

Bedfield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124720
Local Authority	SUFFOLK
Inspection number	293088
Inspection date	18 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Ruth Frith

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	48
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Graham Mobbs
Headteacher	Mrs Jill Overbury
Date of previous school inspection	8 May 2002
School address	Bedfield Woodbridge Suffolk IP13 7EA
Telephone number	01728 628306
Fax number	01728 628760

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector in one day.

Description of the school

This is a very small, two class village school. Over half of the pupils live outside the village and come from families representing a range of socio-economic backgrounds. The percentage of children receiving free school meals is below average. Pupils frequently enter school with attainment below that seen nationally for four year olds and sometimes it is well below. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties is much higher than that usually seen, as is the percentage with a statement for their needs. Nearly all pupils come from White British backgrounds. There is high pupil mobility and many pupils join the school very late in their primary education. Over the last two to three years there have been frequent changes in teaching staff.

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 enjoy their learning and do well. They say, 'I would recommend it to anyone ... everyone is friendly ... teachers help you learn and have fun'. Parents also support the school and are pleased with what it offers their children. Recent good improvements, together with good leadership from the headteacher and the support of staff, governors and parents, indicate that the school has good capacity to improve further.

Pupils make a good start in Reception where quality and standards are good. Good progress continues throughout the rest of the school so that by the time they leave at the end of Year 6, pupils typically reach average standards and sometimes they are above. Standards are better in English and mathematics than they are in science. Pupils achieve well because teaching is good and their learning is developed at a good pace. Staff are particularly effective at meeting the wide range of needs within each class and providing appropriately challenging work. Those who find learning difficult are well supported so they too, make good progress.

Pupils' personal development is excellent. Their spiritual and cultural education is enhanced effectively through their art work. Also, pupils are very successfully encouraged to reflect on their feelings and their place within the community. Because of the caring ethos, children are sensitive to the differing needs and capabilities of children within each class and show a sensitive regard for others' well-being. They make good friends and learn to work well in groups and independently. Relationships are excellent and pupils show consideration for views and ways of living different from their own.

The good curriculum maintains pupils' interests well and helps them to discover that learning is fun. Because activities are interesting and pupils thoroughly enjoy what they are doing, they behave exceptionally well. The curriculum also ensures that pupils learn how to stay safe and healthy. Pupils are well cared for and, through comments in class and the setting of targets, they receive good academic guidance. They feel well looked after and become confident learners, well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Leadership and management are good and help the school to provide good value for money. The strong commitment and good leadership of the headteacher, together with good support from governors, have ensured that pupils' learning did not suffer during a period of frequent staff changes. Staff are now ready to share management and leadership responsibilities to ensure further improvement. Because the school's self-evaluation is accurate, staff and governors have a clear understanding of what the school does well and what needs to be improved. Priorities closely reflect the inspection findings.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the curriculum for science in order to raise standards.
- Review whole school management roles and responsibilities so that the work load is distributed more equitably, particularly in relation to the leadership of subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress and achieve well. This helps to prepare them for their future economic well-being. Children settle well in Reception but, by the time they enter Year 1, a few do not reach the levels expected for their age because they start from such a low base or have significant

learning difficulties. Over recent years, results of the Year 2 national teacher assessments have been broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2006, Year 2 standards were below average in reading and writing and low in mathematics because of the low starting point and particular learning difficulties of that year group. The 2006 Year 6 test results continued the trend of improvement with above average standards in English and mathematics and average standards in science. The school sets challenging targets for English and mathematics and almost meets them. Work of pupils currently in Year 2, and records of their achievements, show they have made good progress during their time in school. Year 6 pupils are working at broadly average levels but science continues to be weaker than English and mathematics. Pupils' art and design work is of a high standard. Pupils who experience difficulty with their learning make good progress and frequently reach higher standards than those generally seen in pupils with similar needs.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. It reflects the school's strong ethos in which pupils feel happy and do well. Attendance is exceptionally high. Pupils' attitudes are especially good. They enjoy being part of this small school and make friends easily. Pupils behave exceptionally well and relationships are excellent. Older pupils support those younger through being 'buddies' and all pupils recognise unacceptable behaviour and know how to deal with it. Pupils are aware of how to keep themselves safe on the roads. In school they follow routines very well and act sensibly and safely. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy and this knowledge is influencing what they do in terms of eating a healthy diet and taking part in activities to raise their fitness levels. Members of the school council reflect the views of others well and their work brings about improvements, such as more equipment at play times. They also contribute well to the wider community, for example, by taking part in local events and raising money for charities. Pupils are acquiring skills that will support them well in their next stage of schooling and beyond. They run their own small enterprise by bottling, labelling and selling fertilizer from the school's wormery.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good because staff know pupils very well and use good assessment information to plan lessons which build systematically on previous learning. Teachers have a good understanding of what they want pupils to learn and share this with them so pupils are clear about what they must do and feel able to succeed. Tasks are well matched to the wide range of ages and abilities within each class. Staff are particularly effective at developing enjoyment and excitement in pupils' learning through using a good range of teaching styles and providing activities which encourage pupils' independent learning. Pupils are frequently keen to continue with their work after the end of the lesson. Now and again the pace of learning slows a little when pupils are not directly supported by adults. Teachers' questioning is particularly good and helps to develop pupils' thinking well. Teachers and pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) effectively to support teaching and learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school's curriculum is well developed in relation to how it plans the teaching of several subjects through a theme. This arrangement makes the best use of teaching time and motivates pupils well because they find this way of learning interesting and enjoyable. A recent focus on improving pupils' writing has proved successful and the school is now ready to use the knowledge gained from this to improve curriculum provision for science. The Key Stage 2 curriculum is enriched through the teaching of French. Teachers' expertise in art and design is used well to provide interesting learning opportunities which results in high quality work. The successful personal, social and health education programme ensures that pupils know how to keep safe and healthy, learn to get on with others and contribute well to the wider community. A good range and number of popular clubs, visits, visitors and other extra activities help pupils to develop new interests and extend their skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The good support, care and guidance given to pupils help them to develop into happy, confident and responsible youngsters. Pupils feel safe and, because of the excellent relationships, feel able to turn to someone if they have problems. Those who find learning difficult are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants so they are fully involved in the school's activities and make good progress. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust. Staff are quick to identify any pupil who is experiencing difficulty and their concerns are quickly acted upon. The relatively new system for setting literacy and numeracy targets is proving successful in motivating pupils but its full effect on standards is yet to be seen. Targets show pupils the steps they need to take to improve their learning but, now and again, some pupils find it difficult to understand from teachers' marking how they can improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has shown great commitment to the school and provided a good lead to colleagues during an unsettled period. Staffing is now more established and she has successfully built a team who share her sense of purpose and vision for the school. With the recent permanent teacher appointment, the headteacher is in a position to redistribute whole school roles and responsibilities to improve the leadership and management of subjects further. Through effective monitoring and evaluation, staff and governors have highlighted clear and appropriate priorities for improvement. The system to track pupils' progress and attainment is helping teachers to plan appropriately challenging work which, in turn, ensures good pupil progress. The views and ideas of all members of the school community are taken into consideration and acted upon, when appropriate. Governors have supported the school well through their regular visits to school and work in committees.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	1
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

20 June 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Bedfield C of E Voluntary Controlled Primary School Bedfield, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP13 7EA

Thank you for making me feel so welcome when I recently visited your school. I really enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work. I was very pleased to see that you enjoy school and are happy there. I agree with you and think that Bedfield is a good school. I have written below some of the things I like best.

- You try hard and make good progress.
- You behave exceptionally well because you are interested in what you are doing and find learning fun.
- You get on very well with each other and make good friends.
- Your attendance is exceptionally high. Well done!
- Staff work well as a team and teaching is good.
- Those of you who find learning difficult do well because you try hard and are given good support.
- Staff look after you well and you feel safe in school. I was pleased to hear that you would talk to a member of staff if you had problems.

Mrs Overbury leads and manages the school well and staff and governors give her lots of help. We have agreed that the school will be even better now that you have enough permanent teachers. I have asked them to take over some of the jobs involved in leading and managing the school and also to help you do even better in science by improving the curriculum.

I am sure your school will continue to improve and wish you all well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Ruth Frith Inspector