

Bandon Hill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102958
Local Authority	Sutton
Inspection number	308172
Inspection date	21 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Wendy Simmons

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	292
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr R Adams
Headteacher	Mrs I Ramsay
Date of previous school inspection	13 October 2003
School address	Sandy Lane South Wallington SM6 9QU
Telephone number	020 8647 5377
Fax number	020 8647 0034

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- How well pupils achieve overall.
- How well the school is helping lower ability boys to do better in mathematics.
- How well writing is developing, especially for higher attaining pupils and boys.

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 self-evaluation, were not justified. These have been included where appropriate in this report. Evidence was gained from lessons and the school's own evaluations of its work. Discussions were held with staff and pupils and a range of documentation was evaluated. Pupils' work was scrutinised, especially in their writing. The views of parents were gathered from questionnaires.

Description of the school

Bandon Hill Primary School is a large and consistently oversubscribed school. It serves a socially and culturally mixed community. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds. The next largest groups include pupils from Asian, Black African and mixed heritages. An average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language and most are not new to speaking English when they join the school. Slightly more pupils have learning difficulties than is average. The school has gained several national awards such as, Investors in People, Healthy Schools Status and the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Bandon Hill Primary School is an outstanding school. The school provides an exciting range of activities, clubs and visits so that pupils enjoy learning. Teaching and learning is of a very high quality. Pupils of all abilities are well challenged and thrive in their academic and personal development. The headteacher provides excellent leadership. She has especially high standards and very clear ideas about how she sees the school developing. She shows much drive and enthusiasm and above all, has the best interests of the pupils at the heart of her work. The headteacher is very well supported by all other leaders, staff and governors. They know the pupils very well and are constantly looking for ways to make the school even better. The school has maintained very good achievement and high standards since the last inspection.

When children join the school, their skills are less well developed than is usually expected. This is especially evident in their language and communication skills. From this low starting point, they make outstanding overall progress and, by the end of Year 6, pupils reach above average standards. This is because almost all pupils reach the average Level 4 in their work and many gain the higher Level 5 in mathematics and science. The school is working successfully to help more pupils, especially boys, to reach these very high levels in their English work. Leaders are ambitious to get standards to an exceptionally high level.

The samples of work seen, the school's assessment and tracking information and evaluations of lessons confirm that standards are very high. For example, close to half of all Year 6 pupils are on track to gain the higher Level 5 in English. This has been brought about by improvements in the curriculum so that writing activities are more interesting, particularly for boys. There is a greater emphasis on discussion work, use of video clips and drama to inspire pupils to write. The special writing project is helping pupils to edit and extend their writing well. Pupils do exceptionally well in reading, due to rigorous development of skills and very good opportunities to discuss books.

Since the last inspection the marking of pupils' work has improved greatly, with teachers often giving good guidance about how pupils might extend and improve their work. However, not enough reference is made to pupils' individual writing targets when marking work or in lessons. As a result, not all pupils can remember precisely what they need to do to improve their learning. Leaders have set excellent whole school targets for the improvement of national test results in Year 6 for 2008, especially for writing. They know that there is room for greater challenge in the targets set in writing for the most able pupils in Year 2.

Leaders and teachers know that boys do especially well overall compared with boys nationally. However, they found that lower ability boys could still do even better. This included a few pupils with some learning difficulties. Very effective action has been taken to address this, especially through ability group teaching, extra clubs and focused group support. Assessment data and evidence from lessons show that this group is now doing very well. Leaders and the inspector agree that there is a need to keep a close eye on this group in the drive to lift overall attainment in mathematics to an exceptionally high level.

Pupils from all backgrounds do very well. For example, pupils in receipt of free school meals and those from minority ethnic backgrounds often perform better at this school than these groups do in other primary schools. Pupils with English as an additional language perform exceptionally well due to an excellent focus on promoting speaking skills. Pupils with complex learning needs, such as hearing, sight and behavioural difficulties are very well supported and

make excellent progress due to very good care, modification of resources and strong links with support agencies and parents.

Parents have confidence in the school. They noted such things as, '...wonderful staff, very good ethos of respect and, their children are encouraged to do their best'. A few parents would like more information about their children's progress. Parents, pupils and the inspector agree that the school is a very caring and happy place to be. The excellent attendance rate demonstrates pupils' enthusiasm for school. Relationships are very positive and pupils' behaviour is excellent. Pupils are extremely polite, well mannered and enthusiastic. They like their teachers and other adults very much. As one pupil said, 'You get lots of chances to do new things and you make friends straight away', while another noted, 'Teachers help you to try your best'. A few parents noted some incidences of bullying. This is taken very seriously by staff. Pupils confirm that bullying is very rare. Pupils show excellent respect for others. The 'International Week', support for a school in Malawi, music and art contribute much to pupils' cultural development and their contribution to the community.

Pupils enthusiastically take part in many sporting activities. They value the special snack sales, which help pupils to eat healthily and manage money. Pupils regularly grow vegetables and know how to cook a healthy vegetable soup. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility and doing independent research, which are very important life skills. Links with local secondary schools provide opportunities for the most able pupils to do especially well. For example, they attend master classes in mathematics, textiles and specialist sports coaching.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children join the school in the Nursery showing skills and knowledge that are below what is expected. For example, a quarter of all children are referred to the 'Language and Communication Support Service' for additional help. Children make good progress and by the end of the Reception class year they have average skills. In children's personal development, mathematical and speaking, thinking and communication skills, together with their reading and physical development, a high proportion reach average standards. Children's creative development and their knowledge of the world around them are especially high, which, considering their starting point, is impressive. As yet, the Foundation Stage is good rather than outstanding because leaders are still working to further enhance speaking and writing skills together with children's knowledge of letters and sounds to very best effect. Teaching and learning are good and supported by interesting activities. Children are encouraged to learn in different ways. The outside learning area is being up-graded well. The excellent induction programme and very good relationships helps children to enjoy school. Children are cared for very well.

What the school should do to improve further

As an outstanding school, the school has already started work on the areas that will help to lift standards of work still higher by:

- Making sure that pupils know their individual targets for writing.
- Keeping a close eye on the progress being made by lower ability pupils in their mathematical work in order to sustain their recently rapidly improving progress.

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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?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	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?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

28 January 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bandon Hill Primary School, Wallington, SM6 9QU

You may remember that a school inspector came to your school recently. Thank you for being so polite and friendly. I am writing to let you know what I found out.

Your school is outstanding, which means that it does many things especially well for all of you and is a very happy place. Your teachers give you many exciting and challenging activities, which make learning fun and in return, you work very hard. This is outstanding and helps you to make very good progress. You thoroughly enjoy coming to school and your attendance is excellent, congratulations! I was especially pleased to see how well you are getting on with your writing. I like the new writing activities and agree with you that drama and use of video clips help you to get good ideas. I was also pleased to see you working hard on mathematics, keep up with the tables work, as it really helps you when solving problems. You do especially well in reading. I know that you value being at a school that is caring and helps you to do so well. Your school makes sure that you get to higher levels in your work than in many other schools in the country. You have great fun with all of the exciting extra clubs and activities. I agree with you that they help you to get fit and healthy and learn many new things. I especially loved the undersea textiles work. Well done for behaving so fantastically and showing respect and care for others. Keep up the very good work on supporting the school in Malawi working with your own community. The adults, especially your headteacher, are working amazingly well to keep improving things for you. I have asked them all to:

- make sure that you all know your targets for writing and work more on these in your daily lessons.
- keep a close eye on the progress being made by pupils who find learning mathematics more difficult.

You can help them with this, by continuing to work hard. Well done! You are a great credit to your school, your parents and yourselves.

Yours faithfully

Wendy Simmons

Lead Inspector