

# Bowsland Green Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	130257
<b>Local Authority</b>	South Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	315606
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John English

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	241
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sue Banfield
<b>Headteacher</b>	Clare Whitaker
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 May 2004
<b>School address</b>	Ellicks Close Bradley Stoke Bristol BS32 0ES
<b>Telephone number</b>	01454 866766
<b>Fax number</b>	01454 866765

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors

## Description of the school

This is an average sized school built in 1995. Most of the pupils are White British, although nearly one in five of them comes from a wide variety of other ethnic backgrounds, with no particular one predominating. One in eight pupils speaks a language other than English at home, but only a few of them are at an early stage in their acquisition of the language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. The current headteacher was appointed in September 2006, following a lengthy period during which the previous headteacher had been absent with long-term illness.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

After a difficult period during which standards declined, the school is rapidly improving, and is now giving the pupils a satisfactory education with some good features. Parents are in no doubt as to why it is improving so much: 'the headmistress is doing wonders for the school', was a typical comment, and inspectors agree. The school is now firmly back on track owing to the exceptional direction and leadership of the new headteacher. She has united and galvanised the staff, who are giving her their full support and working extremely hard to develop the school. There have already been improvements, for example in pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning, the effectiveness of the Foundation Stage and the rate of attendance.

Pupils reach standards that are broadly in line with national expectations from the time they arrive at the school until the time they leave. The pupils' achievement overall is satisfactory, and although standards have risen in the last year, they are not as high as they should be in English, mathematics and science. This is because, while there is much good teaching, the practices that are successful in some lessons are not all being consistently applied in others. In addition, the school is still working to overcome some of the legacy of underachievement in recent years. This affected some of the older year groups particularly and the school is making strenuous efforts to support them. For example, an additional class is being created to reduce class sizes in Years 5 and 6. Some groups of pupils, notably pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do well because of the good quality of the support they get. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds do particularly well in mathematics and science. However, more able pupils could achieve higher standards if they were given more challenging tasks to do.

It is a very happy and vibrant school with its corridors crammed with the creative work of many pupils, illustrating the wide range of their studies and the pride they take in their work. Indeed a number of parents used the word 'pride' to express their own feelings about being part of this school's community. They also commented on its impact on their child. As one wrote, 'The school has made a significant positive change in my child's personality, character and confidence.' Pupils enjoy school because of their good relationships with the teachers and the teaching assistants. They enjoy many of the lessons, which are varied and interesting, with teachers often planning creative ways of engaging the pupils' attention. Their behaviour in lessons is often outstanding and mostly good in other parts of the school. They understand how to eat healthily and enjoy taking plenty of exercise. They treat each other with care and respect and have a good understanding of the lives of others from different backgrounds. Their preparation for their future economic life is limited because their key skills, including computer skills, are not as good as they should be.

Pupils are well cared for. The school works well with other agencies to care for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and many parents of these children commended the work of the school. Guidance to the pupils on how to improve their work is good, especially in English and mathematics. The curriculum is satisfactory but does not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to improve basic skills by practising them in all subject areas.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children love coming to school in the Foundation Stage. Consequently, they do well in all areas of learning, particularly in personal, social and emotional development and in early speaking

and listening skills. Adults provide a caring and stimulating environment, which supports learning well. Activities are exciting and varied, and have a clear purpose; for example, children made a musical instrument in order to play a lullaby for the baby. Leaders have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas of development necessary to improve further.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science by improving the consistency of the teaching to match the best in the school.
- Improve the curriculum by ensuring that literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills are developed in all subjects of the curriculum.
- Improve the standards of higher attaining pupils by providing greater challenge to them in lessons.

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**

Standards on entry to the school are close to those expected for the age group, but with weaknesses in aspects of language and social development. Pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage, especially in those two areas, and by the time they start Year 1 most children have reached the expected levels in all the areas of learning. As the pupils progress through the school, standards are maintained at broadly the national average. Although standards have risen in the last year, they are not yet as good as they should be in English, mathematics and science. There is a notable lack of pupils doing better than average in English and science, and so the pupils' achievement overall is no better than satisfactory. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of the good quality of the support they get from their teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make good progress in mathematics and science.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

The pupils thrive in this happy community, and they enjoy coming to school. Even the youngest pupils are confident in expressing their views. Children say they feel very safe at school. They all have a good awareness of how to maintain a healthy lifestyle. They know that if they have a problem they can turn to an adult for help. Attendance is now improving and is close to the national average. Pupils' moral and social skills are well developed and most show a good awareness of their own culture and that of others. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Apart from some lapses in playtime, behaviour is good overall, although often outstanding during lessons. Older pupils are keen to take on responsibilities around the school such as running the healthy eating tuck shop and the 'huff and puff' activities on the playground. Various charities benefit from fun days organised by the staff and pupils together. Preparation for future economic well-being is limited because of the standards of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Although the teaching is satisfactory overall, there are good features, which are present in all classrooms. Teachers and pupils enjoy each other's company, and this creates a good climate for learning. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace, and teachers often think of creative ideas to engage the pupils' interest. Pupils are told what they are going to learn in the lesson, and are usefully involved in reviewing this at the end. However, there are inconsistencies in the way in which these practices are put into effect in different lessons. For example, in some lessons, the review of learning is not effective enough for the teacher to be sure that all the pupils have made sufficient progress. Some teachers lack confidence in their subject knowledge, particularly in mathematics and science, to ensure that their explanations of some technical concepts are clear and easy to understand. Finally, there is not always enough challenging work for higher attaining pupils – too often they are given more work at the level of difficulty they have already mastered.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum has a strong emphasis on building basic skills in literacy and numeracy. However, the pupils are not given enough opportunities to practise and develop them in all areas of the curriculum. This results in a somewhat fragmented curriculum, and some subjects are given insufficient time. Despite this, the school does have strengths in music, art and Spanish. The frequent failure of ICT equipment limits how well it is taught. More able pupils are identified and offered opportunities to develop further skills outside of lessons, but there is insufficient challenge for them in lessons. There is good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

There is a good range of enrichment activities available to the pupils, and they participate energetically in many sporting opportunities within the school and countywide.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

The school has worked hard to build a strong inclusive community where pupils' interests are paramount. As a result, pupils develop trusting relationships with all adults in the school. Parents rightly expressed pleasure at the level of care that the school offers. Correct procedures to protect the safety of the pupils and staff are well established and robustly followed. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are carefully identified and are provided with effective support by teaching assistants and from outside agencies.

The provision of regular assessment opportunities and the close tracking of pupils' progress are rapidly improving aspects of the school's work, although practice is not yet fully consistent in all subjects. Pupils are aware of their targets for improvement in literacy and numeracy and they receive good guidance on how to make progress in their learning.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The headteacher provides exceptional direction for the work of the school. In just a year she has forged the staff into an effective team. The headteacher, senior staff and governors know the school well and planning to improve it is good. The school sets challenging targets and has met them in many areas, but not yet fully those related to standards and achievement. The school has pupils from a diversity of backgrounds and academic capacity, and works hard to ensure that all groups can achieve success. Members of the governing body set high standards for the school, and have a good programme for monitoring and evaluating performance. There is much to be done following a very difficult period in the school's development. Although standards are not yet as good as they should be, they have already improved over the last year. In addition, there have been sufficient other improvements, for example in behaviour, attendance, and the quality of provision in the Foundation Stage, to demonstrate a good capacity to improve.

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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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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 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	3

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the 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?	2

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
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	3
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	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	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

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

Thank you very much for the way you welcomed us when we visited you. We enjoyed talking to you about your school. We know that the school has been through a difficult time, but now it is rapidly improving. This is because you have an excellent new headteacher, and the teachers and other adults are working very hard with her to bring about many improvements. Overall, you are getting a satisfactory education at your school, although standards in English, mathematics and science are not yet as good as they should be. Some of you find the work too easy and we have suggested to the school that teachers give those pupils more challenging tasks to do.

We noticed how well you behaved in school, and you told us that you enjoy many of the lessons and the extra activities that the school organises. You keep yourselves healthy and treat each other well. The school is a lovely place to come to work, for both you and your teachers, and we liked all the interesting pieces of work that were displayed on the walls, showing us that you are learning a lot and take a pride in your work.

Your progress is satisfactory but we think it could be better, especially in English mathematics and science. We have asked the school to help you improve by ensuring that all the teaching is up to the quality of the best, and that your curriculum offers you more opportunities to practise your literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills in other subjects. You can also help by working especially hard in these subjects.

With best wishes to all of you for the future.

2 December 2007



Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Bowsland Green Primary School, Bradley Stoke, Bristol, BS32 OES**

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With best wishes to all of you for the future.

John English  
Lead inspector