

Bampton CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123114
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	292585
Inspection dates	20–21 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Steven Hill

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	133
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev. David Lloyd
Headteacher	Mrs Mary Dodge
Date of previous school inspection	15 April 2002
School address	Bowling Green Close Bampton OX18 2NJ
Telephone number	01993 850371
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small primary school in a small market town. Pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic circumstances. There is an intake of about 20 pupils each year, so that classes are almost all mixed-age. Attainment on entry varies from year to year, and covers a very wide range. Children's skills when they start Reception are broadly average, except in communication, language and literacy, where standards are below average. A large proportion of pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities. Almost all are of White British origin, with a mother tongue of English, and a tiny minority come from a range of other ethnic heritages. Four pupils are at the early stages of learning English. Mobility is variable and is high in some year-groups. The current headteacher took up post in September 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school where pupils achieve well academically and socially. Standards are generally above average. Standards are not as high in writing as in other subjects, and the school is planning to address this by a concentration on improving speaking and listening skills, to put learning in writing on a firmer basis.

Good achievement is based on good teaching and careful tracking of the progress of individuals. Teachers provide variety and interest to lessons through different approaches and good use of practical work. A pupil summed this up by saying 'Teachers are good at explaining things - but they do it in a fun way'. Very good relationships underpin the secure discipline and positive working atmosphere that characterise lessons. Teachers match work well to pupils' needs so that tasks are challenging but manageable. They set group targets for pupils' attainment in English and mathematics but this is inconsistent between classes, as are procedures for reviewing targets so pupils can move on. There is a good curriculum that is enhanced by a wide range of clubs, in which pupils participate enthusiastically and in large numbers.

Children settle happily into the Foundation Stage, where they make good progress because of the strengths in teaching and in the curriculum. Throughout the school, pupils' personal development and well-being are good because of the very strong pastoral care provided by all the adults. Behaviour is excellent and pupils' high levels of enjoyment are evident. They particularly enjoy the wide range of special events that take place, such as the school's participation in Red Nose Day and the visit from a choir of Ugandan children. All these support their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The school is well led and managed, and the new headteacher is building well on the strengths in provision established by her predecessor. The careful monitoring of standards has led to the establishment of priorities that accurately reflect the school's needs. Subject leaders play a strong part in this. The monitoring of lessons is well established, and enables useful feedback to teachers to help them improve their practice. However, records of this concentrate too much on teaching rather than learning, and are not organised to be a useful tool for management.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing by improving pupils' speaking and listening skills.
- Refine the way lessons are monitored, so that more attention is paid to pupils' learning, and improve the way records are organised.
- Make the setting and reviewing of pupils' targets in English and mathematics more consistent, so they have a better overview of their progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and standards are generally above average. Pupils in the Foundation Stage progress well, although their standards in communication, language and literacy are still below average at the end of Reception.

In the rest of the school, pupils also make good progress. Standards fluctuate from year to year, largely due to high levels of special educational needs and considerable mobility in some cohorts. This was true of the Year 6 pupils who undertook national assessments in 2006. Despite this, and disruption to their progress in Year 3 because of staffing difficulties, they attained

results above the national average. However, as is often the case in other year groups in the school, standards in writing were not as good as in other subjects. The school accurately identified this as stemming partly from a need to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills, and a concentration on this is starting to show positive results. Pupils develop good skills in information and communication technology (ICT) by the end of their time in school.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress because of the good support they receive. The small number of bilingual pupils also do well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The strengths in personal development underpin the school's very welcoming ethos. Pupils have very good relationships with each other and with adults, are friendly to visitors, and give a warm welcome to new arrivals. Pupils say bullying is very rare, and examples they recall from the past were sorted out quickly. Pupils work hard and develop good collaborative skills, taking a pride in their accomplishments. They have a good knowledge of healthy eating and are very keen on exercise, as can be seen by their participation in sport and the huge numbers energetically skipping at break-times. They are safety conscious, and understand the reasons behind school rules. Pupils take on jobs conscientiously. Year 6, in particular, show great care and concern for younger children, both informally and in their 'yellow band' role as official helpers. Year 2 pupils confirmed that 'and;hellip; people are nice to each other and;hellip; like a big family and;hellip; everyone looks after each other'. Pupils take a great interest in other cultures, and were very enthusiastic about their visitors from Uganda. Attendance is good. Together with their good basic skills, pupils' positive approaches to work and to other people stand them in good stead for their future lives, in education and beyond.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. A lively, practical approach in the Reception class, together with exciting activities, engages children's interest and enthusiasm. Positive relationships mean children feel safe and secure and enjoy learning. Good use is made of the outside area in a variety of areas of learning. The language-rich environment enhances their progress in communication, language and literacy.

Positive relationships throughout the school mean pupils respond well to their teachers and are keen to please them by working hard. Teachers transmit a sense of enthusiasm leading to a matching enthusiasm from pupils, and good progress. Teachers question pupils carefully to extend their understanding and to get them to think through their ideas. Good use is made of ICT to support learning. There is some inconsistency in setting pupils' targets. Pupils do not all have a clear view of their learning beyond their current target, and targets are not always reviewed promptly so pupils can move on rapidly to the next step in their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

There is a good curriculum which is constantly improving. It is enlivened by a wide range of clubs, special events, visits out and visitors to the school. These are greatly enjoyed by pupils

and contribute effectively to their academic standards as well as to their personal development. Pupils are enjoying their French lessons, which started this year, and there is good provision for music and art, also popular with pupils. Good use is made of the local community and of links with local churches and with other schools to enhance pupils' learning. Healthy eating and exercise have a high profile. The school has recently improved the grounds and is successfully extending pupils' understanding of the environment. Links to several schools abroad support pupils' cultural understanding well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral care is very strong and parents and pupils appreciate the individual care provided. Procedures to safeguard learners are all in place. Pupils feel safe in school and say 'Teachers are really kind to us'. A parent wrote 'My eldest son left last year and didn't really want to leave the warm and family feel of the school'. Assemblies and lessons provide pupils with clear direction on moral issues and they are successfully encouraged to think about the needs of others and to support them, both in school and further afield. Pupils who are new to the school are helped to settle in quickly by both staff and other children.

The academic support provided to pupils is good and is based on thorough tracking of their progress. The school intervenes effectively to help pupils who are in danger of falling behind. There is good support given to pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities, so they achieve well. Target setting for individuals is satisfactory. Good support is given to pupils who are new to English, drawing on help from the local authority and the community, as well as the school's own resources.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management are at the heart of pupils' good personal development and academic progress. A careful track is kept on standards across the school. Good self-evaluation, including effective monitoring by subject leaders, has helped identify issues that need to be addressed. This process is already leading to improvements in the issues identified by the inspector, and means the school is well placed to improve in the future.

There has been regular monitoring of teaching for several years, and staff have been given clear feedback to help improve their practice. However, written records of lessons are not focused enough on children's learning, and are not always clear about strengths and weaknesses. They are not helpful to staff in tracing progress or identifying issues that are general across the school.

Governors have a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses and are able to use this to hold the school to account. They are supportive and very appreciative of the staff and their hard work in maintaining standards, particularly through the disruption caused by the recent building work in school.

The school maintains strong links with parents, who also appreciate the hard work of the staff. One wrote 'The school is run by dedicated, enthusiastic staff who care for each individual child'.

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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	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

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	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

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

Thank you for your help and your very warm welcome when I inspected your school. I enjoyed talking to you and watching you working hard in class. I could see how much you enjoy Bampton, and why you said it is a good school. I agree.

Bampton is a good school because you all make good progress in learning. Standards in reading, maths, science and ICT are good, and you are also very good at skipping! You haven't all done so well in writing, and I have agreed with the staff that they should concentrate on improving this, particularly by getting you to talk about things before you write about them. Teachers set targets for you to help you make progress, but organise this in different ways. The headteacher and I have decided that this should be improved so that you have a better idea of how you are doing, and can move on to the next targets more quickly. You can help by trying hard to improve your writing and to reach your targets.

I was very impressed by your behaviour, which I thought was excellent, and by how well you all get on with each other. The older pupils do a lot of jobs around the school very conscientiously and are really good at caring for the younger children. I found that you were all very thoughtful about other people and keen to help them.

The adults organise the school well and keep a careful eye on how you are getting on, so they can give extra help if you need it. They are good at giving each other tips about helping you learn when they visit each other's classes. I have suggested that they should write down what they have seen more carefully, so they can share ideas better.

Thanks again for all your help, and I am sure you will carry on enjoying school and doing well.

Best wishes,

Steven Hill.

Lead Inspector