

Bisham CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109951
Local Authority	Windsor and Maidenhead
Inspection number	310153
Inspection dates	2–3 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Barnard Payne

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	113
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Ben Seifert
Headteacher	Mr Jim Cooke
Date of previous school inspection	2 October 2001
School address	Church Lane Bisham Marlow SL7 1RW
Telephone number	01628 482910
Fax number	01628 477198

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Nearly all pupils at this small primary school are from White British backgrounds. Two pupils have a first language other than English. Local communities are mixed but there is little social deprivation. Few pupils are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is similar to the national average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Pupils of all abilities make good progress in this effective school. Parents and pupils value the happy, caring ethos and the wide range of learning opportunities. One parent writes 'I particularly appreciate the school's approach to developing the whole child'. In addition to being strong in traditional core subjects, Bisham offers excellent opportunities in sport, music and art, nutritious home-cooked lunches and educational and enjoyable trips'.

Pupils' achievement is good. In Key Stage 1, standards are above average in reading and mathematics and at the national level in writing. More pupils reach higher than average levels in reading and mathematics than they do nationally. In Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is above average in English, mathematics and science. In English, pupils reach, and some exceed, their personal targets, although performance is stronger in reading than writing. The school has identified writing as a development priority as, in recent years, performance has been lower than in reading and in other core subjects. In mathematics and science, pupils nearly always meet or exceed their targets.

Teaching is good, enabling pupils of all abilities to make good progress. Pupils find the lessons interesting and fun. Their work is regularly marked and they find the marking and teachers' comments helpful. Teachers plan work well to cater for different age and ability groups and the school makes effective use of smaller groupings and support staff to target different ability levels. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities receive effective support and make good progress. The staff know pupils well and are very sensitive to their needs, particularly where pupils are vulnerable. The school provides a rich, extended curriculum, which contributes significantly to pupils' personal development.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They really enjoy school, their attendance is good and they feel very happy and secure. This is because the school has effective systems in place for pupils' care, guidance and support. Pupils place a very high value on the 'buddy' system, showing an excellent level of care for one another, and on the peer mediation system, which has effectively eradicated bullying. They show outstanding attitudes towards being healthy. They appreciate the significant improvements made to school lunches. All enjoy sports, because they all are encouraged to take part. They happily take on responsibilities and fully reflect the school's values in their positive behaviour. They develop the key skills, including personal skills, to help them flourish in their future lives.

The school is effectively led and managed. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and his success in realising it is shown by pupils' attitudes, how well they are all included and by the wide range of learning opportunities the school provides. Staff share this vision and work well as a team. The school has a good understanding of its strengths and knows where it needs to improve. Monitoring and evaluation need to be more systematic so that responsibilities are shared in order to develop leadership and management capacity. The school has a good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children's attainment on entry changes from year to year, from broadly average to above average. The children make good progress and enjoy their time in school. Many reach above average levels by the end of the Foundation Stage. They learn to work well with others in their

class, who include pupils in Year 1. The teaching is sensitive to their needs and leads to children actively engaging in a variety of activities. The teacher makes careful assessments of their progress towards each of the Early Learning Goals. The environment is safe, secure and encourages increasing levels of independence. The school has identified home visits and links with local nurseries as development priorities to help ensure good continuity.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve writing to bring it in line with standards in other subjects.
- Establish more formal and systematic monitoring and development systems to develop leadership and management at all levels.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress and many reach standards that are high for their age. Pupils in Key Stage 1 achieve above average levels in mathematics and science. The school has accurately identified writing as an area where, although many make good progress, the standards have been broadly average. In Key Stage 2, pupils reach levels that are above average. Again, the school has appropriately targeted writing as an area where attainment is lower than in reading, mathematics and science. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress and reach higher levels than similar pupils do in the national tests. The school provides well for high attaining pupils, particularly in mathematics, where there is efficient and effective deployment of staff to create smaller ability groups.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils make outstanding progress in their personal development. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They speak highly of their school and greatly enjoy what it has to offer. Their attendance is above average. Older pupils strongly value the opportunity to take on extra responsibilities. For example, they act as caring 'buddies' to younger pupils and organise playground games for them. They have excellent attitudes to health issues, enjoying the much improved school lunches and involving themselves in the wide range of sports the school provides. This includes pupils who may not naturally choose sports activities, but who feel encouraged to do so. Pupils feel safe, well cared for and show a high level of concern for others. They develop an excellent range of personal skills, in addition to the key skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), to use in their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress and have very positive attitudes to learning because of the good teaching they receive. They enjoy the lively range of activities on offer and are able to get on in secure, friendly classrooms. Teachers involve pupils well, getting them to take a lead in some activities and ensuring all are included. Despite the challenges of catering for mixed age classes, teachers plan for different learning needs well and pupils are suitably challenged. They give pupils the confidence to apply their knowledge and extend it. There are instances where able

pupils could do even more when they find the work too straightforward, for example in mathematics. Teachers work well with teaching assistants, who are well briefed and take an active role in helping pupils make good progress. Teachers assess pupils' work effectively and pupils find the marking thorough and informative.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a range of learning activities that is significantly beyond statutory requirements. Pupils respond very well and this is a key way in which the school realises its mission statement, in particular 'to empower its pupils through its teaching programmes...' Through the use of professional sports coaches, multilingual parents and other visitors, the school is able to extend very significantly what it is able to provide. During the inspection, a professional author visited the school to work with the children as part of their book week. The curriculum is inclusive and encourages all pupils to take part both inside and outside the classroom. There is good provision for literacy, numeracy and ICT. The school prepares pupils well for their future lives. There is some inconsistency in the provision for physical education (PE), where some pupils have lessons intermittently and therefore do not receive their full entitlement.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school effectively caters for a wide range of needs. All staff are committed to pupils enjoying and achieving in school. The school has robust arrangements in place to safeguard pupils. Pupils feel well informed about their progress, through both teachers' marking and the use of personal targets. Parents of children who are vulnerable place a high value on the caring, supportive environment the school provides. This group of pupils make good academic and personal progress as a result. Over the past year, the school has improved its management of attendance records, leading to a much more accurate picture of attendance.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school that he has successfully communicated to staff. This has led to a lively, exciting learning environment in which all pupils feel cared for and valued. The school has an accurate view of its strengths and knows where it needs to improve. Formal monitoring systems have recently depended largely on the headteacher. However, the roles of other staff in monitoring and evaluating the school's work need to be more systematic. The head has built a strong, committed team of staff to ensure pupils receive good teaching and support. Teachers are clear about the school's priorities, but need clearer guidance about their own personal targets as part of the school's performance management system. The school deploys staff and resources effectively to achieve the best value. Governors support the school well, are involved in strategic decisions and share the headteacher's vision for the school. They make informal visits to the school and recognise that they need a more formalised programme of visits in order to make best use of time.

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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
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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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 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	2
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?	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

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?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
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	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	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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

12 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bisham CofE Primary School, Marlow, SL7 1RW

Thank you for making me so welcome during my recent visit to your school. I was very impressed by your positive attitudes and excellent behaviour. The way you take on responsibilities and look after one another is outstanding. I can see that you have a very good understanding of how to live healthily. You really enjoy all the sports and other activities the school provides.

Both you and your parents have a high opinion of the school and I agree with you. Bisham provides you with a good education and enables you to develop your interests in many different ways. Mr Cooke and all the other staff work very hard to care for you and provide you with lessons that are fun and interesting.

You make good progress in school but I feel, and the school agrees, that pupils could reach even higher levels in their writing and I have asked the school to focus on this. You can help by making sure you know what the best writing looks like and striving to write at the same level. I have also asked the school to do more to involve the teachers in looking at and assessing how well the school is doing and to give them clearer guidance on how to do this.

Barnard Payne

Lead Inspector