

Bidford-on-Avon CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125625
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	315274
Inspection dates	16–17 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Alwyne Jolly

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	268
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Angela Ballard
Headteacher	Ellen Honeybunn
Date of previous school inspection	4 November 2003
School address	Bramley Way Bidford-on-Avon Alcester B50 4QG
Telephone number	01789 773201
Fax number	

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This bigger than average primary school is located in a large village in Warwickshire. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is average overall. The school shares its site with a private nursery and library.

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 with a positive ethos that ensures all pupils make good progress. Strong links with both the Church and the community help the school to promote its Christian foundation. A concerted effort to improve pupils' progress has resulted in them attaining above average standards by the end of Year 6. For example, the development of effective ways to check on pupils' progress has meant that staff can identify any weaknesses and intervene to remedy them. Parents value this aspect of the school highly and one commented 'My daughter has thrived at Bidford School. I am very grateful for the individualised intervention from which she has benefited.' Challenging targets set for pupils, which they attain and sometimes exceed, has led to their good achievement.

Leadership and provision in the Foundation Stage are both good. Standards in the 2007 Year 2 national tests were average but current work indicates higher standards are being reached. However, too few able pupils have attained the higher level in reading for the last few years. Also, although standards of writing have improved throughout the school, pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not write in sufficient depth across the full range of subjects.

Good teaching and learning have led to the sustained overall improvement in standards. Teachers mark pupils work well, giving them constructive advice on how they can improve. Relationships are consistently good which helps to foster the good personal development and well-being of pupils. The pupils appreciate the good quality care, support and guidance they receive and understand the importance of staying safe. Attendance has improved since the last inspection.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher has been instrumental in ensuring the school meets the needs of its pupils well. This is reflected in a developing curriculum that both expands pupils' education beyond the basic skills and extends their learning. There is an appropriate emphasis on healthy eating and the importance of exercise. There are good links with outside agencies. Pupils take on roles of responsibility that help them make a positive contribution to both the school and local community. They organise events and raise funds for charity, giving them an effective understanding of the skills involved for their next stage of education and beyond.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Good induction procedures ensure children quickly settle into the school's routines and become confident learners. They are well cared for and thrive in this thoughtful and supportive setting. Parents speak highly of the ways in which good relationships and interesting learning opportunities have helped their children make such a good start. Most children start school with secure skills for their age and make good progress because teaching is good with some outstanding elements, notably in outdoor activities such as 'Welly Wednesday'. As a result they reach average levels in their work by the time they start in Year 1, but do particularly well in their personal, social and emotional development. Teaching is especially good at improving their personal, social and emotional qualities because the staff provide them with good opportunities to make choices, work in small groups, receive individual support and explore new challenges in a safe environment. Staff use assessment information well to plan exciting activities that are planned to match children's need, across all areas of learning both in and out of doors.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in reading by the end of Year 2 by focusing more closely on the specific needs of more able pupils.
- Improve standards in writing by Year 6 by providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length across the curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils are taught consistently well which ensures their good progress to attain above average standards by the end of Year 6. Effective checks on pupils' performance quickly identify those who are underachieving so they can receive extra help. This has led to improved standards in the national tests in 2007. In Year 2, standards were in line with those found nationally and current work in Year 2 indicates this improvement is being maintained. The least effective feature for the last few years has been the progress of able pupils in reading in Years 1 and 2. The pupils' performance, which exceeded slightly the challenging targets set for the Year 6 national tests last year, confirm pupils achieve well. There has been a good improvement overall since the last report, particularly in mathematics and information and communication technology. Although pupils write short poems and stories well, their writing for other purposes is often too brief and undeveloped. Pupils with learning difficulties benefit from well targeted individual education plans to make good progress and attain appropriately.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which reflects well on the school's religious foundation. As a result, pupils enjoy school and are keen to join in all activities. The school expects its pupils to behave well and cooperate with each other, which they do. The fact that there have been no exclusions in the last two years bears this out. Pupils are polite, friendly and respectful, behaving responsibly and safely in lessons and around school. They willingly take on responsibilities, for instance as monitors, play leaders and school council members. The introduction of effective systems to monitor pupils with the lowest attendance records has ensured they now come to school more regularly. Nevertheless, attendance is only broadly average as a few pupils are persistently absent. Pupils understand the importance of physical exercise indicated by the award of Active Mark. The school is also working towards the Healthy School's award to underpin the emphasis on promoting a healthy lifestyle.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

A calm and orderly atmosphere, built on good relationships, pervades all classrooms, which creates a good environment for pupils to learn. Teaching assistants give well targeted support to both groups and individual pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties. Teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is consistently good, although the challenge for younger more able pupils is not sufficient in reading. Strategies to improve pupils' writing have led to improved standards but the writing of boys in particular is still not good enough and there are

too few opportunities to write at length in lessons. Assessment of pupils' work is thorough, particularly in English, mathematics and science and the information gained is used effectively to respond to the varied needs of most pupils. Marking of pupils' work is always good. The very best marking, not only includes helpful comments, but also indicates at what National Curriculum level the pupil is working at so they know what they must do to attain the desired level.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school's effective curriculum emphasises learning by doing and boosts pupils' interest through an impressive range of experiences outside class. Provision for information and communication technology has improved since the last inspection and now meets requirements. Topics link different subjects so that learning is more meaningful and enjoyable, ensuring better progress. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop their extended factual writing through subjects other than English. Special events are imaginatively planned to provide a different approach to learning. For instance, Year 2 pupils organised a tea party for parents, learning the practical skills of organising the event, writing invitations and preparing the refreshments. Outside normal lessons, there is a good range of clubs and other activities, with an emphasis on sport. All pupils benefit, including those identified as being gifted or talented.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Staff know the children well and develop warm relationships with them. Child protection procedures are well understood and implemented. As a result pupils say that they feel safe, knowing who to turn to if necessary. Those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are given good support. Strong teamwork between teachers and assistants ensures that children having difficulties in lessons receive extra help quickly. Assessment procedures are thorough and used well to identify pupils needing additional help, particularly in English and mathematics where the information is used effectively to adjust work for different ability groups. Pupils receive targets for improvement, which are also shared with parents, who are thereby encouraged to help at home. However, the wording of these targets is not always easy for pupils to understand.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has been a major influence on the successful development of the school. She has been instrumental in ensuring the school has responded to criticisms in the last report and moved forward. She receives valuable support from other senior leaders who have devised effective systems to track pupils' progress and ensure that both the personal and academic needs of pupils are met successfully in most areas. Recent initiatives to improve standards, particularly in writing, are beginning to bear fruit, although these are not yet fully effective. Subject managers in English, mathematics and science ensure there is consistent planning in these areas, but this is not yet a feature of all subjects however. Regular lesson observation has helped remedy past weaknesses in teaching as all staff now have regular guidance on improving their lessons. The governing body is also well led and purposeful. Governors have a good understanding of key areas, such as the use of data to measure the school's performance,

so they are able to both support and challenge the senior leadership. The quality of self-evaluation is good at all levels. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses and given its track record of improvements, has a good capacity for improvement.

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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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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	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?	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	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

18 April 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bidford-on-Avon C of E Primary School, Bidford, B50 4QG Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We found you very polite and friendly and enjoyed talking to you and finding out what you really like about your school.

We found Bidford-on-Avon to be a good school, which is well led and managed. Your teachers try very hard to make your learning interesting and consequently because you are well taught you achieve well. They are also very good at marking your work to help you improve. You behave well and understand well the need for living a healthy life by exercising and eating properly.

We have suggested two areas that the school needs to improve.

- Those of you in Years 1 and 2 who find reading more easy, need to be given harder tasks. You in turn, will have to concentrate so you improve your reading skills in order to achieve the higher Level 3 in the national tests.
- We have asked the teachers to give you more opportunities for extended writing in all subjects and you must play your part by writing more when given work to do!

My best wishes for the future,

Mr Alwyne Jolly Lead inspector

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