

Badocks Wood Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109139
Local Authority	Bristol, City of
Inspection number	309895
Inspection dates	11–12 December 2007
Reporting inspector	Linda McGill HMI

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	Linda Waldren
Headteacher	Dawn Cotter
Date of previous school inspection	13 October 2005
School address	Doncaster Road Southmead Bristol BS10 5PU
Telephone number	0117 9030050
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Badock's Wood is a large primary school. It draws its pupils from the local area and very few are from ethnic minority heritages. The socio-economic circumstances of many families are not favourable and this is reflected in the high numbers who are entitled to free school meals. Although the proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties or disabilities is similar to that found nationally, there is a small number who present particular challenges because of their behaviour. When they start in the Nursery class, many pupils do not have the skills and knowledge of typical three year olds, particularly in language and literacy. When the school was last inspected, it was judged to require special measures as it was not providing an acceptable standard of education.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Badock's Wood School provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. It has improved a good deal to get to this point and this is testament to the tenacity of the headteacher, key members of staff and governors who have worked tirelessly to tackle the significant weakness that were reported at the inspection two years ago. It has not been an easy task to bring about the necessary improvements in the context of a significant turnover of staff, difficulties with recruitment, and the entrenched underachievement of many pupils, many of whom were disenchanted with school. Importantly, the headteacher has established rigorous procedures for evaluating the school's effectiveness. This means that growing strengths are acknowledged and there are clear plans to deal with continuing weaknesses.

Everything that the school has done, and is planning to do, has a clear focus on improving learning. The expectations of teachers, support staff, parents and pupils are higher. The pupils are making up the ground they have lost in previous years and their achievement is satisfactory. A number of factors contribute to this. First, the quality of teaching is more consistently satisfactory and the number of good lessons is growing. There are still weaknesses to be addressed to make sure that each pupil has a good experience of learning in every lesson. For example, planning is not always precise enough which means that the work is sometimes too hard for some pupils and too easy for others. Teachers and support staff work well together on initiatives such as 'The Big Write', which have had a positive impact on standards. There is still some way to go, however, as standards are still very low in all subjects. Second, the teachers track their pupils' progress regularly and accurately. In discussions with senior staff, they work out what to do to increase the rate of progress further and to stop pupils from falling behind. Finally, the school has been successful in improving the pupils' behaviour, changing their attitudes to learning, and increasing their enjoyment of school. Although a small number of pupils still present particular challenges, the pupils generally behave well in lessons and around the school. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Initiatives, such as the outdoor learning project, have improved the curriculum and broadened the pupils' horizons.

The school cares very well for its pupils. There are good and productive relationships with a wide range of external agencies and a good deal is done to help those who have behavioural difficulties. There are also rigorous procedures for checking on absence and promoting good attendance but, despite this, attendance levels are still too low. Children are sometimes kept away from school unnecessarily and the school is working with the community to emphasise the impact of regular attendance on achievement and, ultimately, pupils' life chances.

Morale in the school is much improved and staff have been encouraged by seeing the results of their hard work. However, the headteacher and senior staff know that satisfactory provision is not good enough and are determined to keep moving forward in order to make Badock's Wood one of the best schools in the city. To this end, they and the governors have agreed the 'Big Hairy Audacious Goal' of making the school into one of excellence, particularly in sports and the performing arts. The improvements made so far show that there is a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

The Foundation Stage gives children a satisfactory start to their education. The Nursery provides a welcoming and secure environment and children settle in quickly. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and improving well, characterised by a stronger emphasis on helping children understand what they are learning rather than doing. Pupils make good progress in their personal and social development and, by the end of the Reception Year, most are interested and keen to learn. The pupils make steady progress in other areas of learning, although when they start Year 1, standards are generally well below those expected for their ages. The curriculum is developing well. The Reception class pupils have greater access to learning outdoors and this has brought several benefits. More time for vigorous activity in the fresh air has led to a calmer atmosphere indoors, there are more opportunities for staff to work closely with small groups or individual pupils and staff are involved more effectively in teaching, rather than supervising, the outdoor activities. The Nursery and Reception classes are working more closely together, but do not fully share the same approaches.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve lesson planning so that activities are more precisely matched to the pupils' needs, in order to raise standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology.
- Take steps to share good practice and raise all teaching to the level of the best.
- Continue to work with parents and the wider community to tackle poor attendance.

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

Although standards remain low, pupils are making satisfactory and increasingly good progress in lessons. This means that their achievement is satisfactory. The school has invested a good deal of time and effort in improving the pupils' attainment in writing, with positive results. The results of assessments in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2007 were much higher than the previous year and the gap between the school's results and the national figure closed considerably. Results in reading and mathematics also improved, but not by so great a margin. Pupils in Year 6 also made better progress, especially in writing, during their final year at Badock's Wood, but this came too late for them to make up all of the ground that they had lost since their Year 2 tests. There are clear links between the quality of teaching and the pupils' rate of progress. The school tracks every pupil's progress systematically. Current records show that the proportion of pupils who are working at the levels expected for their age is increasing more quickly in those classes where teaching is consistently good. Pupils who have learning difficulties make satisfactory progress, in line with their classmates.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils say that they are happy in school, everyone is nicer to each other, and people are friendly. They are increasingly able to sort out difficulties themselves and the older pupils, who act as

mediators at break times, take their responsibilities seriously. House captains are proud to put forward pupils' points of view. The school is beginning to work well as a community and behaviour is satisfactory. The challenging behaviour of a few pupils does not usually interfere with others' learning. Pupils do not have enough understanding of cultures other than their own.

Pupils know that they are in lessons to learn and their attitudes are satisfactory. The school has had considerable success in improving the poor attendance of some targeted pupils. Nevertheless, attendance levels are too low. Too many parents keep their children away from school unnecessarily and the school knows that there is still work to do with the community to stress the impact of irregular attendance on learning.

Pupils say they know how to keep healthy and are especially enthusiastic about sports. They play safely at break and lunch times, knowing that staff and the mediators are there to help them should they need it. Pupils' contribution to the wider community is growing, for example, through contact with senior citizens. Pupils have particularly enjoyed working with woodworkers to create seating and storytelling chairs for the outside area. This helped them to work together constructively and extended their skills in language and mathematics; attributes that will serve them well in later life. It has also helped them to develop an appreciation of the need to care for their environment.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, and there are some good features. Where teaching is most effective, all pupils complete tasks that are well matched to their needs, leading to good progress. This is not typical, however. In most lessons, pupils make steady progress but the planning is sometimes not precise enough to make sure that the higher attaining pupils are stretched. When pupils are interested and engaged in challenging activities, their attitudes are good, but they are usually passive and compliant rather than active seekers of knowledge and understanding. The quality of teachers' marking has improved and comments are usually related to the objectives for the lesson or the pupils' targets, but there are still inconsistencies in how well this is done. The questions that teachers ask to check pupils' understanding too often require a short answer, rather than challenging them to think, reflect or expand on what they have said. Relationships are good and teachers manage pupils' behaviour competently. The targets for pupils who have learning difficulties are sometimes too general, although the support they receive from teaching assistants helps these pupils to make satisfactory progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

In the Foundation Stage, there is an appropriate balance of direct teaching and opportunities for children to learn through practical activities and play. The curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2 sensibly emphasises the development of pupils' skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Short, regular 'Miss the Bus' sessions reinforce important aspects of English and mathematics by presenting them in a new way. In one session, the pupils responded enthusiastically to the 'Kung Fu Punctuation' activity, which involved punctuating sentences using arm movements and sounds to represent each punctuation mark. However, the development of pupils' skills in speaking and listening is not always given enough emphasis. Satisfactory provision is made for

information and communication technology (ICT). A good start has been made in the use of ICT to support pupils' learning in other subjects, but this is not sufficiently widespread. The outdoor learning project has brought a new, stimulating dimension to the curriculum. A reasonable range of visits, visitors and after school clubs enriches pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school is a caring community where relationships between adults and pupils are positive. Consequently, pupils feel valued and secure, and know that staff have their best interests at heart. Parents are justifiably confident that their children are well looked after at the school. Procedures for protecting and safeguarding pupils are robust. The school works well with external agencies to provide support for vulnerable pupils. Good procedures help children to settle in to the Foundation Stage and move on to Key Stage 1, and there are sound arrangements to support Year 6 pupils as they transfer to secondary school.

The school is resolute and tenacious in its support for those who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. The academic guidance given to pupils is satisfactory. Most pupils know their learning targets. However, inconsistencies in marking and missed opportunities to check on understanding in some lessons mean that pupils are not always clear enough about what they need to do to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher is a strong and determined leader, and has been a major driving force behind the school's improvements. She knows the school well and is clear about what needs to be done to bring about further improvement but, until recently, the pace of change was slow because there were too few senior staff to share the workload. The pace of change has accelerated following the appointments of senior and middle leaders. They are enthusiastic and share the vision for the school's future development. They have responded well to the responsibility that has been devolved to them and their work is beginning to have an impact, for example, in improving provision in the Foundation Stage and in bringing greater consistency to how subjects are taught and progress assessed. Staff understand clearly that they are all accountable for improving progress and raising standards. Most of the senior and middle leaders provide a report to the headteacher once each term, evaluating the quality of provision in the areas for which they are responsible. These reports are detailed, thorough and accurate, and underpin the school's rigorous systems for self-evaluation and future planning. Evaluation of the effectiveness of support for pupils who have learning difficulties has not been completed and so the school cannot be certain that these pupils' needs are met as precisely as they should be.

Governors have always been supportive of the school. They have now rightly begun to give more emphasis to evaluating the success of initiatives, shaping the school's future direction, and asking challenging questions.

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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?	3
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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	4
The behaviour of learners	3
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?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

13 December 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Badock's Wood Primary School, Bristol BS10 5PU

Thank you so much for the friendly welcome you gave me and my colleagues when we inspected your school recently. We would particularly like to thank the house captains and peer mediators who talked to us about life at Badock's Wood.

Some of you might remember that I have visited your school a few times before. This is because the teachers were working hard to improve things that were not good enough and I was checking to see how well they were doing. I'm sure you, and especially your teachers, will be happy to know that I don't have to do this any more because things are much better. Your school now gives you a satisfactory education.

We found that: ? you are making better progress in your learning, especially in writing ? teaching is better which means that you learn more in lessons ? the adults look after you very well ? your headteacher is a good leader who will make sure that things continue to improve

There is still a lot of work to do. Everyone who works in the school and the governors know this. The main things they need to do are: ? plan lessons carefully to help you make even better progress and reach higher standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT ? make sure that all of the teaching is as good as the best ? work with your parents to make sure that you all come to school as often as you can.

You can help with all of these by working hard and continuing to be on your best behaviour in lessons. I would also like you to ask your parents to make sure that you do not miss school unnecessarily. This will help you learn even more.

With very best wishes.

Linda McGill Her Majesty's Inspector

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