

Bishops Hull Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123700
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	314676
Inspection dates	25–26 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Peter Clifton

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	175
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Parkinson
Headteacher	Ralph Bullock
Date of previous school inspection	15 March 2004
School address	Bishops Hull Hill Bishops Hull Taunton TA1 5EB
Telephone number	01823 331624
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is slightly smaller than average. Most pupils are of White British origin. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average, many of whom have behavioural needs or difficulties with literacy. There is a wide spread of individual attainment on entry to the Reception Year. Taking the intake as a whole, children's skills are below the level expected when they begin school. The school has recently gained the Activemark in recognition of its provision for sport, the Healthy Schools award and the silver Eco-Schools award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. Across the school, pupils' progress is good as a result of the good quality of education and because leaders are highly focused on improving pupils' learning. Several areas of the school's work are outstanding. One parent commented, 'Staff are always approachable when needed, our children enjoy school very much ... a truly fantastic school.' These comments reflect the pupils' excellent personal development and well-being and their high level of enjoyment of school. Pupils take a great deal of interest in their work because of consistently good teaching and a highly innovative curriculum which stimulates their imagination and captures their interest. They say they like lessons and that the teachers are friendly. Parents recognise the strengths in the curriculum and rightly comment that, 'Pupils experience a lot of visitors coming to the school to work with them on various topics, greatly enhancing their experiences and education.' Pupils have very positive attitudes and their behaviour is good, reflecting the very good care and support provided for them. Their attendance is very high. Good provision in Reception ensures that children make a strong start in school.

Standards are broadly average and achievement is good. Historically, standards have not been high enough. However, well chosen, and carefully planned, actions are raising standards securely. The headteacher has provided a very strong lead to drive through improvement. Self-evaluation is good and leaders have rightly identified the need to continue to improve standards in writing and have well thought through plans for this. Although action taken so far, through developing the curriculum for writing, has already led to strong improvement, leaders know that there is more to do to raise standards further. The success of initiatives so far shows that the school is well placed to improve.

Teachers are enthusiastic and they often encourage the pupils to be involved through answering questions and praise their contributions. They create a very positive and friendly atmosphere for learning in all classes which is helping pupils to build confidence. However, the use of targets in lessons is underdeveloped and pupils are not sufficiently well involved in identifying next steps for learning. Consequently, pupils are not clear enough about what they should do to improve their work and marking does not always give sufficient guidance. The progress of all pupils, especially those with learning difficulties is monitored carefully so that the few pupils who may not be doing well enough are quickly given extra support.

Pupils' contribution to the school and wider community is outstanding, particularly in pupils' support for local activities. The school forum has taken responsibility for important initiatives in improving the school. Large numbers of pupils join in enthusiastically with the extensive range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy eating and the importance of exercise and of how to keep themselves safe. They are well prepared for the future.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children's skills are below those expected for their age on entry to the school, particularly their communication and literacy skills and mathematical development. Children make good progress during their time in Reception and standards on entry to Year 1 are currently average. They use information and communication technology (ICT) confidently. Good use is made of key words linked to current themes and this is promoting good speaking and listening. Writing is

encouraged satisfactorily. Teaching and the curriculum provide rewarding and enjoyable experiences through which children can explore, discover and consolidate skills. Children's behaviour is good and they work and play cooperatively with each other, taking responsibility for their own learning within well managed activities. The outdoor learning environment is used effectively to promote investigation.

What the school should do to improve further

- Fully implement the plans to improve standards in writing.
- Increase the involvement of pupils in setting themselves targets, and improve marking, so that pupils have a clearer idea about the next steps for learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

From their different starting points in the school, children achieve well in the Reception Year and are ready to start the National Curriculum in Year 1. Over the past three years, standards in Year 2 have risen markedly. In 2007, standards were above average, with standards in reading and writing being particularly strong. Currently, standards in Year 2 are broadly average and this group of pupils has an unusually high proportion of pupils with literacy and numeracy difficulties. The support these pupils receive is enabling them to achieve well. Year 6 results in 2007 show that standards were broadly average in English and mathematics and above average in science. The current Year 6 pupils are on track to reach similar standards to those in 2007. However, standards in reading are particularly strong with a high proportion reaching the higher Level 5. These pupils have made good progress from their starting points in Year 3. The school's tracking shows that most pupils are currently making good progress in all year groups. Those pupils with literacy difficulties are doing well because of the effective guidance and support provided.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils are very proud of their school and are enthusiastic about many aspects of its life, particularly its Eco-School status. They have an exceptionally strong voice in saying what they would like to be changed. They really enjoy the extra-curricular activities and visits, and really throw themselves into community events such as the carnival. Pupils are very reflective and concerned about the welfare of others. They have a strong understanding of their own local culture and of the wider world, particularly valuing their fellow pupils who bring experience of Asian and other cultures. They enjoy both English country dancing and the more exotic rhythms of the samba and salsa. Their social development is very strong and the atmosphere in the school is one of harmony and sharing.

There are a few pupils with challenging behaviour but this is managed well so that pupils feel very safe around the school and in the playground. Behaviour and pupils' response in lessons are good and pupils listen and concentrate well. They say that there is always someone who will listen to them and that their views really matter. Pupils regularly eat fruit and greatly enjoy taking exercise in the spacious grounds, for example, organising their own games of cricket. These are just examples of how good they are at adopting healthy lifestyles. They show an exceptional understanding of water and road safety, and how they can help the environment, by walking to school, saving electricity and composting waste.

Pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy are secure and pupils are very confident in using ICT. Year 6 pupils show their ability to work in teams, for example as part of a Young Enterprise activity on global trade. Therefore, pupils are well prepared for their next school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers are enthusiastic and their encouragement helps the pupils gain in confidence and enjoy their lessons. Pupils' very positive attitudes to learning are helping them to make good progress. Teachers promote strong relationships and manage the pupils very effectively. They rarely need to intervene to gain the attention of the pupils and this is a good indication of how happy pupils are in class. Good listening starts well in Reception and is built on effectively through the rest of the school. Lessons are planned well to meet the needs of different pupils. However, on a few occasions, teachers do not make their expectation clear enough about what the pupils should achieve and as a result, pupils do not always produce their best work. Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' learning, skilfully supporting those with learning difficulties and in helping a few pupils to concentrate. Pupils are given some opportunities to assess their own work but these are not regular enough or consistent across the school. A good feature of lessons is the way in which the pupils cooperate, such as when they discuss what they know and understand with each other.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum offers a rich learning experience for pupils, with a very good balance between the development of basic skills and creative subjects. It engages pupils in being active learners. Pupils' personal and social development is strongly promoted. The success of much of this can be seen in the good quality displays that frequently show strong links between different subjects and reflect pupils' pride in their work. There are excellent community links and pupils join in enthusiastically with village celebrations. Sport is very strongly promoted through the use of local specialist providers. The school's FA Charter Standard status has enabled the pupils to receive high quality coaching. Themes and projects, on topics such as being healthy and cultural diversity, together with activities such as historical re-enactment, bring the curriculum alive for the pupils. A strong focus on environmental issues has provided the pupils with knowledge and understanding necessary to debate about sustainable development and being eco-friendly. Recent changes to the curriculum to improve writing and pupils' mental mathematics have all been successful and are improving pupils' progress. In the Foundation Stage, there is a good balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care and support are well planned and monitored. Health and safety routines, risk assessments and child protection procedures are fully in place. Supervision around the school is good and pupils enjoy lots of playground activities. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported very well, as are those who have been identified as being gifted and talented. The school makes good use of outside agencies to support pupils and provide high quality advice for parents and carers. The house system is used successfully to encourage pupils to

care for each other. Assessment is helping pupils to make progress because teachers talk to pupils about their work. However, marking is regular but does not consistently identify what pupils need to do to improve. Pupils are not using targets regularly enough to help with their learning and this is preventing them from making even better progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides a very strong lead in creating a shared understanding about priorities for improvement, setting learning at the heart of the school's work. Leaders set the challenge of improving attendance. The headteacher has worked very effectively with other local schools, to ensure that attendance levels are now very high. The current focus on writing and mental mathematics is improving progress and raising standards, with further clear plans for improvement in writing. The monitoring of teaching and learning is thorough and improving learning in the classroom. The school encourages pupils and parents to make their views known and members of the school forum and the house captains make a valuable contribution to the daily running of the school.

The senior leadership team is reflective and very ready to embrace new ideas while retaining and improving the existing strengths of the school. Self-evaluation is good and school performance is monitored well. However, targets set are not always sufficiently challenging to raise sights even higher in terms of what can be expected of pupils. Governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development. They are well informed, visit regularly and provide good support.

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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	3
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	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	1
The behaviour of learners	2
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	2

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?	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	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

25 June 2008

Dear Pupils Inspection of Bishops Hull Primary School, Taunton TA1 5EB

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you and were very impressed with your friendliness and confidence. The valuable information you gave us was a great help. Your school cares for you well and gives you a good education. Teaching is good and the curriculum is outstanding. You are making good progress and achieving well. Leadership of your school is good. We were very impressed by your very positive attitudes to learning.

What your school does particularly well:

- Your headteacher and other leaders are helping you to improve your learning.
- You make a good start in the Foundation Stage.
- Teachers are enthusiastic and make sure you have many enjoyable and interesting activities to help you to learn.
- There are very strong links with your parents or carers.
- You have an excellent understanding about keeping yourselves safe and being healthy.
- There is a rich curriculum provided with many adults coming in to support your learning and this is helping you to enjoy school a great deal.
- Adults make sure that the school is a happy and welcoming place.
- You behave well and your attendance is very high.
- You are doing particularly well in science and reading.
- Links with the local community contribute very well to your learning and enjoyment.
- Improvements have been made to help you with writing.

We have asked your headteacher and the other adults to do these things:

- Make further changes to help you improve your writing.
- Involve you more in evaluating your own learning and give you clear feedback in marking so that you understand more about how to improve your work.

With your hard work, you can help your school to improve further.

Yours faithfully

Peter Clifton Lead inspector