

# Bradley Barton Primary School and Nursery Unit

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113241
<b>Local Authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	325778
<b>Inspection date</b>	10 February 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jonathan Palk HMI

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	300
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Karen Jenks
<b>Headteacher</b>	Julie Barton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 January 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Ogwell Mill Road Bradley Barton Newton Abbot TQ12 1PR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01626 203450

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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**Fax number**

01626 203451

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the standards pupils reach and their progress, particularly in writing
- the quality of teaching and the use made of assessment information to improve learning and accelerate progress
- the effectiveness of school leaders at all levels in providing the necessary challenge to sustain improvement.

Evidence was gathered from the examination of school documentation and data, discussions with pupils, school staff and governors, and by observing teaching and learning and other school activities. The inspectors took account of parents' views expressed in questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments were not accurate, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

Bradley Barton Primary School is larger than the average school with an Early Years Foundation Stage that admits children part-time in the September and January after their third birthday. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. There is a very small minority of pupils from other ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, whilst the proportion with statements of special educational needs is above average. The range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broad, including speech and communication problems and social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and physical needs. The headteacher was appointed in September 2008 after a year and two terms of temporary arrangements. A few posts are filled by temporary teachers covering absence.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Bradley Barton Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Its provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. Parents recognise the recent improvements in leadership. Comments such as 'a breath of fresh air' and 'lots of positive changes' reflect the largely positive views.

The headteacher has been in post for five months. During that time, she has established a strong sense of teamwork among staff and governors. There is a shared determination to improve the school. The process for school self-evaluation is secure and accurate and targets for the more able pupils have been revised upwards. All levels of leadership have a clear understanding of what the school does well and of how it can improve. However, the outdated strategic school improvement plan lacks precision. It does not provide an overarching strategy for improving teaching and learning or help leaders guide and check up on the impact of the action taken to improve the school's performance. The well established leadership roles of the deputy headteacher and the senior management team provide increased influence over developments in their areas of responsibility, and this is having a positive impact on school improvement. Some good decisions have been taken to support weaker teaching through more focused intervention but not enough has been done to spread the expertise more evenly. The governing body has a satisfactory understanding of, and involvement in, school improvement. They have achieved considerable success in stabilising the budget and with guidance from the headteacher and local authority are improving systems for evaluating more rigorously the school's effectiveness. Recent improvements in leadership, after the turbulence experienced following the last inspection, have yet to show through in higher academic outcomes but the school has good capacity to improve further. This is demonstrated by the firm grasp that leaders have of the school's performance based upon their accurate self-evaluation of it.

The school's tracking data show that most groups of pupils make expected progress. The majority of children begin school with skills that are as expected of three-year-olds, although their speech, language and literacy lag behind other areas of development. Some excellent teaching and provision enable them to achieve standards which, by the end of Year 2, are above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. The school has worked hard to close the gap between boys' and girls' writing by creating exciting play areas in the Year 1 and 2 classrooms that serve as a stimulus for writers.

Pupils' achievements by the end of Year 6 are more variable as not all teachers are good enough at matching work accurately to different abilities. In the main this affects the progress that is made by more able pupils, although some pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do not make the progress expected of them. Senior leaders have successfully raised the expectations of all teachers by ensuring that lesson planning identifies more sharply the expectations of different ability groups. Teaching assistants work collaboratively with the teachers to plan appropriate interventions and are more focused than previously on supporting groups of pupils who are identified as trailing behind. National test results and school data show that a below average proportion of pupils reach the higher levels in writing. In the main this is because teaching quality is still too variable. There is much that is good, typified by lessons with pace, challenging questions and visual aids such as the interactive whiteboards. Importantly, in the good lessons teachers are clear about the objectives for different abilities, and these are well matched to assessment information. Weaker teaching still persists. Some of the teaching does not involve pupils actively enough and tasks are insufficiently challenging

because the emphasis is on what pupils are doing, rather than on what they are expected to learn.

The curriculum is satisfactory but with strong elements that contribute well to pupils' positive attitudes, their enjoyment of learning and preparation for their future economic well-being. Pupils speak enthusiastically about environmental and sustainable education as well as the sporting and musical opportunities they have. Group work and opportunities to discuss their learning are encouraging greater independence in writing sessions. The school has made a purposeful start on identifying in other subjects where and how pupils' writing targets can be addressed, but overall not all teachers use the curriculum well enough to ensure the more able pupils make the most of their skills. There is a well-managed programme for meeting the needs of gifted and talented pupils through clubs and workshops additional to the regular lessons. For pupils who find learning difficult, including those with specific learning difficulties, work is now better adapted to meet their needs, and they make satisfactory progress. Pupils' personal development and well-being are integrated well into the curriculum.

The school is tracking pupils' progress carefully. The leadership team has given plenty of guidance to teachers on how to pinpoint and intervene where pupils make slower progress than expected. It has recently introduced a new process for assessing pupils' progress and is combining this with meetings between senior staff and teachers. These meetings review the effectiveness of the previous intervention and plan further action to help teachers to accelerate progress. This initiative is currently being used for reading, and there are plans to extend it to writing later in the year.

The good care, guidance and support that the school provides contribute much to the pupils' good personal development. Pupils who have speech, language or behavioural difficulties are identified early and are given good support in their personal development. The newly appointed coordinator has introduced systems for ensuring class teachers are more involved in setting and tracking targets in pupils' individual education plans. Most pupils are beginning to understand their learning targets and appreciate their own involvement in assessing for themselves how well they are doing, but this is variable across the different year groups. The school is developing this involvement further. There is similarly variable quality in the marking of pupils' work, and pupils comment that they do not always 'get the chance to correct their mistakes'. Procedures for health and safety are well established and are monitored and reviewed effectively.

Pupils eat healthily in school and have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles. They say that they feel very safe and that the school's procedures to deal with bullying are effective. Pupils are very conscientious in carrying out responsibilities, such as helping lonely children at playtimes and organising the fair-trade snack bar. They value the opportunities that they are now getting to plan with the headteacher their contribution to school development through the school council. Pupils have sound basic skills but because their personal qualities, including their self confidence, develop well they are effectively prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils' behaviour is good, as is their understanding of the school's system for rewards and sanctions. The few pupils who present challenging behaviour are managed effectively.

The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. It uses the pupils' links with a school in France and a pupil in Africa to promote tolerance and understanding of other cultures and faiths around the world but acknowledges that it could extend this further. Pupils treat visiting pupils who have more complex needs with respect. The school successfully reaches out to the

local population by signposting local projects for those adults who wish to improve their basic skills.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

The children are given a tremendous start to their education. The very high quality environment is outstandingly supported by lively staff who engage with the children very well. Group activities meet the needs of all children and the intervention by adults is securely based on a thorough knowledge of the next steps required in their development. The adults not only observe learning and development but involve the children in talking about the new skills they are acquiring using appropriate language. Children relate very well to each other and this is supported by wonderful opportunities for imaginative play both inside and outside the classroom. Props such as the prescription notepads and colour test cards encourage good development of writing. With so much to choose to do, inside and outside, it is not surprising that the children are engaged all the time. There is skilled teaching of letters and sounds and many opportunities for children to extend their sight vocabulary through captions and labels. The adults work very well as a team, constantly updating the activities to follow children's interests and ensure the right level of challenge and care. The leader of the unit evaluates it very effectively, drawing in views from a range of sources including parents and care professionals. Excellent use is made of progress records to adapt and refine curriculum provision, resulting in some excellent learning and development.

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

- Ensure greater consistency in classroom practice, especially in terms of providing appropriate challenges for all learners.
- Improve the rate at which pupils in Years 1 to 6 make progress in writing.
- Provide an overarching strategy for addressing key priorities and evaluating the impact of action across the whole school.

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.

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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 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?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
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?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

### 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/or disabilities make progress	3

<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## 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	3
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 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**

11 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bradley Barton Primary School, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 1PR

Thank you for helping make our visit so enjoyable. It was very helpful to talk with you and have the chance to look at some of your workbooks, and to visit you in lessons. Yours is a satisfactory school with some good features that I have listed below.

- You have positive attitudes towards learning.
- You are kind and helpful to each other and your teachers.
- The adults at school take good care of you and your parents tell us they are very happy with how the school is improving.
- The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have an excellent start to their time in school.
- Your opportunity to learn about nature and sustainable environments is impressive and we would have liked more time to share this with you.

The standards most of you reach and the progress you make at school are satisfactory. Your headteacher, teachers and governors have a good idea about what they need to do to improve. We have asked the staff to do three things.

- Ensure that the lessons they teach really challenge those of you who are capable of doing harder work; you can help by telling them when work is too easy.
- Make every effort to improve standards in writing to at least the level of those in reading and mathematics.
- Devise a plan for how they can check up on the action they have taken to improve your school.

Best wishes

Yours faithfully

Jonathan Palk

Her Majesty's Inspector