



Bradley Stoke Community School

Inspection Report - Amended

Unique Reference Number 134036
Local Authority South Gloucestershire
Inspection number 294107
Inspection dates 3-4 October 2006
Reporting inspector Ian Hodgkinson

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Fiddlers Wood Lane
School category	Community		Bradley Stoke
Age range of pupils	11-16		BS32 9BS
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01454 868840
Number on roll (school)	397	Fax number	01454 868841
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	John Williams
		Headteacher	Dave Baker
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected		

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Amended Report Addendum

Report updated to resolve formatting inconsistency

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a new school which opened in September 2005 to serve a rapidly expanding town and new housing development on the north-west edge of Bristol. It is a relatively prosperous area, and the social and economic circumstances of the students are favourable. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is low, and none speak English as an additional language. Currently there are students only in Year 7 and Year 8. The school's spacious buildings and grounds have been designed to accommodate a full complement of secondary-aged students, and are used extensively by the local community.

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, which has made a strong start. It is particularly effective in developing a broad range of skills among its students which should equip them very successfully for later life. Students are well taught, and are encouraged in most lessons to show much initiative and independence in their approach to solving problems. They thoroughly enjoy their learning because teachers use a variety of methods and approaches, often drawing on the school's excellent resources and information and communication technology (ICT), to make lessons interesting. As a result, students are highly motivated and behave very well. They work very effectively in teams, and make a very strong contribution when asked to lead school activities, such as the school council and the production of school publications. High levels of participation in sport and physical activities, along with very sensible attitudes towards cycling and walking to school, are indications of a strong awareness among students of the importance of healthy living. Their personal development is excellent.

The key strength of the school's excellent procedures to care for, guide and support their students is the careful monitoring of individual students' attitudes and progress. Teachers intervene quickly if academic records indicate that students are showing signs of underachievement. In addition, the school's highly effective use of student attitude surveys keeps teachers alert to personal difficulties which might put students at risk of underachievement in the first place. Given such careful monitoring, in the short time students have been in the school they have made good progress, and standards are above average. They achieve well. Their progress has been particularly strong in mathematics and in their use of ICT.

The school is well led and managed. The governors, headteacher and senior team share a very clear vision of a community school, 'in the community, for the community'. They have very high expectations of and set challenging targets for the school's performance. Parents are therefore highly supportive of the ethos of the school, and appreciate how much it motivates their children. One parent for example wrote how her children 'enjoy getting to school early and going to the library before lessons. The move to secondary school has made them more confident in every way.' A good curriculum is supported by a wide range of enrichment activities and by opportunities to study before and after school. Some parents and students however are concerned about the short time that students have to socialise and eat lunch during the school day.

The school uses information from a variety of sources to analyse its performance. However, evaluations of performance have not yet sharply identified main areas for improvement and drawn these together into a school development plan. Although managers have been engaged in an extensive programme of observations of lessons which have led to improvements in marking and assessment, monitoring has yet to check on the success of the implementation of other initiatives, such as the drive to improve writing across subjects. Such monitoring and better improvement planning could also help to further raise the good quality of teaching by ensuring that students' skills of independent learning are consistently well developed in all lessons across the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Identify priorities for school improvement more sharply through self-evaluation, and produce a school development plan.
- Review the timing of the school day to ensure that students have enough time to eat and refresh themselves at break and lunch.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Students' standards on joining the school in Year 7 are in line with the national average overall, though rather higher than average in mathematics. The school has identified that students have a relative weakness in writing and especially spelling skills when they join. Alongside successful intensive literacy support for those students in particular need, teachers in all subjects have received well focused training to develop students' writing and spelling skills. In the short time they have been in the school, students have made good progress. This progress is assessed carefully and measured against very challenging targets, which most students meet or exceed. Standards of Year 8 students are above average. They are particularly high in mathematics and ICT, where students of all abilities, secure in their understanding of basic principles, are able to explore a range of strategies for solving problems and discuss the merits of their approaches with their peers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Students' outstanding personal development and well-being are clearly demonstrated in their enthusiasm for the school. 'My daughter has been ill over the weekend and she was desperate to get better so that she wouldn't miss school on Monday', said one parent of her daughter's 'fantastic' start in her new school. The student attitude survey confirms that attitudes to school and to learning start positively and improve between Years 7 and 8. Students behave exceptionally well both in class and around the school, relating very well to each other and to adults. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent, and they show thoughtful, reflective approaches in work and extra-curricular activities. Students collaborate very well, discussing methods and allocating tasks sensibly. Their cultural awareness is good and they perform in music and drama for parents and for the community. Students show a strong sense of responsibility that encourages them to behave safely. Knowing about healthy living, they eat healthy food, while a high proportion take part in sport and walk or cycle to school. The student council are rightly proud of the role they have played in shaping the development of the new school, while other students believe that they are well supported by their representatives. Such responsible behaviour is typical of the thinking, problem-solving and confident attitudes that are fostered by the school. This, along with the solid development of basic skills, gives students an excellent foundation for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good overall, and contributes a great deal to the students' high degree of enjoyment of their learning. Teachers often make very good use of the excellent facilities and resources at their disposal, including a range of ICT equipment, to help students learn in ways best suited to them. Typically, lessons are very well planned to develop pupils' subject knowledge and skills effectively through a range of varied and exciting activities. Occasionally, though, subject knowledge is given insufficient emphasis. In most lessons, skills of independent learning are very successfully fostered, and there is some outstanding practice in this regard. In mathematics, for example, teachers confidently introduce students to a range of techniques to help them solve problems independently. Students respond very well to such challenges. The pace of their learning slows in those few lessons where teachers take the lead in directing their classes for too long. Teachers' marking of students' work is supportive and well linked to students' targets so that students have a clear understanding of how they can improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It has been carefully designed to meet the needs of all the students. The school strongly promotes the development of a broad range of skills across the curriculum, with the result that students can solve problems effectively and communicate confidently and accurately. The good quality of in-class support from teachers and teaching assistants, and the quality of work done in small withdrawal groups, equip students with learning difficulties well with the skills they need to gain full access to the curriculum.

The school makes good use of its excellent sporting and leisure facilities. Students benefit from the expertise of a number of qualified sports coaches, as well as of teachers who enjoy sharing their own interests and enthusiasm, for example in dance and drama. Some Year 7 students and their parents, however, are concerned that in the short school day the lunch break is not long enough for students to eat properly and relax socially, and inspectors agree.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The excellent care, guidance and support provided by the school are based firmly on close attention to individual needs. Rigorous systems ensure that child protection procedures and risk assessments are fully in place, while students are monitored to identify and support those who may be at risk. External agencies are used extensively to help students with learning difficulties and disabilities. Regular communication with parents keeps both home and school very well informed about issues that could affect

students' progress and well-being. In every subject students are encouraged to evaluate their own work and that of their peers, so that in discussion with their teachers they are very well informed about their strengths, weaknesses and ways to improve. All are encouraged to express their views about their learning and about the school, so that they feel that they are valued members of the community.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is sharply aware of its mission to be a high quality centre of learning which meets the aspirations of the growing community it serves. This widely shared vision helps to give the school an excellent sense of direction, and has caused its leaders to listen carefully to the views of students, parents and partners in the community in shaping its provision. It has made a successful start. Good governance has successfully secured high quality learning resources for the school, and offered energetic support to the leadership team. The headteacher's high expectations for the school's standards and ethos have gained the strong approval of its users, and confirm a good capacity to improve further. The leadership team has established a comprehensive system for tracking and monitoring the performance of individual students and their progress in subjects. The school's self-evaluation is informed by a good range of performance and survey data, but has not yet sharply identified the school's main strengths and weaknesses to give a clear set of development priorities. A clear development plan might allow teachers to focus their own planning more precisely to meet the school's main priorities, and help to spread the outstanding practice evident in some lessons.

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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 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?	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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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 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?	1

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.

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	1
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

Many thanks for the welcome you gave to me and my colleagues when we visited the school for its recent inspection. It was great to see you working with such fabulous facilities. You are clearly well taught. We saw some really exciting lessons where your teachers helped you to learn by using ICT and other resources, and where they really encouraged you to think for yourselves. It is no wonder that you and your parents were so keen to tell us how much you enjoy coming to school!

Like you, we think the school is good, and has got off to a strong start. It gives you excellent preparation for later life by encouraging you to develop skills of teamwork, leadership and initiative, and we were very impressed by the way in which you rise to the challenge of taking on such responsibilities. You make good progress in your subjects. You reflect carefully on the important things in life, and behave very well in school. Your active participation in the many sporting and other activities on offer, as well as your commitment to cycling or walking to school, confirms that you have excellent awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

The school has been well led to get it off to such a good start. It has set up some excellent systems to monitor the progress made by each of you, and it reacts very quickly if any of you need support. We have asked the school to do two main things to help it get even better. Firstly, the school needs to draw up a school improvement plan, listing the main things it needs to do and how it will do them, so that everyone has a clear idea about the school's main priorities. Secondly, we have asked the school to look at school day timings because some of you do not have enough time to eat and refresh yourselves at lunchtime.

I wish you every success as the school grows in the future.