by the age of seven. However, standards in writing are lower than in reading and mathematics, particularly for more able pupils.

This is a happy school where pupils know very clearly what is expected of them and behave well. They feel safe and secure. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, because teachers are excellent role models. A strength of the pupils' personal development is the kind and caring way that they look after each other. Pupils are eager to contribute to school improvements. The healthy eating team encourages pupils to consider diet and exercise and the school council is effective in expressing the views of others.

The quality of teaching is good and has some excellent features. Relationships are outstanding and, as a result, pupils are eager to learn. In lessons, teachers have a very good understanding of pupils' progress and set challenging targets to meet individual needs. Good attention is given to the teaching of basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Recently, teachers have accurately identified that they must raise their expectations in writing, especially of more able pupils. Also, some pupils find it difficult to listen to instructions and this slows their rates of progress. Not enough time is given to addressing these issues in lessons.

In the Foundation Stage, children are curious to learn and make good progress overall, although this is less rapid in outdoor play, where progress is satisfactory. This is because some learning tasks do not have a sufficient challenge, especially for more able pupils. The curriculum is planned well for all year groups and some links are made across subjects to consolidate learning, for example in information and communication technology. Teachers prepare pupils well for their next stage in education and promote their economic well-being effectively.

Leadership and management are good. A dedicated and committed headteacher has ensured a firm direction for the school and is very well-supported by the deputy headteacher. They have an excellent record in appointing staff who address school priorities well. Well-established systems of analysis and review have enabled staff and governors to be effective in their evaluation of the school's performance. Key issues have been addressed successfully from the previous inspection report and the school has a good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing, especially for more able pupils.
- In lessons, provide more opportunities for pupils to improve their skills of listening.
- Improve the teaching and learning in the outdoor play in the Foundation Stage.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupil's achievement is good. They make good progress and attain average standards by the age of seven. However, in writing, more able pupils do not make as much progress as in reading

and mathematics. This is because teachers' expectations are too low and they do not challenge them sufficiently in writing. In the Foundation Stage, children achieve well and mostly reach the expected goals for their age. This is apart from in their reading and writing skills, which remain below nationally expected levels. Initiatives to raise standards by Year 2 have proved effective and, in 2006, considerably more pupils than nationally attained the higher Level 3 in reading. Further improvements in standards are predicted for the current Year 2, including for the high numbers of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. These pupils have a good understanding of what they must do to improve and work hard to achieve better results. Across the school, pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well because of good adult support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. They enjoy school very much and behave well. Apart from holidays taken in term-time, attendance is good. Pupils are confident learners, secure in the knowledge that staff know and care for them well. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They enjoy visits into the community and welcome visitors to school. In a topic called Animal Magic, pupils in Year 1 showed a good understanding of the needs of animals, commenting that pets need food, clean water, exercise, and playtime too! Pupils show good consideration of the needs of the community, raising funds for national charities and the local hospice. Pupils know the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Posters are displayed around the school, made by members of the school council to remind others about school rules.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. It is underpinned by the excellent relationships between all adults and pupils. Teachers use praise effectively to reward good achievement and encourage further effort. As a result, pupils concentrate well and work hard in most activities. However, in writing tasks, more able pupils are sometimes not challenged sufficiently. Teachers give good guidance about how pupils can improve their work. The quality of teachers' marking is very good and targets for improvement are clearly identified. When their targets are achieved, pupils receive their certificates with good pride. Teachers do not provide enough opportunities to develop pupils' listening skills. Because some pupils do not listen well enough, their progress is hampered in some lessons. Learning support assistants help pupils effectively, particularly those with learning difficulties and disabilities. In the Foundation Stage, teachers focus effectively on developing children's social skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and is enriched by a wide range of popular out-of-school activities, which provide specialist teaching and more in-depth learning. Teachers plan the curriculum in year group teams. They review pupils' progress regularly so that activities remain relevant. Actions are taken quickly to address any perceived weaknesses. For example, Year 2 pupils now work with those of a similar ability in mathematics, so that learning tasks challenge more effectively. Staff training has taken place to ensure that the needs of pupils with learning

difficulties and disabilities are met well. The teaching of basic skills is given a high priority, especially in reading. There are some good links between subjects so that pupils have practical opportunities to consolidate their reading and number skills. For example, Year 2 enjoyed writing tongue twisters about mini-beasts, following a nature hunt in the school grounds. Information and communication technology activities are incorporated into many lessons. Visitors encourage pupils to reflect on what they need to do in order to be safe and stay healthy. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage has a good balance and provides many exciting opportunities for children to work and play together. However, the range of activities for outdoor play does not always challenged children sufficiently, especially the more able.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support of pupils are good. Well-established procedures ensure that children settle quickly into school. Staff know pupils well and care for them effectively. Regular checks ensure that the learning environment is safe and secure. Child protection procedures are securely in place. A wide range of care facilities and clubs are available for pupils and their families. For example, a nurture group gives support to a small group of pupils with emotional and behavioural needs. Parents are appreciative of the range of activities available to engage them in their children's learning. The 'Ready, Steady Books' sessions held weekly allow parents to visit the classroom and are well-attended. Assessment systems provide good information on pupils' progress and enable staff to set targets for the end of Year 2. Reward certificates are popular with pupils as they strive to improve. Learning assistants give good support in lessons and advice is sought from outside specialist agencies, when required. Transition arrangements are effective, because good links are established with feeder schools and pre school providers.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The leadership skills of the headteacher are excellent. Governors recognise the clear direction she has provided during a recent period of instability in staffing and in the governing body. Parents are very appreciative of her care, support and guidance of pupils. One parent described her leadership as 'inspirational' and others have recognised how, under her guidance, the school has remained 'a happy place in which children flourish.' Supported very well by an enthusiastic team of staff and governors, actions are taken to address perceived weaknesses in standards and, outcomes are monitored regularly. Specialist expertise is shared well by subject managers and there is good evidence of recent improvements in standards. The budget is managed efficiently and monies are targeted to perceived needs. The school has good capacity to improve further.

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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?	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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
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?	2
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?	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

18 May 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Bishopswood Infant School, Tadley, RG26 3NA

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our visit and finding out about all the interesting things you do each day. We think that you have a good school.

The things we liked are:

- children are friendly and very welcoming
- you care for each other very well
- you enjoy school very much and work hard in lessons
- all grown ups work hard to make sure that your school is an exciting place to be.

To make your school even better we have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to make sure that writing activities are challenging enough, especially for more able pupils. We think that you could learn to listen better in lessons, both to teachers and each other. In the Foundation Stage we think that teachers need to make sure that outdoor play opportunities are challenging enough for children.

We hope that you continue to enjoy your time at Bishopswood Infant School.

Yours truly,

Bernice Magson

Lead inspector