

Bunbury Aldersey CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111344
Local Authority	Cheshire
Inspection number	325358
Inspection date	30 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Paul Bamber

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 aided
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	212
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr M Thomas
Headteacher	Mrs A Thacker
Date of previous school inspection	23 January 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	School Lane Bunbury Tarporley Cheshire CW6 9NR

Age group	5–11
Inspection date	30 September 2008
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: how well pupils achieve throughout the school, but especially the more able pupils, Year 6 pupils in science, those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and whether standards in Year 6 are high enough given their relative fall in 2007; the quality of the curriculum and of leadership and management.

Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation form, nationally published assessment data, the school's own assessment records, relevant policies, and observations of the school at work, including visits to lessons and analysis of parents' questionnaires. Discussions were also held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, staff, the chair of governors, pupils and parents. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

The pupils who attend this average sized school come from relatively advantaged backgrounds. Most are of White British heritage. Very few speak English as an additional language. There is a much lower proportion of pupils than normal who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There is also a much lower than average percentage of pupils who are entitled to a free school meal. An average proportion has a statement of special educational need. The school has an Artsmark Gold Award, the Activemark and the Basic Skills Quality Mark. The headteacher has only been in post since the beginning of this term and the deputy headteacher was appointed in 2007.

The school runs a crèche between 15.00 and 15.30 to look after children in Reception and Years 1 and 2 so that parents who also have children in Years 3 to 6 need only make one journey to collect them.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Bunbury is a good school. Effective leadership and management, consistently good teaching and an enriching curriculum combine to promote pupils' good progress and well above average standards. The very high quality of the care, guidance and support pupils receive contributes significantly to their outstanding personal development and to how safe and secure they feel. Parents spoke warmly about the school's work, typically commenting, 'We are really impressed with the standards of teaching and level of care'. to ensure that children are happy and stimulated whilst maintaining excellent discipline. Our children love going to school.'

In most years, children enter the Reception class with skills above those expected for their age. They make good overall progress and achieve well throughout the school and leave with well above average standards in English and mathematics. Leaders have used challenging targets well over the last year to address a slight downward trend in standards in Year 6 at the end of 2007. In particular, inspection evidence indicates that good teaching and effective interventions have enabled the school to exceed its own targets for the proportion of pupils attaining Level 5 in English and mathematics in 2008. These proportions have been consistently higher than the national average over a number of years and inspection evidence shows that in 2008 they improved by a considerable margin. The school has been less successful in enabling a similar proportion of Year 6 pupils to reach Level 5 in science. As a result, over the last two years, standards in that subject have been no better than average. The school's own analysis of test data has revealed that there is a relative weakness in pupils' ability to hypothesise and to organise investigations which would test those hypotheses. The school's success in gaining the Artsmark Gold and the sport related Activemark reflect pupils' above better than expected skills in physical education, in music and in art.

The good quality of pupils' learning is due in no small part to their willingness to listen to and act promptly on instructions. Pupils persevere with tasks even when they find them challenging and they take pride in presenting their work well. The sensitive way in which staff foster very positive relationships contributes significantly to pupils' willingness to cooperate with 'shoulder partners' in order to share their learning. Pupils clearly enjoy learning, participate eagerly in discussions and when given the opportunity, respond sensibly to the guidance provided in teachers' marking. This opportunity is not consistently evident in all classes and as a result some pupils, especially in Key Stage 2, lack the skills to accurately evaluate their own progress and the work of others.

The evident caring ethos means that pupils look out for each other and that older pupils nurture the welfare of younger ones very sensitively. Examples include Year 6 pupils escorting and partnering Reception children on visits out of school and older pupils encouraging younger ones to develop good eating habits at lunchtime. Pupils play an important part in decision making, especially through the school council. This elected body has an appointed chairman and secretary and its members were involved in the recent appointment of the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Such experiences, together with team work skills, pupils' excellent attendance and punctuality and their well above average standards in literacy and numeracy stand them in good stead for their future education and the workplace.

The experiences pupils have as a result of their good curriculum enable them to be very concerned young citizens capable of serving the school and local community exceptionally well. They also have a keen awareness of the differences between their own environment and those

in urban areas or in other parts of the world. Pupils' excellent moral and cultural development was considerably enhanced in an assembly by the compelling story telling of a professional actor who visits the school regularly. His Caribbean morality tale utterly entranced pupils, young and old alike, who remained spellbound for 20 minutes. Specialist teaching in music, physical education and French promotes pupils' very good achievements in these subjects. The wide range of after-school clubs, visits and visitors into school contribute very well to pupils' personal and academic development.

Leaders and managers ensure that all procedures for protecting and safeguarding pupils are in place. They forge very effective links with other schools and external agencies which ensure that pupils with particular difficulties or who are gifted or talented receive appropriate support. The school's recognition that there were some relative shortcomings in the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities resulted in changes made to the way in which the provision was managed. This means that the work of teaching assistants is now more focused and this enables them to effectively meet the needs of these pupils more specifically and to ensure that they achieve as well as their classmates.

The very effective partnership the school has with a cluster of other primary schools and its main secondary school contributes well to the professional development of staff and to the teaching of French. Senior managers and staff have a keen ambition to improve all aspects of the school's provision. Governors provide a crèche between 15.00 and 15.30 for those children in Reception and in Years 1 and 2. They are also actively responding to many parents' wishes and to government guidelines to provide much more comprehensive care, both before and after school. The governing body is very supportive of the school's work and has been very influential in providing improved accommodation. However, governance is only satisfactory overall because governors currently lack sufficient knowledge to rigorously challenge the school about its performance. There have been good improvements made since the last inspection, particularly in tracking pupils' progress more rigorously and in making leadership at all levels more effective. Together with the good quality of pupils' achievements and of provision this demonstrates the school's good capacity to both improve further and to provide good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Most children enter Reception having had some pre-school experience. Overall, their skills on entry are above those expected for their age, although in some years they are in line with those expected. They settle in quickly and happily. Children soon learn routines and respond to the staff's high expectations by behaving sensibly and working and playing independently and cooperatively. Their learning is well organised and their needs quickly identified. The early identification of any child who needs extra support, or who would benefit from working at a higher level than usual for their age, means that the tasks set suit individual children well. Children evidently enjoy their day, busily moving from one activity to another, both in the stimulating classroom or outside in the well equipped outdoor area. Many were excited to dress up in macks and wellies to play outside in the rain. Others eagerly helped a member of staff to make strawberry ice cream, an activity which skilfully promoted their early understanding of sequencing through following a simple recipe. The provision is well led and managed by an experienced and skilful teacher who is ably supported by a dedicated teaching assistant. Together they ensure that children's development is well promoted and tracked. Detailed records show that children do best in their personal, social and emotional development, their physical

development and in their creative development, all areas in which they do particularly well as they move through the school. Children's skills in writing are relatively less well developed. Every effort is made to ensure children's personal well-being and they are very well cared for.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the proportion of pupils reaching Level 5 in science at the end of Year 6 matches those in English and mathematics.
- Make sure that all teachers enable pupils to develop skills in assessing their own and others' learning and that they use marking to promote pupils' better understanding of how they can improve their work.
- Enable governors to be better placed to challenge the school's performance.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

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?	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
The extent to which 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 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?	1

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	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**

I would like thank you very warmly for the way you made me feel so welcome when I inspected your school recently. As you know, I was there to find out how well you are learning and to decide how good your school is. You and your parents left me in no doubt that they felt that it was helping you to learn well and to become super young people. I agree with that view and can tell you that Bunbury is a good school. It is excellent in the way it cares for you and makes sure that you are extremely well behaved, very pleasant children who work hard, enjoy school and attend very regularly. It provides you with lots of opportunities to find out about the world, to help in your village and to visit lots of places which help your learning and develop personal skills. You care for others very nicely. Super assemblies, such as the one I attended on my visit, give you much enjoyment but also help you to understand that wherever you are in the world things such as sharing are highly valued. You are helped to learn really well in music, French and physical education because of the specialist teachers you have.

The teachers who run the school do a good job and know what improvements are still needed. It is part of my job to suggest ways in which the school could be even better. There are three things in particular that I have asked you headteacher to do.

- To make sure that as many pupils in Year 6 reach Level 5 in science as they do in English and mathematics.
- For all the teachers to give you more chances to decide for yourselves how well you and your friends are getting on with your work. Also for all of them to give you more advice on how to improve when they mark your work.
- For governors to be able to find out a bit more about how well you are getting on with your work.

I hope you carry on working really hard and enjoying school. Thank you again for your help with the inspection.