

Bolney CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126007
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	315392
Inspection date	8 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Linda Kelsey HMI

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	84
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Jonathan McArthur
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2004
School address	Church Lane Bolney Haywards Heath RH17 5QP
Telephone number	01444 881352
Fax number	01444 881047

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: how good the school is and which, if any, elements of its work are truly outstanding; and whether the school has identified through its own monitoring procedures the correct areas for further development. Evidence was collected from lesson observations, interviews with the headteacher and chair and vice chair of governors, and discussions with pupils and teaching staff. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but no evidence was found to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its selfevaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This small village school takes pupils from the local village and surrounding areas. The number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and from minority ethnic groups is below average. The number of pupils at the school fluctuates from year to year and the current Year 6 has seven pupils. Numbers of boys and girls also vary each year, with some year groups consisting almost entirely of boys or girls. The school is organised into mixed-age classes covering two academic years in each. The new headteacher has been at the school since April 2006.

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 where standards are high and pupils make outstanding progress. The school is very well led and managed and there has been a consistency in the good quality of education provided for the pupils for a number of years. The strong caring and Christian ethos and the high expectations for all pupils are what makes this school attractive and successful. Leadership and management are outstanding. This is because the school knows its strengths and weaknesses. It has identified the correct areas for school development and is working hard to meet these aims. An illustration of this is the plan to improve the information and communication technology (ICT) resources with the recent purchase of a laptop computer for every pair of children in Key Stage 2. The school recognises that regular and easy access to ICT equipment will make a real difference by extending independent learning opportunities for all pupils. Equally, the headteacher has improved pupils' access to a wider range of sporting opportunities through links with a network of similar schools and through the greater opportunities offered by after-school clubs. Over half of these support the physical education curriculum and are taught by expert coaches, and governors. The school knows how well its pupils are doing because it tracks their progress as they move up the school. Targets for 2007, which were exceeded at Key Stage 2, ensured that standards have remained high. These high standards have been a constant picture since the time of the previous inspection. Targets are equally aspirational for 2008 and 2009, although the school recognises there can be fluctuation in standards from year to year because of the frequently small cohorts of pupils. Since 2005, over half the pupils have achieved standards above national expectations in English tests, and over a third also achieved this in mathematics and science. This attention to basic skills prepares pupils very well for their future. Pupils greatly enjoy school and are proud of its achievements. Their behaviour and attitudes to school are outstanding. Attendance is consistently above average. One pupil said how lucky they were to be at Bolney 'as the outside play areas were so nice and there were lots of opportunity for sport'. Pupils have a very clear understanding of how to keep healthy, what constitutes healthy and unhealthy food and how to keep fit through their participation in the sport offered. Pupils show considerable understanding of different cultures and beliefs. Topics such as 'Diwali' and 'Indian life' form part of the regular curriculum. The school has very good links with the church and the local community. The links with local schools of similar size enable pupils to participate in team sports and for the school to benefit from the sharing of good practice. Teaching is consistently outstanding across all classes. This is why pupils make outstanding progress and, from good starting points, they quickly become independent learners, growing in confidence and self-esteem. Teachers make learning fun and are innovative in the ways in which they make the learning real and relevant for the pupils. One teacher adapted a history topic, adjusting it to have a greater emphasis on pirates so it would be particularly appealing to the high number of boys in the class. Many pupils spoke about how their favourite subject was mathematics because teachers made it so interesting. Teachers are very good at helping those who do not find learning so easy, and pupils who have more problems are given very good support. The school cares exceptionally well for its pupils and all procedures for safeguarding are in place. As a result, pupils feel very safe at the school. Pupils are identified early if they need additional support and the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is outstanding. Teachers at the school are very good at planning lessons; they take great care in ensuring that the wide range of ability and age is catered for in all lessons. The regular phonics work, which takes place three times a week, is a good illustration of staff working very well together and having a consistent approach

to teaching. Teaching assistants provide very effective support and the additional specialist members of staff employed by the school provide expertise in music and French as well as professional development time for staff. Pupils' work on display illustrated some excellent artwork. The design and technology models of the Indian elephant used pneumatics to move both the ears and the trunk. Pupils were keen to explain how they worked. Parents are extremely positive about the school and recognise its good quality. One parent said, 'The headteacher is a diamond,' and another commented that 'this is a fantastic school led by a fantastic headteacher.' Parents are also very positive about the teaching and they are right to be so proud of the school and its achievements.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Provision for the Foundation Stage is very effective. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the Early Years curriculum and the use of the outside area to enhance the learning environment. This provision creates real and relevant situations where very young children enjoy playing outside using the pedal powered vehicles, making cheese pastries and working with their first letter sounds. Teaching is of a high standard, lessons and activities are very well planned and teaching assistants are very well deployed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Enhance the use of ICT across all subjects and build on the already very good assessment arrangements to enable pupils to progress individually in their own learning.

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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	1
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	1
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	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Wednesday, 21 November 2007 Dear Pupils, Inspection of Bolney C of E Primary School, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH17 5QP Thank you very much for making me so welcome at your school. I enjoyed talking to many of you and watching you working hard and playing during the day. You clearly love your school and are proud of its achievements. So are your parents. It is an outstanding school where all of you are achieving very good standards in your work. Your school is very well led and managed by your headteacher. He and the teachers are very keen to make sure you are taught exceptionally well and get as many opportunities as possible to take part in many activities. For a small school, this is quite an achievement. Your excellent behaviour and the very good teaching is why so much of what happens works so well. Teachers know how good you are and where you have difficulties, and they plan very conscientiously to ensure you make progress in every lesson. You told me how interesting lessons were, how teachers made sure you understood things and how well supported you feel by everyone in the school. Your school is working at improving the ICT facilities and very soon you will have access to laptop computers to use more frequently in the classes. Although I know your ICT skills are well developed and the ICT suite and whiteboards are used well, this extra provision will help develop your independence even further. Best wishes, Linda Kelsey HMI



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Best wishes,

Linda Kelsey HMI