

Bodsham Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118673
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	313041
Inspection date	1 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Kevin Hodge

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	75
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jo Coulon
Headteacher	Jenny Reeves
Date of previous school inspection	6 December 2004
School address	School Hill Bodsham Ashford TN25 5JQ
Telephone number	01233 750374
Fax number	01233 750374

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the progress pupils make in writing in Years 1 and 2 and science in Years 3 to 6; the pupils' multicultural awareness and their knowledge of how to use their targets; and how senior leaders challenge the school to improve further.

Evidence was gathered from lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work and school documents. Parents' responses to the inspection questionnaire and discussions with pupils, two governors, some parents and staff also contributed to the judgements. 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 the report.

Description of the school

The school is much smaller than average. When children enter the school, they have skills that are broadly typical for their age. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The percentage of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, whilst broadly similar to other schools overall, is much higher than average in the oldest age groups. About half of the current Year 6 transferred into this school from others and did not start their education in the Foundation Stage.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school that has the enthusiastic support of the local community. 'Bodsham is unique', 'an amazing school', 'a little gem' are some comments from parents, summing up the views of many more. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and has helped the school go from strength to strength. The thoughtful approach of all staff means that they study new ideas carefully and make sure that children benefit from new initiatives. This approach is based on high quality support and coaching for all staff. Outstanding leadership, including that shown by governors who support the school superbly, have secured ongoing improvements and the desire to make things even better. This reflects an excellent capacity to improve the school. All parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire are very supportive of all that the school does.

It is the excellent quality of provision from the Foundation Stage to Year 6 that enables children to flourish. The typically excellent teaching uses a wide range of approaches to make sure that all pupils develop their individual potential. This results, among many other abilities, in them being enthusiastic and creative writers, being able to take charge of finances for the school council, and create 'masterpieces' in the new art studio. This quality of teaching, with extremely high expectations, leads children to achieve above average standards which are much higher than could be expected given their starting points and levels of learning difficulties. By the time they reach the end of Year 2, pupils avidly tackle number work such as division sums and readily suggest ways they can check if their answers are correct. Their writing is very creative and interesting. They often use good 'wow' words to make it more exciting, although their spelling accuracy varies between different pieces of work. By the time pupils leave in Year 6, they have achieved brilliantly on a wide number of fronts. Their basic skills are highly developed in English, number work and science. They are articulate and confident to express their views. For example, a role-play exercise based on studies about the Second World War caused a pupil to cry, as her friend's imaginary painful account of being evacuated was so realistic! Pupils also reach high standards in their information and communication technology (ICT) work as they use advanced internet, film-making techniques and presentation skills to research and produce their work. Pupils also achieve really well in other subjects such as history and geography.

Very close individual checks on pupils' progress mean that teachers know exactly what the next steps in learning are for all. These checks include assessing and then planning for any children who join the school during the year, ensuring that they too make as much progress as possible. Pupils have an excellent understanding of their targets and 'growth points' for development devised by the teachers. This awareness of what to aim for next gives pupils very secure guidance about how to improve.

The curriculum is hugely enjoyable for pupils and provides them with a real appetite for learning. They eagerly arrive at school and report that they are ready to learn, particularly if they take part in the regular 'wake and shake' exercises at the beginning of the day. Classrooms and pupils' books are filled with evidence of the school's 'SMART' approach to learning that has enabled all children to feel they are good at something. The curriculum promotes an ability to work independently, work with others and put forward ideas to be tested out, which prepares pupils extremely well for the next stage of their education. Plenty of highly successful extra activities and clubs help motivate children, who speak highly of the range that are offered to them. Pupils talk about all the healthy exercise they do and readily admit that their large school grounds help in this respect. They know about healthy eating and many say they try to adopt

healthy eating, happily eating the fruit and vegetables that are served at morning playtimes. Children are enthusiastic about their food growing in the school allotment which they sell in the local community to raise funds.

Nearly all aspects of children's personal development and well-being are outstanding, with the exception of some aspects of their knowledge and understanding of others in distant developing countries. While pupils learn about people from differing backgrounds, their views and knowledge are limited to predictable views of life in distant countries rather than a realistic picture. Pupils do, however, raise money for charities such as 'Water Aid' and in response to natural disasters. As the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is promoted so well, their behaviour and attitudes are excellent. This spreads through all aspects of their life in school, from their exemplary behaviour in class, to their polite, mature attitudes to others. Children who have specific learning needs are cared for exceptionally well so they make excellent progress. Professionals beyond the school are used well in this respect to provide additional support. The school provides simple routines such as 'worry boxes' and books where pupils can record their concerns. Pupils speak highly of their teachers and staff and say they feel like part of the 'Bodsham family' which they value. They think of others without being prompted and know how to keep themselves safe, showing care when playing in the school grounds or on their new fitness trail. Pupils report that they cannot recall the last time there was any bullying, but know that the school will respond quickly if it arises.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children get off to a great start in the Foundation Stage and make rapid progress in all areas of learning. By the end of the Reception Year, they reach above average standards. Children are eager to come to school, aided by the school's good links with their parents. These links help parents to see what goes on and children to settle quickly. Children sometimes have activities with pupils in Year 1 and this helps them develop mature attitudes and prepares them well for their next class. The very lively and interesting activities in the classroom and outside areas help them develop their independence, while ensuring they gain their basic number, writing and reading skills. Children enjoy choosing activities through their 'plan, do and review' times, although these do not always take place at the beginning of the day, which slightly reduces their value. However, there is a good balance of activities chosen by the teacher and those chosen by the children. The outside areas are well designed and make good use of the available spaces. They enable pupils to be active and creative, such as when designing a make-believe fire engine to put out an imaginary fire in their playhouse. The Foundation Stage provision is well managed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Give pupils in Years 1 and 2 more help to improve their consistency of spelling to enhance their written work even further.
- Increase pupils' knowledge and understanding of the cultures, lifestyles and beliefs found in other places, particularly in more distant developing countries.

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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	1
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	2
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?	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	1
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

2 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bodsham Primary School, Ashford TN25 5JQ

I liked visiting your school recently. Thank you for chatting to me and telling me what you thought. Yours is a brilliant school that still tries to be even better. Here are some of the things that I found are particularly good.

- You make great progress in your work and reach higher than average standards in your work by the time you leave.
- You all really enjoy being at the school and you help make the 'Bodsham family' by being so involved in what goes on there.
- Children in the Reception class have a happy start to school. They learn really well and make good use of their outside area.
- You said you feel extremely safe and all the adults know you well because they keep a very close eye on how well you are doing.
- You know that getting exercise, drinking water and eating certain foods are good for you. Your lovely grounds and new fitness trail really do help you keep fit!
- You behave brilliantly in class, in the playground and in worship time. (You sing really well in worship time and the prayers are lovely.)
- Teaching is high quality and teachers make lessons exciting. Your art studio and ICT facilities are really good and you do great work in these subjects.
- The activities planned in lessons, along with extra help for those of you who need it, make sure you do not feel left behind.
- Your headteacher, governors and other staff lead the school extremely well and know what needs to be done to make it even better.

There is just two things I have asked the school to do to help improve it some more.

- I have asked that pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a bit more help with their spellings so their written work is even better.
- The teachers could give you more opportunities to find out about different peoples' lifestyles, backgrounds and customs found in other parts of the developing world. Yours sincerely

Kevin Hodge Lead Inspector

Annex B

2 July 2008

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Kevin Hodge
Lead Inspector