

Bishop Carpenter CofE Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123180
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	327866
Inspection date	26 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Olson Davis

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	105
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 Justin Bentley
Headteacher	Miss Susan Lenihan
Date of previous school inspection	10 January 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	School Lane North Newington Banbury OX15 6AQ
Telephone number	01295 730404

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues.

- The strengths in pupils' personal development and well-being.
- The progress pupils make in mathematics and writing and how this relates to the quality of teaching and learning and the curriculum.
- The impact that the leaders and governors are having on provision and achievement.
- The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Evidence was gathered from:

- observations of lessons, assembly, break and lunchtime
- discussions with staff, members of the governing body and pupils
- the school's records of pupils' progress and samples of pupils' work
- documentation relating to the Early Years Foundation Stage
- parents' 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 judgements, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified. These are included in the report where appropriate.

Description of the school

This small primary school is situated in a village near Banbury. Attainment on entry is broadly average. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. At the time of the inspection, the school was led by an acting headteacher to cover the maternity leave of the headteacher. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision for Reception-age children.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Bishop Carpenter Church of England Primary School provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. The school went through a difficult time last year due to the absence of some staff for a significant period. This restricted thorough monitoring by school leaders and the successful implementation of programmes of work designed to support older pupils, particularly those who find learning difficult. As a result, standards dipped. Under the determined leadership of the headteacher and, now, the acting headteacher, the school is making rapid and sustainable improvement. Greater stability in staffing, well-chosen staff professional development to increase skills, and more regular monitoring of teaching by the acting headteacher have led to improvements in achievement. The school's strong focus on basic skills has also led to improvements, particularly in Key Stage 1.

Pupils achieve satisfactorily from broadly average starting points to attain average standards overall at the end of Year 6. Pupils do well in their reading and science because these subjects are well taught. The school recognises that more could be done to improve pupils' skills in writing, and too few pupils reach the highest levels in writing in the Year 2 and Year 6 assessments. Results at Year 6 last year dipped from their previous above-average level. Inconsistencies in the teaching hampered the progress of some pupils, particularly the more able. Improvements have been made and school data show that challenging targets are being used to raise attainment and that most boys and girls make satisfactory progress overall. However, older pupils are not doing as well in mathematics as they could because they are not given enough opportunities to use their mathematical knowledge to solve more difficult problems. Vulnerable pupils, including those who find learning difficult, make the same progress as their classmates because of the effective additional support they receive.

The headteacher and the acting headteacher promote a strong, caring ethos in which staff work closely for the benefit of all pupils. Pastoral care is excellent. As a result, pupils feel valued and make good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This very positive aspect of the school is greatly appreciated by parents. As one parent wrote, 'Children are nurtured in a positive, happy environment and empowered to take responsibility for their own learning'. Pupils say that any concerns they might have are dealt with swiftly and effectively because 'adults listen to you'. All requirements for ensuring pupils' health and safety and the safeguarding of pupils are met. Pupils are developing an understanding of how their targets in reading, writing and mathematics can help them to improve their work. Teachers mark pupils' work well and comments are often linked to the purpose of the lesson and to pupils' targets. As a result, pupils are becoming more aware of the next steps in their learning.

Pupils make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage in their personal development. By the time they reach Year 6 they are confident, mature members of a harmonious community. Relationships are good and pupils say that the very caring way that older pupils look after younger pupils, 'makes the school into a family'. Pupils have a good understanding of how to be healthy. They also know how to stay safe, for example, when using the internet. They behave well and have positive attitudes in class and around the school. Pupils' involvement in the school community and the wider community is seen in the good links with the village and with a school in Sierra Leone, and also in the socially responsible way in which pupils raise money for charities. The school council has had a positive impact on improving the quality of playtimes by providing a 'friendship bench' and organising the pupil play leaders. Pupils' sound level of

basic skills and enhanced personal and social skills prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

Pupils make steady progress in their learning because the quality of teaching is satisfactory. There are some clear strengths in teaching across the school despite some inconsistencies. Pupils feel involved in their learning because they are given a clear idea of what they are expected to learn and achieve by the end of each lesson. Relationships between adults and pupils are good and this helps the pupils to tackle their work with confidence and enthusiasm. Some teachers do not always make the best use of assessment information to plan for pupils' individual needs. Consequently, there is not always enough challenge in lessons and this slows the progress of some pupils, particularly the more able, in areas such as writing and mathematics.

Teachers make links between subjects to make learning more relevant and enjoyable for pupils. Pupils develop their writing skills well in literacy lessons, but opportunities for pupils to write are not planned well enough in other subjects. Also, pupils do not have enough opportunities to use their problem-solving skills in mathematics. Pupils' learning and personal development benefit from a well-planned programme in personal, social and health education. The curriculum is enhanced well by visits, including residential trips, visitors, and special events such as Science Week and Teamwork Week. Good partnerships with parents, the local community, other small schools and the local secondary school provide benefits for pupils' learning and contribute to the satisfactory promotion of community cohesion. Pupils also participate enthusiastically in a satisfactory range of clubs and other activities. These add greatly to their strong enjoyment of school as illustrated by pupils' good attendance.

School leaders know the school well. Together they have accurately evaluated the school's work. Issues from the last inspection have been successfully tackled. Senior leaders and governors are not complacent and recognise that they need to do more to raise pupils' achievement from satisfactory to good. The school improvement plan correctly identifies the key areas for attention, including the need to raise standards in writing and mathematics. The school has satisfactory capacity to improve. School leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching, with a focus on raising standards, but some variation in the quality of teaching remains. There is scope for a stronger focus in the monitoring of teaching to ensure that the impact of teaching on learning is more fully evaluated. For example, more remains to be done to ensure that teachers are making the best use of assessment information to accelerate the progress made by pupils, particularly the more able pupils. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities conscientiously and challenge the school to do its best for its pupils. They are keen to further their monitoring role so that they can more fully hold the school to account for the progress made by pupils.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

School leaders have worked successfully to improve provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that children are very well cared for and settle quickly into the Reception class. Children generally enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of skills in line with what is normally expected at that age. They make sound progress so that many reach the goals normally expected for children when they enter Year 1. However, teachers realise that more needs to be done to develop children's skills in communication, language and literacy, particularly as these skills are often at a relatively lower level when children start school. Staff have rightly focused on improving children's skills in linking letters with sounds and their writing skills. Formal assessments have not shown the impact of this action, but children's work shows signs that they are making better progress in this area of learning. Children enjoy their learning

because there is a good balance between adult-directed activities and activities that they choose for themselves. They have easy access to outside activities which help develop their creativity and practical skills. Children work well independently and in small groups. For example, when decorating 'happy biscuits' they helped each other, discussed different techniques thoughtfully, and showed good awareness of hygiene issues.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve writing by providing more opportunities for pupils to write purposefully in subjects other than English.
- Raise standards in mathematics for older pupils by improving their problem-solving skills.
- Ensure consistency in teachers' use of assessment information to provide greater challenge for pupils, particularly the more able.

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	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
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	2

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?	2

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**

11 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bishop Carpenter CofE Aided Primary School, Banbury, OX15 6AQ

On behalf of the inspectors, I would like to thank you for all your help when we visited your school. We enjoyed visiting your classrooms and talking to you. We found that your school provides you with a satisfactory education.

Here are some of the good things about your school.

- The adults take excellent care of you, which makes you feel happy and safe. The older pupils care very well for the younger pupils.
- You enjoy your learning and the other activities in school.
- You behave well and want to do your best in lessons.
- You take lots of exercise and know a good deal about healthy living.
- The school council represents your views well and you all help the school to run smoothly.
- The school works well with outside people to make sure that you get the help you need.

There are three main things that we have asked your school to do to improve further.

- Help you to do better in your writing by giving you well-planned opportunities to write in other subjects.
- Help the older pupils do better in mathematics by improving their skills in solving more difficult problems.
- Make sure that all teachers give you tasks that are just at the right level for you so that you make faster progress in your learning, particularly those of you who can do harder work.

You can help by always trying your hardest and doing your best work.

Yours faithfully

Olson Davis

Lead Inspector