

Bradfield Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110007
Local Authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	310173
Inspection dates	28–29 January 2008
Reporting inspector	John Laver

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	142
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr J Bishop
Headteacher	Mr A How
Date of previous school inspection	4 November 2003
School address	Cock Lane Southend Bradfield Reading RG7 6HR
Telephone number	01189 744304
Fax number	01189 745119

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This one form entry school is smaller than average and serves a locality which is mostly socially and economically advantaged. The numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals and the proportion of pupils with English as an additional language are well below average. The great majority of pupils are of white British heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is broadly average, and is mostly reflected in weaknesses in literacy.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school provides a good and improving standard of education, with some outstanding features. It offers good value for money. Particular strengths are the outstanding quality of pupils' personal development; the curriculum, with its breadth of classroom activities and enrichment opportunities; excellent care, guidance and support; and the 'family' atmosphere generated within the school. This comment from one parent was typical of many: 'Much of the success of Bradfield rests on it being at the heart of our community. Everyone knows all the children.' Pupils also recognise these strengths, which contribute to their enjoyment and positive attitude towards learning. Pupils' behaviour is excellent both in lessons and around the school. The school's success in promoting responsible citizenship is reflected in above average attendance and the caring attitude of older pupils towards the youngest children. It is evident, above all, in the enthusiasm of Year 5 and 6 pupils for organising and leading house activities.

In 2007, standards in both Year 2 and Year 6 were above average. Pupils of varying levels of ability all achieved well, overall. However, for average attaining pupils, their progress in writing was less than in reading, mathematics and science. The current progress of pupils is even better, with pupils on track to meet challenging targets. The school successfully enables the most able pupils to fulfil their potential. It also ensures that pupils with learning difficulties in literacy are now making more progress, by the provision of an increasingly extensive programme of support. Staff use the school's tracking system to set helpful targets. Teaching is good, demonstrating particular strengths in planning, classroom management, and the use of objectives and assessment. Teachers build on pupils' excellent attitudes to ensure good learning. In the best lessons, strategies such as 'talking partners' help all pupils to learn actively. Where teaching is satisfactory, it lacks the consistent challenge and so achievement is satisfactory.

Leadership and management are good. The use of assessment and the quality of resources for information and communication technology (ICT) have been improved since the previous inspection. Accurate self-evaluation has resulted in a realistic appraisal of how the school can move further forward. Staff and governors share the senior leadership's vision of excellence. The head teacher's reflective approach to combining opportunities for both academic and personal progress is paying dividends in terms of helping pupils to develop as knowledgeable, skilled and personable individuals. The improved achievement, combined with the commitment of staff and enthusiasm of pupils, shows that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage is led, managed and resourced well, so children get a good start to their education. Children join Reception with variable levels of skill, but a significant proportion display language and social skills above those typical of children of their age. Staff provide good teaching and a high standard of care, so that children feel safe and enthusiastic about learning. Sessions are well planned. Particularly successful is the emphasis on children choosing and managing their own activities. By the time they join Year 1, children have made good progress in all areas of learning. They achieve beyond the goals expected of their age and are well placed to benefit from the next stage of their education.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve progress in writing, so that average-attaining pupils reach the higher standards achieved in other subjects.
- Raise the level of challenge in teaching and learning so that all pupils make good progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Most pupils join the school with an above average level of skills, and they achieve well. The 2007 assessments for seven year olds showed standards to be above average in reading, well above average in mathematics, and close to average in writing. The 2007 test results for eleven year olds showed above average standards in all subjects, with significant numbers reaching the higher grade of Level 5. Pupils are currently on track to meet appropriately challenging targets. This continues the existing trend of rising standards and good achievement, although progress in writing is less strong than in other subjects. The school is addressing this discrepancy through support programmes, with increasing success. Both the most able pupils, and those with learning difficulties in literacy, who benefit from well-targeted support, make particularly good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils show an outstanding level of behaviour, eagerness to learn and enthusiasm for taking responsibility. These qualities contribute to their success as learners and their maturity as young citizens. Parents rightly praise the outstanding spiritual, moral and social development of pupils, which is evident, for example, in their response to worship in assembly and their enjoyment in helping the youngest children. Attendance is above average. Pupils have a good awareness of the benefits of healthy eating and exercise. They relish opportunities to perform in events such as school musical productions and to support charities. Pupils value the work of the school council. Older pupils show great maturity in the way they organise and lead house meetings and take responsibility for younger pupils in events such as the 'bluebell walk'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Although teaching and learning show some variations in quality, overall they are good, and sometimes outstanding. The best teaching is challenging, especially for more able pupils. Well-trained support staff help pupils with learning difficulties to make good progress. Teachers use lesson objectives well and mark work constructively to show pupils how they can improve. Most pupils understand how their individual targets can help them move forward. Very good classroom management and strong relationships build on the positive attitudes that pupils bring to lessons, and ensure a very good climate for learning. In lessons which are only satisfactory, the teaching is not so well paced or confident, and some pupils feel that then the work can be too easy, so that their progress slows.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The outstanding curriculum is central to pupils' enjoyment of school. Pupils and parents greatly appreciate the quality and range of enrichment activities such as the many after-school clubs, day visits to sites such as Avebury and various residential trips. The curriculum is very well planned. It takes very good account of the full range of subjects, not just core skills. ICT provision has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils enjoy swimming and French, whilst the thoughtful programme of personal, social and health education contributes significantly to pupils' excellent personal development. A good range of support programmes ensures that those who need extra help with their learning make good progress. More able pupils enjoy opportunities such as the challenge club.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The full involvement of every pupil in the life of the school is central to the school's vision. The school's Christian ethos underpins outstanding care, guidance and support. Pupils feel safe and are confident about turning to adults or peers when they need help. Child protection arrangements are robust. There is excellent pastoral and emotional support, and some very vulnerable past pupils of the school have testified gratefully to the help they received. The school makes very good use of its links with the church, parents, outside agencies and other local schools to provide extra support, for example a family support worker. Academic support is very good, and is much better than it was at the time of the previous inspection. The school carefully tracks each pupil's progress, and the resulting targets and support programmes have helped to raise achievement significantly.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

There is an imaginative and effective approach to leadership, as the composition of the leadership team changes in line with changing priorities in strategic planning. Staff at all levels manage their responsibilities well. All staff share the head teacher's appreciation of how the school can further improve, particularly in promoting even better achievement. The current leadership team has a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Monitoring and evaluation have improved significantly in recent years. This has resulted in good strategic planning and improved achievement, through initiatives such as support programmes in literacy and numeracy. Governors have a good understanding of the school, have a high profile, and hold the school to account well. Some of the school's accommodation is poor, but the school works successfully to minimise the impact on learners.

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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?	1
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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
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?	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?	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	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

11 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bradfield Church of England Primary School, Reading, RG7 6HR

Thank you all for the warm welcome and politeness you showed when I visited your school recently. I very much enjoyed meeting many of you and seeing other pupils around the school or at work in lessons.

Mr How and all the staff make sure that your school gives you a good education. Your school has some outstanding features. You behave very well and are very considerate towards your classmates and towards younger children. I know that most of you are very enthusiastic, enjoy learning, and feel very safe in school. I agree with you that your teachers are very friendly and helpful. Both they and Mr How work very hard to make the school successful, and they provide all of you, from the youngest to the oldest, with excellent help and guidance.

You do very well in your lessons. Many of you reach a standard higher than pupils of a similar age achieve in other schools. Most of you put in a lot of effort, and I was impressed by how you respond in class to your teachers, who teach you well. As a result, you make good progress. I agree with you that the school gives you excellent opportunities outside lessons. Some of you told me how much you enjoy the wide range of clubs, sports competitions, day trips and residential visits. I enjoyed listening to you telling me about how you organise and lead house activities. You are excellent at taking responsibility and your parents and teachers are rightly proud of your attitude.

There are two things that your school could improve even more. One is to help some of you improve your writing, so that you do as well in that as in your other subjects. I have also asked the school to check that the challenging activities which you enjoy in some lessons happen more frequently, so that you can make even more progress with the help of your teachers and through your own hard work.

I wish you well for the future.

John Laver

Lead Inspector