

Bilton C of E Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125682
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	293328
Inspection dates	7 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Julia Coop

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	396
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Mike Goode
Headteacher	Mr Richard Powell
Date of previous school inspection	15-18 April 2002
School address	Plantagenet Drive Rugby Warwickshire CV22 6LB
Telephone number	01788 810675
Fax number	01788 522576

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The following issues were investigated: the pupils' achievement and their personal development and well-being, the quality of teaching and learning, care, guidance and support, and leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from observations of lessons and the pupils' work, discussions with them, the staff and the chair of governors, and a scrutiny of documents, including the school's self-evaluation form (SEF), national published assessment data, the school's own assessment records and parent questionnaires. Most classrooms were visited and the inspector, headteacher and deputy headteacher conducted joint observations of lessons. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its SEF, were not justified. These have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The school is larger than most junior schools and serves a socially mixed area to the south of Rugby. A significant proportion of pupils travel to the school from outside this area. Most pupils are of White British heritage. There are a small proportion of pupils from other ethnic backgrounds for whom their first language is other than English. Very few pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals and those with learning difficulties or disabilities are below average, although in some year groups, the proportion of pupils with complex learning needs and disabilities is above average. A new headteacher took up his 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

Parents are right when they comment that this is a good school which is a 'helpful and friendly' place for children to learn. The school is a warm, very caring and supportive school community that values each individual pupil. Parents have positive views of the school and many say that it is changing for the better. Only a minority of parents expressed individual concerns. Discussions with the school show that most of these issues are already known and well in hand. For example, the involvement of parents in the life of the school is an aspect of the school's work which is developing well. The headteacher is introducing new initiatives, although the chair of governors agrees that the governors could be more visible to the parents. The inspection confirms that the school follows all safeguarding procedures, and that there is an early phone call if pupils are absent without prior knowledge. Occasional difficulties with behaviour are dealt with swiftly and pupils say that they are safe and 'know who to turn to if they are unhappy'.

An impressive feature of the school is the very caring way that pupils look out for each other and especially their friends with learning needs and disabilities and those from different cultural backgrounds. This is because they are actively encouraged to become compassionate individuals. The school's safe, nurturing environment enables vulnerable pupils, such as those with troubled lives or those new to learning English, to build confidence and make good progress. As a result, the school is a harmonious school community and the pupils' personal development and well-being and their spiritual, social, moral and cultural awareness are excellent. The pupils are mature, very thoughtful young people whose awareness of the world around them and understanding and appreciation of other faith groups is inspiring.

Pupils also have very many forums in which to make a considerable contribution to the school and the local community. Pupils relish the vast array of opportunities to take responsibility. Through the very effective school council and Eco committee, together with roles such as publicity and finance officer, school meteorologist, lunch monitors and play leaders, pupils learn about democracy in action and develop some very important skills that ensure they are very well prepared for life beyond Bilton.

Pupils have an excellent awareness of the environment and of the importance of recycling and fair trade, and actively seek to live healthy, sensible lifestyles. They thoroughly deserve their Eco Green Flag Award. They are very effective ambassadors for the school and are not afraid to express their opinions or canvass support from the media or other organisations. They are not thwarted by costs and raise an impressive amount of money to fund their CCTV bird box camera and water cooler and to help communities around the world.

Care, guidance and support are good. The excellent pastoral support and guidance pupils receive helps them make very good progress in developing their personal and social skills. In addition, through the provision of a good, much improved and interesting curriculum, the school successfully broadens pupils' horizons and learning experiences. As a result, pupils say that they 'like their teachers' and really enjoy learning, especially music and all the extra clubs and activities. The quality of their

art and singing is exceptional and the Steel Pan Band and orchestra are right to be proud of their achievements.

Academic guidance is not quite as strong. Pupils are aware in general terms of what they need to do to improve and say that teachers talk to them about their work. They have individual learning targets but the school knows these are not sharp enough. In addition, marking doesn't always show pupils how they can improve and rarely makes links to the pupils' targets. The school recognises that this is a missed opportunity to spur on learning further.

Nevertheless, standards are above average and overall all groups of pupils make good progress and achieve well. Boys don't do quite as well as girls in English but they say they are enjoying the new reading books, and one boy said that as a result he now 'reads more at home'. Lessons observed show that there is a good emphasis on promoting an interest in writing and this is beginning to help close the gap.

Progress is good in science, but progress in mathematics is not quite as strong and is satisfactory. Teachers have sensibly moved away from being too reliant on written exercises and have introduced a more practical approach to helping pupils develop their mathematical skills and understanding. However, this is not consistent. In addition, some less able pupils remain too reliant on additional support. The school recognises there is scope to broaden further the range of teaching approaches, particularly in mathematics, so as to better meet the learning needs of some pupils. Despite this, the main reason that pupils do well overall is because the quality of teaching is good. There are common strengths that are exemplified by very good relationships, good use of questions to challenge pupils' thinking and a good balance between class, group and individual work.

The new headteacher sets the tone for the happy, calm and very caring manner that filters through the school. Good leadership and management have established an effective team. The deputy headteacher provides astute and enthusiastic support and consequently much has been achieved in a short time. The school knows its good points but equally knows what it needs to do to improve further. It already has plans in hand to develop the monitoring role of middle managers. However, although the school development plan is targeted at the right areas, it lacks clarity; for example, actions planned are concerned more with processes and policy. They are not yet sharply focused on outcomes in terms of pupils' learning. This makes it difficult for the school to check more closely on how well it is doing.

In conclusion, the school has many strengths and staff are fully committed to making changes because of the good support they receive from the headteacher, deputy and governors. The school has already introduced many initiatives which have begun to improve English and science. There is a positive attitude around the school and a shared commitment to succeed. This shows that the school is well placed to build on this positive platform and has the capability to make further improvements.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers use a wider variety of teaching approaches to accelerate learning, particularly in mathematics.
- Develop the monitoring role of middle managers and ensure that school improvement planning focuses more sharply on expected improvement in pupils' learning and shows how this will be evaluated.
- Provide pupils with more guidance about how they can improve their work.

School's response to the inspection

The staff, governing body and pupils were pleased that the findings of the inspection team reflected the hard work and achievements of the school since our last inspection.

Although the focus was on the core areas, the inspection gave us the opportunity to reflect and celebrate achievements and standards of our rich and broad curriculum and we were pleased that this was reflected in the report.

As well as statistical evidence, our own self evaluation was used during the inspection and it was pleasing to note that the report reflected our own view of progress made in the school and areas we had identified for development.

The process enabled the school to celebrate the achievements of staff and pupils. We now feel empowered and enthused to move the school on to the next level – as always, aiming for excellence.

The school would like to thank the inspector for the professional way she undertook the inspection and for the useful dialogue held with senior management during the day.

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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
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	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
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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

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.



7 June 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Bilton C of E Junior School, Rugby, Warwickshire CV22 6LB

Thank you so much for the mature and friendly way you chatted to me when I visited. I really enjoyed being shown around the school by the Eco Committee and particularly want to thank them for their huge efforts in making sure BJS is an environmentally friendly school. You all told me that your school is good and is a friendly, happy place and I agree with you. These are some of the best things I found.

-  You are extremely confident, very sensible and you behave well.
-  I was delighted with the way you think about others less fortunate than yourselves and really care about each other and the world around you.
-  You do well in school, especially in English and science.
-  Your singing is impressive, so are the Steel Pan Band and orchestra.
-  Everyone takes very good care of you so you are happy and safe.
-  The headteacher and staff are working hard to make your school an even better place to learn.

What I have asked the school to do now:

- Provide even more interesting activities in some lessons, especially to help some of you learn more in mathematics.
- Make sure that the plan to help the school improve is clearer so that it is easier for everyone to keep a check on how well you learn.
- Help you understand what you need to work on next so you can make even better progress.

You are very lucky to attend such a caring, happy school and I hope you go on trying hard and enjoying all of the interesting activities which help you learn.

Yours sincerely

Julia Coop
Lead Inspector