

Bridestowe Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113248
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	311175
Inspection date	2 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Mark Lindfield 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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	63
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Caroline England
Headteacher	Linda Wells
Date of previous school inspection	8 June 2004
School address	Bridestowe Okehampton EX20 4EL
Telephone number	01837 861361
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Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The inspector focused in particular on: the current rates of progress for all pupils; the outcomes for learners in terms of their personal development and well-being as a result of the school's care and support; and the impact of leaders and managers in the school's recent improvement work. 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, and these have been included where appropriate in this report. The inspector gathered evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work, assessment information, documents and discussions.

Description of the school

This small school is set in the heart of the village of Bridestowe. Most pupils have favourable social and economic backgrounds and are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is well above average. Cohort sizes in the school are small and the proportion of boys to girls can vary widely from year to year. The school achieved the Healthy Schools Community Award in 2007. It has recently been reorganised into three classes and currently has an acting headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Bridestowe is a satisfactory school. There are good features to its work. Its strength is a staff who provide a caring environment and who are committed to putting children first. Several parents wrote in praise of the commitment of staff and this is echoed in the words of one who wrote, 'Everyone has worked extremely hard to maintain the children's education and well-being.' The acting headteacher is following along the path set by the dedicated and inspirational leadership and management of her predecessor. She continues to set a clear direction for the school and receives good support from the close team of staff and governors.

Pupils are confident and friendly. They are happy to talk about their work and their school. They enjoy a wide range of subjects and are proud of, and enthusiastic about, the many ways in which they contribute to the life of the school. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy eating and enjoy local produce prepared by the cook who epitomises the caring nature of the staff. The school council has a strong voice; it sets agendas and keeps minutes. It has managed to bring about a number of improvements to the school and the wider community. Pupils generally behave well in lessons and, in the main, they feel safe and well looked after. Parental concerns about the level of bullying are not supported by the majority of pupils who feel that their concerns are listened to and incidents are dealt with. During play times, pupils of all ages mix well and enjoy the wide-open space and the adventure playground. The school is intent on working more closely with parents. In their turn, parents appreciate the opportunities to attend information evenings on early reading and the use of information and communication technology to make animations.

Children arrive in the Reception Year with varying levels of attainment. They receive strong support and teaching is closely matched to their needs. Pupils consequently make good progress in the Foundation Stage and across Key Stage 1. After a three year rise, standards in all core subjects at Key Stage 1 are now average. Progress across Key Stage 2 is satisfactory so that by the time pupils leave the school their standards are also broadly average. Older pupils have experienced some disruption but are now more settled.

Teaching is satisfactory overall. Staff build positive relationships with pupils and provide good care and support. The transition to three classes has been beneficial, allowing teachers to focus on a smaller age range in smaller class sizes. Teaching assistants provide valuable support to pupils with additional learning needs. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills through 'talking partners' that allow them to share ideas in pairs. They are also encouraged to participate and be active learners in lessons. Good examples of teachers' planning include clear success criteria for pupils of different abilities but this is not consistent across the school. In some lessons the match of activity to pupils' learning needs is not quite right and pupils are not sufficiently clear about what they should include in their finished work to make it the best it can be. Individual pupil targets for literacy and numeracy are in place and regularly updated. They are not effective in raising standards because pupils do not use them with sufficient frequency.

The curriculum is good and continually adapted to meet the needs of all groups of learners. Careful planning of a topic-based curriculum helps to ensure that pupils avoid repetition and also gives opportunities for cross-curricular links. Specialist teachers enhance the curriculum and bring a range of subject knowledge and enthusiasm for their subjects which is communicated to pupils and adds to their enjoyment. Many pupils of all ages take part in a range of after

school clubs and particularly appreciate the Wednesday Okehampton Community sports club (OCCRA) and the school swimming pool. Good use is made of the school grounds. During the inspection, pupils clearly enjoyed the opportunity to classify mini-beasts whilst pond dipping.

The school has maintained rigorous systems for tracking and evaluating the progress of each pupil. This system is used well to identify those pupils who require additional support. Subject leaders have a good knowledge of their own subject areas based on thorough data analysis and monitoring and give a good educational direction. The school improvement plan is produced with input from all levels of leadership and management. It is a well-structured document with clear actions aimed at addressing the identified areas for improvement. Governors are involved in monitoring these areas and are well involved in the decision making process. Some aspects of the leadership and management of the school are understandably in a state of flux. The strong team of staff and governors provides the school with the capacity to make the necessary further improvements.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Reception children are nurtured, play together happily and develop positive attitudes to learning. Parents comment on how well their children settle into Reception and the school has good links with the local playgroup. The staff team is well led by the coordinator. Learning is carefully planned and activities closely matched to children's needs. Although some improvements have been made, the outdoor area is still in need of further development. Staff know the children well and make sure that, alongside the Year 1 pupils, they get the right levels of support. The older Year 1 pupils who are in the same class provide good role models and encourage Reception children to become independent learners. Good quality teaching means that children make good progress, particularly in communication and literacy.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that there are clear success criteria for pupils of different abilities in lessons, with activities closely matched to their learning needs.
- Encourage pupils to use individual targets regularly to ensure that they are fully effective in raising standards.

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.

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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?	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?	3
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	3
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	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	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

3 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bridestowe Primary School, Okehampton, EX20 4EL

I am writing to thank you for your friendly and welcoming approach when I visited your school. You are well looked after and helped by all members of staff who care for you a great deal. I am sure that your previous headteacher would have been proud to hear about all the things that you enjoy doing in school.

You are proud of the way you help out around the school. I was also pleased to meet your school council which has helped to improve your playground and raise money for charities. You know a lot about healthy eating and are fortunate to have such a cheerful and friendly cook who prepares your lunches. Some of your parents are concerned about bullying in school. You can help make your school even safer by telling someone if you are worried. Many of you said that you do this already and that adults listen and help to sort out problems.

Your school is providing you with a satisfactory education. Your teachers get to know you well and this helps them plan lessons. They encourage you to talk to each other about your learning and to get involved in enjoyable activities. You told me how much you enjoy a wide range of subjects and the different teachers who teach them. You also enjoy doing topic work and the staff make sure that these topics keep changing so that you do not have to do the same things each year.

To help you to make more progress, I have asked teachers to tell you exactly what they are expecting to see in a good piece of work. Then you will know what you are aiming for. Because you are in the same classroom as children of different ages, I have asked teachers to make sure that each and every one of you is doing your best work by ensuring that the activities are at the right level for each of you. You all have targets to help you get better in your mathematics and English. I have asked your teachers to help you use these more often so that you improve your work.

Thank you once again for the friendly welcome.

Yours sincerely

Mark Lindfield Her Majesty's Inspector