

Bryn Offa CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123528
Local Authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	292699
Inspection date	11 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Patricia Potheary

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	116
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Parry
Headteacher	David Purslow
Date of previous school inspection	24 February 2003
School address	Rockwell Lane Pant Oswestry SY10 9QR
Telephone number	01691 830621
Fax number	01691 830621

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Bryn Offa is a small rural school. A very small minority of pupils have a variety of learning difficulties. The current headteacher was appointed in January 2006. The school provides extended services with a breakfast club, after school club and holiday provision in association with the local childcare centre. Almost all pupils are from a white British heritage background.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Bryn Offa is a calm and well organised school that provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Achievement is satisfactory. Children enter Reception with levels of skills that are above average. They make satisfactory progress and almost all attain and many exceed the goals expected for their age when they enter Year 1. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress throughout the rest of the school, so that by the end of Year 6, standards are above average. In each age group this results from a satisfactory curriculum and satisfactory teaching and learning. The school has been through a period of declining standards since the last inspection but this trend is now being reversed. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher is beginning to address key areas, including improving the assessment of how well pupils are doing and improving the quality of teaching in some subjects. Despite this, the information gathered by school leaders on pupils' progress and the way it is used, especially in improving teaching, is not developed sufficiently well to help pupils learn more rapidly.

There are good elements in lessons and in the curriculum, with plenty of interesting and enjoyable activities. Pupils therefore enjoy school and this is reflected in their good attendance and positive attitudes to their lessons. As one typically reported, 'I like school because lessons are fun.' The personal development and well-being of pupils are good and they contribute well to the school and wider community. This was evident in a delightful assembly run by Class 2 where pupils read out their poems to parents, visitors and the rest of the school. A large majority of parents feel satisfied with the school and their views support the findings of the inspection. The quality of care, guidance and support given to pupils is satisfactory. Pupils are well supported personally, but are not provided with individual targets that are sufficiently challenging. As a result, they do not make consistently good progress in all subjects. Therefore teachers cannot plan lessons to take learning forward at a faster rate.

Strong links with other schools and organisations enhance what the school offers. The breakfast, after school and holiday clubs all add to the good range of opportunities provided for pupils. For example, these links have supported the curriculum in successfully encouraging pupils to eat more healthy food and take more exercise.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the rate of progress for all pupils by setting more challenging individual targets and making sure that teachers' planning takes account of these targets.
- Improve the way that information on pupils' progress is gathered, analysed and linked by leaders to the quality of teaching so that school improvement is more rapid.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement and progress for all pupils, including those with learning difficulties, is satisfactory and this is an improvement on some significant underachievement in the previous two years. The standard of pupils' work varies from year to year because pupil numbers are so low, although it is above average overall. Improvements to the curriculum mean that children in Reception

now make satisfactory progress, showing at least adequate gains in all the areas of learning. Pupils make satisfactory progress in all age groups. A few pupils in Year 6 have made good progress this year, especially in mathematics. The more able pupils in Year 6 make satisfactory progress. Writing throughout the school is relatively weaker mainly due to lack of opportunities for extended writing.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils show a keen awareness of the needs of others and a strong appreciation of the wonders of the world around them. This is especially evident in some of the beautiful artwork around the school. The pupils' awareness of the lives of people from other cultures is, however, less well developed because too few opportunities are provided to increase their understanding. Pupils' behaviour is good and this is reflected in the good quality and warm relationships that exist throughout the school. The majority of pupils act safely and most pupils say they feel safe in school although a very small minority of parents report incidents of bullying which they feel have not been satisfactorily resolved. Pupils' good contribution to life in school is evident in the way they act responsibly as monitors, as mentors to other children and when sitting on the school council and the eco group. Pupils' preparation for their future well-being is good with, for example, above average levels of basic skills and their ability to work well in teams.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers have high expectations of how pupils should behave in lessons and pupils respond accordingly. There are good opportunities for practical activities which pupils enjoy. Phonics is taught well in Reception and Year 1. Teachers give good encouragement to pupils to learn on their own and in groups, and this stands them in good stead for the future. Relationships are very positive and teachers usually identify accurately how well pupils are doing. They assess what pupils have already achieved and some lesson planning takes account of this. Often, however, lessons are taught to meet the needs of the majority in each year group and sometimes pupils underachieve as a result, especially the more able. This is because teachers are not consistently setting individual targets that are sufficiently challenging to take learning forward at a faster pace. This also means that most pupils are not aware of what they need to do to improve. The way work is marked and homework is set are also not well developed. This is why a few parents rightly feel that their child's progress is too slow. The school has recognised this and there have been some recent improvements in the way lessons are assessed and planned, which is why standards are improving.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is carefully planned to meet the needs of mixed age classes. The curriculum in Reception is satisfactory and it covers all the required areas of learning, although there are not enough opportunities for children to choose activities and to learn outdoors. Most class sizes though are too large to enable much supported group working and pupils sometimes have to wait a while for help, which slows their learning. The school recognises this and regularly splits

some groups. The curriculum is lively and is enhanced well by visits and visitors. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to take part in sporting and performing arts activities. In addition, the good number of after school clubs are popular with pupils and significantly contribute to their personal development as they succeed in activities as diverse as karate, cricket and drama. Links with groups such as the 'Crucial Crew' support the good work of the school in developing pupils' awareness of how to live safely and healthily.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Procedures to safeguard pupils are thorough and risk assessments are robustly carried out. The school's systems however are not sufficiently effective in dealing with the very small minority of pupils who tease or intimidate others. Pupils are well supported in their personal development through good support from different agencies and the good knowledge staff have of pupils' individual needs, including those with learning difficulties. The school provides good support for pupils with significant needs. Pupils are given satisfactory guidance on how to make progress in their work. The school has recently begun to improve the way pupils' progress is assessed and targets are set, but this system is not well established and targets are not sufficiently challenging. The school's system for tracking the progress pupils are making is not yet sufficiently effective to raise standards. The school is working towards more regular tracking of what progress pupils are making so that more timely support can be given to those falling behind.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has made several positive improvements and now leads a well organised team. Improved practice has already begun to reverse the downward trend in pupils' progress. Progress in mathematics and the achievements of more able pupils are good examples of where substantial improvements have taken place. School self-evaluation is satisfactory and the areas for development have been accurately identified. The way information about pupils' progress is organised and used to support school improvement is satisfactory but still developing. For example, lesson observations are not linked well enough to records of the progress being made to give a sharper analysis of where teaching could be better. As a result the school's capacity to improve is satisfactory. Governance is also satisfactory. Governors are highly committed and bring several strong skills to their work, although they appreciate that they do not hold the school to account sufficiently well with regard to standards and achievement.

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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	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	2
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	3

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	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
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?	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.

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	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

Dear Pupils

Bryn Offa C of E Primary School, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY10 9QR

Thank you for being so welcoming to us when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you very much, joining you for lunch and seeing some of your lessons.

Your school has a calm and caring atmosphere. It is a satisfactory school, with many good things going on, just like you told us. It helps all of you to make at least satisfactory progress in your lessons, and good progress in your social and personal skills. Staff and governors do a sound job in running the school and seeing that it keeps improving. We would now like them to use the information on how well you are doing more thoroughly so that you can do even better. Your teachers and teaching assistants are skilled at helping you to meet satisfactory targets. We have asked them to make sure that all of your lessons are planned to help you reach more challenging goals and so help you progress even faster. Your behaviour is usually good, although a few of you are too quick to tease or hurt other children. You make a good contribution to the school and community and we like the way that you care about the environment. The poems some of you read in assembly were lovely.

It is pleasing to see that you take plenty of exercise and eat a healthy diet. You have a satisfactory curriculum and your teachers see to it that you have lots of activities to keep you interested, and the amount of sport and artistic things that you do is good. The school keeps you safe and looks after you well.

You clearly enjoy coming to school. We think that all of this, alongside your good skills in working together, will help prepare you well for your next school and future lives. We would like to see you carry on with the good work you all do through the school council to help the school develop further.

Yours faithfully Lead inspector