

Britford Church of England Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126304
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	315484
Inspection date	24 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Liz Kounnou

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	55
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	4
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maryline Leese
Headteacher	Kate Graves
Date of previous school inspection	28 February 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	High Road Britford Salisbury SP5 4DS
Telephone number	01722 327292

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Children and pupils from age four to eleven are taught in two mixed age classes for most of the time. The four children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are taught with pupils from Years 1 and 2. The school is much smaller than the typical primary school and serves an economically advantaged area in a rural community. Almost half the pupils live outside the catchment area. When children start school their attainment varies very widely; overall their attainment on entry is broadly average. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic groups, or are learning to speak English as an additional language. Although the proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than average, there is a much greater proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs, for their particular difficulties, than is typical. The school was awarded the Activemark for a second time in 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education and satisfactory value for money. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. As there are very few pupils in every year group, the standards reached at the end of Year 6 vary widely from year to year. Overall, pupils reach average standards in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave the school, and make satisfactory progress. In the EYFS, children's standards, in relation to typical age-related expectations, are higher due to skilled staff who ensure good quality of provision for this small group.

A strength of the school is the cheerful family ethos, which contributes to good personal development for pupils from the Reception year to Year 6. Parents overwhelmingly agree that their children are happy at school. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school, they try very hard, and behave well in their lessons. The wide range of sports activities both during and after the school day help them to adopt good healthy lifestyles, and their involvement in local school tournaments adds to the good contribution they make to their local community. Their development of key skills that will help them later in life is satisfactory, matching the development of their core literacy and numeracy skills.

The most effective characteristics of teaching and learning are teachers' skills in classroom organisation and the way they develop trusting relationships with their pupils. This leads to a good environment for learning. However, teaching is not always well matched to the varying needs of pupils in the mixed age classes. The spread of ability is extremely wide, and some lessons are not designed well enough to ensure that all pupils make the progress they could. As a result, teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, rather than good. The same principle applies to the school's curriculum. The most successful activities stimulate pupils' interest and enjoyment and lead to good personal development, but overall the curriculum is no better than satisfactory because it does not ensure that all pupils build on their skills from year to year.

The school's caring environment means that many aspects of the quality of care, guidance and support are good. The procedures necessary to ensure pupils' safety are robust, and pastoral care is very good. However, guidance pupils receive about how to improve their work is not sharp enough to ensure they know how to succeed in lessons and reach the next steps in their learning. Consequently, care, guidance and support for pupils are satisfactory overall.

School leaders know the pupils well and have created a sense of trust and belonging so that pupils feel safe at school and a vital part of the small community. Systems for checking how well the school is doing are often informal and some lack rigour. For example, although a great deal of assessment information is gathered, there is not an effective system for reviewing the information and deciding what needs to be done to raise standards further. As a result, leadership and management are satisfactory. School plans for bringing about improvement are not fully focussed on the few most important changes that are needed to improve pupils' progress.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children do well in the EYFS to reach above average levels in all the areas of learning and development. The curriculum is lively, interesting and challenging and provides children with plenty of opportunities to think for themselves and learn as they play. Higher attaining children benefit from working in a mixed aged class and often they relish the challenges set for older

pupils. Children thoroughly enjoyed the lively mathematics games they played outside with the teaching assistant; they were completely involved in the game and increased their skills rapidly. Children develop good personal and social skills, both in working with each other and with the older pupils in their class. Children's welfare is promoted appropriately. Caring staff ensure children settle in to school very quickly. The skilled teaching assistant takes the role of the key person for each child and their family. This is an informal arrangement. Her experience and skills ensure that children make good progress from their varied starting points in all areas of learning and development. However, despite children's good achievement, leadership and management of the EYFS are satisfactory rather than good. There has not been a thorough review to ensure that the new guidance for provision in the EYFS is followed rigorously, so that compliance with the new statutory requirements is currently informal rather than assured. Consequently, there is no clear plan to bring about further improvement or to guarantee that requirements are met in future.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve practice in assessment to inform pupils about their success in lessons, and to plan a curriculum that is tailored to meet their needs.
- Improve the analysis of information gained from assessment, to identify at an early stage the pupils who are doing well in every year group, and those who are falling behind.
- Ensure that strategic planning identifies the most important actions needed to tackle any underachievement, and includes clear measures of success.
- Ensure that the school has full regard to the new guidance for the EYFS.

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.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Taking account of the wide variation in each year group, standards are average overall. The most recent test results show that Year 6 pupils reached above average standards in English and mathematics, building successfully on their above average attainment at the end of Year 2. The majority of pupils build on their skills appropriately from year to year, but some do not make the progress that could be expected of them, so that pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Slower progress is not a feature of any one particular group of pupils, but is a result of the curriculum and lesson planning not always being sharply matched to pupils' differing needs. As a result, the pace of learning is too slow for some pupils, and for some others the level of challenge is too difficult. Pupils with learning difficulties and/ or disabilities make satisfactory progress in their learning.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' good personal development results from the good relationships that exist in the school and the high priority the school gives to providing interesting experiences for the pupils. Learning to play a violin in Key Stage 2 is one of the challenges that help to ensure that pupils enjoy coming to school. Their attendance is above the national average. In lessons their good behaviour creates a good climate for learning. Pupils are confident to express their opinions, but are not always given enough opportunities to use their initiative and work things out

together. This slows down the development of the key skills they will need to succeed later in life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers have a great deal of information about pupils' achievements because they are diligent in their marking and in carrying out assessment procedures. They do not make enough use of the information gained to ensure that the activities and tasks they provide in lessons are matched to the needs of the various different ability groups. Teachers regularly explain to their pupils what they are expected to learn each day, but do not provide pupils with a clear means of measuring how well they have done in each lesson, given their age and ability. As the range of ability and the spread of ages in each class are very wide this sometimes slows the pace of learning. Key Stage 2 mathematics lessons in smaller groups are an exception where the atmosphere buzzes with pupils' ideas, and pupils say 'it's good in this group' and 'we have to try and work out our own questions and then find the answers ourselves'.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory overall, but is not yet sufficiently tailored effectively to meet pupils' diverse needs. The wide range of experiences has a good impact on pupils' personal development. Teachers enliven the curriculum well through opportunities to use information and communication technology (ICT) for research and presentations. This contributes well to pupils' preparation for the next stage of their education. Whilst pupils' moral and social development is good and supported well by the curriculum, pupils' cultural and spiritual development is satisfactory. Pupils lack experience of learning about the diverse cultures and communities in Britain and around the world, and too many curriculum activities limit the extent to which pupils can use their initiative and discover things for themselves.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils feel safe and act sensibly because this is a caring school where individuals are well known to all the staff; this is a real strength. In Key Stage 2, targets are set in partnership with pupils and they are involved in reviewing their own progress. However, the targets are not guiding teachers' planning sufficiently and marking is not sufficiently linked to the targets. This limits the effectiveness of the system, as it does not ensure that pupils throughout the school understand precisely what they need to do to improve their work and reach the next steps in learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. All staff in this small school carry multiple responsibilities in addition to their teaching commitments. The headteacher ensures that there

is a good team spirit and a very inclusive ethos. One parent of a child with specific needs wrote enthusiastically 'This is the best primary school in the area!' The capacity to bring about further improvement is satisfactory. A lot has been done since the last inspection; however, staff and governors are often working on too many fronts to be fully effective and drive forward school improvement at a good rate. The school's strategic plan is not fully focused on how to bring about change in the most important areas, and how the impact of this work will be measured. New initiatives, such as developing pupils' understanding of how communities work together, and implementing new guidance for the EYFS, have begun but are at an early stage of development.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	3
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	3
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**

25 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Britford CE Controlled Primary School, Salisbury SP5 4DS

Thank you all for making us so welcome and helping us when we visited your school. The school is satisfactory, and the teaching helps you to make satisfactory progress in your learning. Most of you reach average standards by the time you leave the school. The headteacher, staff and governors work hard together to ensure that the school is led and managed appropriately.

Here are the things that are best about your school:

- The school is very welcoming and has a wonderful family atmosphere that helps you to feel safe. You play a big part in this by being friendly and helpful.
- Your attendance is good because you enjoy coming to school.
- You particularly enjoy the sports clubs and the tournaments that help you to keep healthy by taking lots of exercise.
- You behave well in your lessons and have good attitudes to your work because you are often interested in the topics you learn.
- Children in the Reception year really enjoy working outside.

We have asked the school to improve a few things:

- To make sure that you know what you need to do in your lessons to succeed, and how to reach the next steps in your learning.
- To use all the information available to make sure that lessons help all of you to make progress in your learning.
- To plan carefully how to make the school even better, and check regularly that things are going well.
- To make sure that new plans for children in the Reception class are followed.

Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly when we came to see you.

Yours sincerely Liz Kounnou Lead Inspector