

Bishops Tachbrook CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125657
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	293322
Inspection dates	15–16 May 2007
Reporting inspector	David Driscoll

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	203
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Monica Heath
Headteacher	P John
Date of previous school inspection	22 April 2002
School address	Kingsley Road Bishops Tachbrook Leamington Spa CV33 9RY
Telephone number	01926 426020
Fax number	01926 450611

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school serves a village near Leamington Spa, although more and more pupils are coming from further afield and the school is now full. Very few pupils come from a minority ethnic background and all are fluent in English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average, but the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Pupils are exceptionally keen to come to Bishops Tachbrook, where they receive a satisfactory education. Children join with standards that are expected for their age and make good progress in the Reception class. Teachers ensure that children settle in quickly by concentrating on developing their social skills, and then make sure they are prepared well to start Year 1 by improving their language and number skills to a good level. From Year 1 onwards, pupils make satisfactory progress and leave with standards that are above average.

Achievement is satisfactory because teaching is satisfactory. There have been indications of some underachievement in the past couple of years, but this has been eliminated by improving the curriculum, so that it is now good. Progress in science is good, but achievement overall is still no better than satisfactory because the tasks set by teachers are often the same for all pupils in a class, so the more able are not really pushed. The targets they set ensure satisfactory progress, but they are not challenging enough to raise standards further. Many pupils are confused about their targets because comments on their work do not make it clear what they need to do to improve.

Standards of discipline are high because teachers insist on good behaviour at all times. The good quality care, guidance and support pupils receive are the main factors in pupils' good personal development. They behave well, work hard and their attendance is excellent. The most notable feature, however, is the high level of independence that pupils display. They are very confident when working on their own or organising themselves in groups, even in Reception.

Leadership and management, including governance, are satisfactory. Actions taken to improve the curriculum have proved particularly effective in eliminating underachievement. Such actions clearly demonstrate that managers have the skills needed to take the school forward. However, the school's view of its own performance is over generous because of weaknesses in the way that teaching is monitored and evaluated. Middle managers are not involved in checks on teaching, which concentrate too much on identifying what works well at the expense of what could be improved.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards by ensuring that pupils understand what they need to do to reach more challenging targets.
- Improve teaching by ensuring that the tasks set for the most able are suitably demanding.
- Improve leadership and management by extending the role of middle managers in checking the quality of teaching, and ensuring the checks clearly identify where improvements can be made. A small proportion of the 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 is satisfactory for all groups of pupils. Progress in Reception is good. Children join with standards expected for their age, but by the time they start Year 1 their standards are above average in all aspects of their development. They make particularly good progress in their personal and social skills. They learn to negotiate with one another at a very early age,

such as when four children sat in a tent deciding who was going to play which instrument without upsetting anybody.

Progress is satisfactory from Year 1 onwards, although good in science, so pupils leave with standards that are above average. Pupils are good at carrying out investigations in science, and the school is now building in more such opportunities in mathematics in order to improve achievement.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils love coming to school, so their attendance is excellent. They enjoy lessons very much, especially if their learning is practical and 'fun', as it is in science. Pupils behave well and concentrate hard on their work, always trying to do their best. They are remarkably independent, even in Reception, so teachers can often just give them a task and they will go off and organise themselves to tackle it. They are confident when speaking to adults. One eight-year-old, on leaving an interview with inspectors, was heard to say, 'Well, I think that went rather well, don't you?' Pupils are sure they can approach adults in the school if they have any concerns or worries and speak very positively about the attitudes of the lunchtime supervisors. They also have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, such as when using the Internet. Pupils know what to do to keep themselves healthy, and put their knowledge into practice.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Some pupils have a very secure awareness, tolerance and understanding of different customs, beliefs and traditions, but others are confused about the different cultures represented in Britain today. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of their role in a community and are developing appropriate skills to use in their future working lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Behaviour is consistently well managed in lessons, so disruption is rare. Throughout the school, teachers are good at questioning pupils to test their understanding. The questions they use invariably demand an explanation and are well targeted to pupils who may not appear to be fully involved. In Reception, a wide range of activities is used each lesson, each carefully matched to the needs of small groups or individuals, although there is always a strong emphasis on improving pupils' literacy skills as these are key to future success. This is not consistent in other years. Often the whole class will be given a similar task, which is most suited to the middle attainers. Higher attainers are sometimes paired with a lower attainer, which helps the less able, but does nothing to stretch the more able pupils. The placing of pupils in classes according to their ability works well in reducing the range of abilities that a teacher has to plan for, but, even within such classes, tasks can be a bit too easy for the most able.

Despite a recent push to improve marking, comments in pupils' books are still often limited to a positive comment, such as 'lovely work', without pointing out what the pupil could have done to improve the quality of work further.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good links with the pre-school nursery ensure that the school has a very clear understanding of the children's needs when they start Reception, so any disruption caused by the move is kept to an absolute minimum. Pupils' learning in science has also benefited from close links with a local secondary school. The school is successfully improving the curriculum to improve standards. Specific initiatives, such as booster classes, for example, are eliminating underachievement and 'investigation Friday' is raising standards in mathematics.

All pupils do an extra 15 minutes of physical activity each day, which is part of the school's successful push to promote healthy lifestyles. This is supplemented by a wide range of other activities and clubs, including musical and linguistic ones, which helps pupils' cultural development. However, there are not enough opportunities to learn about the different backgrounds and cultures of people living in Britain today.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents express strong appreciation of the quality of care provided by the school. The school has a strong ethos of caring, where pupils are valued and there are high levels of mutual respect. This is evident in lessons, where the high expectations for behaviour set the standard for life in school and beyond. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are clear and adhered to effectively. Pupils say incidents of bullying are rare and any are dealt with very well indeed. The school is vigilant in maintaining high attendance levels through its outstandingly pro-active approach.

Academic guidance is satisfactory. There are relatively new systems in place to identify what pupils should do to improve their standard of work, but not all pupils are familiar with these yet. In some years they work well, but in others pupils are confused about how to do better.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school has made steady progress since it was last inspected. Standards dipped a little, but are now on the way back up again thanks to improvements to the curriculum that have eliminated any underachievement. However, the school is not yet going that bit further in making improvements that would turn a satisfactory performance into a good one. This is mainly because the checks on teaching do not identify clearly enough how a lesson could be improved. The current approach results in high staff morale but has less impact on achievement. Middle managers are not involved in carrying out the checks, so the view of the school's performance is not entirely accurate.

The management of pastoral care is particularly good. It would be easy, for example, for a school where attendance is high to become complacent. However, attendance remains at such a high level precisely because of the consistent application of policy in this area.

Some parents are concerned about the new behaviour policy. This is a result of misunderstanding what is involved because the details have not been explained to parents. The new system is working, and the school has planned a meeting with parents to reassure them.

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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?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
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	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	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

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?	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?	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

17 May 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Bishops Tachbrook C of E School, Leamington Spa, CV33 9RY

Thank you very much for helping us when we visited your school. Your mums and dads can be proud of the way you behaved. You have good manners and were always polite. We were most impressed by the very grown-up way you behave when working with each other and your teachers. This is partly because you are taught how to get on well with one another as soon as you join the school. You told us that you like coming to school very much, and you show this by coming to school whenever you can. We also think that you are very healthy. The extra 15 minutes each day you spend on exercise really helps here, but you do your bit by eating healthy food and taking part in all the extra clubs and activities.

We found you are getting a satisfactory education, and doing as well as we would expect you to. You are good at science, but could do a little better in your maths and English. To help you do better, we have asked the teachers to give you work that is a bit harder and to tell you what you can do to improve your work. All the grown-ups in school care about you a great deal and make sure that you are safe, and know how to stay safe.

The school has steadily been getting better, because the people who run it have made some good changes, such as the booster classes. We think it would get better more quickly if they concentrated on finding out which parts of the teaching work the best and then making sure all the teachers use them in their lessons.

With all best wishes for your future,

David Driscoll Lead inspector