

Bysing Wood Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118497
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	326838
Inspection date	25 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Paul Missin

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	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	92
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	Elaine Hogan
Headteacher	Shirley Lall
Date of previous school inspection	7 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Lower Road Faversham ME13 7NU
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This school is smaller than most other primary schools. Children generally start the Reception class with knowledge and skills that are below the levels expected for their age, especially in number and language development. Some do not have any previous pre-school experience. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with statements of special educational needs, is well above average. Most pupils are of White British backgrounds. A well above average proportion is eligible for free school meals. The school runs a breakfast club. The school has a Healthy School award, Activemark and Quality Mark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Bysing Wood Primary School provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. Parents appreciate the school's caring ethos and the support it provides for pupils of all abilities. 'My children have flourished', commented one. The welfare of pupils is a high priority and all staff know pupils and their families well. Procedures for identifying and supporting pupils who are vulnerable are clear, consistently applied and effective in targeting support where it is needed. Overall, the school's procedures for pupils' care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Pupils' personal skills, including their spiritual, moral and social development, are satisfactory. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and of how to keep safe. They have a particularly mature view of some of the dangers of using the Internet. They say they enjoy school, but rates of attendance have remained stubbornly well below average, despite the school's regular contact with support agencies and a range of competitions and incentives to promote good attendance. A small number of pupils do not attend school regularly enough. Behaviour is satisfactory overall. It is usually good in class and around the school, but pupils and some parents say that occasional inappropriate behaviour limits pupils' learning. Pupils make a sound contribution to the community and they are prepared satisfactorily for the next stages of their education and beyond.

Satisfactory leadership and management have ensured that strengths identified at the last inspection have been consolidated and several improvements have been secured, notably in improving the provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Senior staff now have clear roles and responsibilities and are involved with regular monitoring of teaching and learning. The school improvement plan is clear and detailed and is at the heart of the school's work. There has been a good focus on tracking the progress that pupils' make. Performance data are being used well by class teachers and show that most pupils are now making at least satisfactory progress. While overall standards are low at the end of Year 6, pupils' achievements are satisfactory given their starting points and there are firm indications through the progress they are now making that improvements are being secured. Pupils in Year 2 are now on track to reach standards which are closer to average and more pupils are reaching the higher Level 5 in Year 6. The targets for Year 6 in 2009 are satisfactorily challenging given these pupils' starting points. However, leaders have not used all the available assessment data to provide a clear enough strategic overview of standards and performance trends, and insufficient reference is made to standards expected nationally. Nevertheless, self-evaluation procedures are sound and the school has a satisfactory capacity to make further improvements.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers manage pupils well. When activities are interesting and challenging, as seen in a Year 4/5 class investigating forces on objects in water, pupils are committed to their work, work cooperatively and are keen to do well. However, sometimes when pupils are inactive for too long, they become distracted and are slow in following adults' instructions. Some pupils say they are not always enthused by what they learn and would appreciate being more actively involved in their learning and taking more responsibility for organising and managing their work. The sound curriculum is well focused on basic literacy and numeracy skills and provides a good range of well-planned activities to enrich their learning experiences. However, activities planned in lessons do not always excite and interest the pupils. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall. Good work has been done in establishing systems to track the progress being made by pupils in reading, writing and mathematics and information is being used well to set pupils' learning targets. However, the

wider use of assessment, including the further involvement of pupils in their own learning, is still at a very early stage.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children start school with levels of knowledge and skills that are below and often well below those typical of their age, especially in language, number and social skills. They get off to a good start and, although there has been variation in the past, most are now reaching standards which are expected of their age when they begin Year 1. Teaching is good. The teacher manages children well and makes them feel safe and welcome in class. Children's attitudes and behaviour are at least satisfactory and often good because of the teacher's high expectations of behaviour and the positive relationships in the class. The teacher uses well-pitched questions to challenge and support children's learning. Lessons are taught at a brisk pace and activities changed appropriately. Support assistants offer good support for the most part, but this is not always the case. Sometimes behaviour strategies are not effectively implemented, which limits the progress children make. The curriculum is good because activities are carefully matched to children's learning needs. There is a good balance between activities led by adults and those chosen by the children themselves. Provision is managed well and the leader is developing a clearer view of overall trends in attainment and progress. Good progress has been made in this area since the last inspection and is providing a firm footing for pupils' continued progress through the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use assessment data more sharply to identify trends in performance, especially in comparison with schools nationally, in order to improve the quality of the school's self-evaluation.
- Involve pupils more actively in their learning, and provide a more exciting curriculum to accelerate their progress and raise standards.
- Work with parents to improve the attendance of the small number of pupils who do not attend regularly enough.

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

Overall standards in Year 2 have been mostly well below average since 2004. In 2008, they were below average in mathematics and well below average in reading and writing. Through improved progress, pupils currently in Year 2 are on track to reach standards that are below average in reading and writing but are closer to average in mathematics. Standards in Year 6 have been exceptionally low in recent years, although there has been a trend of improvement in overall standards each year since 2006. Currently pupils are on track to reach standards that are below average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. Pupils make satisfactory progress between Year 2 and Year 6, and some are now making accelerated progress, which is better than expected. For example, in 2007–8, all pupils in Year 2 made at least the expected progress in reading, mathematics and science and over half made the expected progress in writing. Pupils in Year 6 made the expected progress in writing and mathematics and better

than expected progress in reading. Pupils who need extra help with their learning make similar progress to

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils feel safe in school and know who to go to if they need help. The 'chill-out' room is especially popular with pupils, who say it helps them to keep calm when they get angry. Initiatives to improve behaviour over time have been successful and the number of fixed-term exclusions has been reduced. Behaviour in and around the school is satisfactory. Pupils know how to lead a healthy lifestyle and they understand different aspects of how they need to keep safe. They mostly enjoy school and are pleased about the range of clubs that are available. However, several are unenthusiastic about the things they learn at school and while most pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the community, a few pupils are unwilling to help out. The school has worked effectively with agencies to make steady improvements to attendance levels since 2003; however, despite a wide range of different strategies in place, levels remain well below average. Despite this area for concern, the sound acquisition of pupils' basic literacy and numeracy and personal skills prepares pupils satisfactorily for the next stage of their education and beyond.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers' lesson planning is detailed and clear and makes good reference to relevant activities and key skills to be developed. Learning intentions are clear and shared with the pupils. Teachers usually plan work which is well matched to pupils of different abilities. However, lesson plans and pupils' learning targets do not make sufficient reference to the levels at which the pupils are working. Consequently, pupils do not always understand clearly how well they are doing, and what the next steps in their learning must be to help them catch up. Pupils are generally managed well and given opportunities to talk together and to work in small groups. Sometimes pupils' concentration and commitment to their learning flags when they are not actively involved in the learning, or when activities fail to inspire and motivate them. Where teaching is most effective, teachers provide interesting and challenging work for the pupils to follow and they intervene cleverly in the groups to support pupils' learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum provides an appropriate focus on the provision of basic literacy and numeracy skills. A good number of additional support and booster groups are organised to make the curriculum accessible to different pupils. Well thought out and sensitively modified activities are provided for pupils who may be vulnerable or in need. The curriculum is made interesting and relevant by additional opportunities through a good range of sports and games activities and through special focus weeks, such as geography, music and arts weeks. A good number of interesting visits and visitors to the school also help to make learning fun for the pupils, for example visits to Dover Castle, the National Maritime Museum and a forthcoming visit to the Marlowe Theatre. There are sound links with the local community through Enterprise weeks, flower festival and visits to local churches. Some pupils are not sufficiently stimulated by the

work provided and the curriculum sometimes lacks excitement. The school is rightly working to develop stronger links between different subjects and to secure the engagement and commitment of pupils to their learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Procedures for the care and welfare of pupils are good. Pupils are well looked after. Safeguarding checks are well maintained and are rigorous and the school provides a safe and welcoming place for pupils and parents. A breakfast club provides a good start for some pupils at the beginning of the school day. Learners at risk are identified early and effective arrangements are put in place to meet their needs. The school uses a good range of outside agencies to help provide specialist support for pupils in need. A school counsellor provides individual support for distressed or vulnerable pupils when required. The school works effectively with parents to support and care for pupils. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Procedures for monitoring the progress that pupils make are clear, regularly maintained and effective. Assessment data are used well to set pupils' learning targets in reading, writing and mathematics which the pupils know and feel useful. However, these targets are not sufficiently matched to National Curriculum levels to increase pupils' understanding of how well they are doing and to raise their aspirations. Pupils are not sufficiently involved in assessing their own work and that of others.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school has a caring ethos which is appreciated by parents. The school has good links with the local community and makes a sound contribution to community cohesion. Its work is carefully planned through a clear development plan which is central to what it does. The sound leadership of the headteacher and the support provided by other senior leaders and the governing body have enabled the school to secure improvements since the last inspection. Good progress has been made in developing assessment procedures for checking pupils' progress and this is leading to a good range of data showing progress made. However, school leaders do not have a sufficiently clear overview of the progress which groups are making. Monitoring and self-evaluation are nevertheless satisfactory. Performance management procedures are in place and are related to school improvement priorities. The management of provision for special educational needs is effective in identifying and supporting pupils who need extra help. Given the marked improvement in the provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and the steady improvements being made which are resulting in pupils now making at least satisfactory progress across the school, the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

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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	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?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
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	3
The attendance of learners	4
The behaviour of learners	3
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	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**

26 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bysing Wood Primary School, Faversham ME13 7NU

Thank you for making my colleague and me so welcome when we came to the school recently to see how well you were doing. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing you at work and at play.

Here are some of the best things about your school

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start to their time at school.
- You are all looked after well. All adults know you and your families well and the school ensures that those who are in particular need get the support they require.
- The school has good systems to show which of you are making progress in your learning and who needs extra help.
- You particularly enjoy the good number and range of clubs that are available at lunchtimes and after school.
- The school uses the expertise from different groups outside the school to help and support you when they are needed.

There are some things that we think could be even better

- More of you need to make sure that you come to school regularly.
- Your teachers need to find ways of involving you more in your work and giving you more exciting things to do in lessons.
- School leaders need to have a clearer view of how the school is doing compared with other schools in order to make sure it continues to get better.
- Thank you again for your welcome.

We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Paul Missin