

Bournemouth Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133771
Local Authority	Southend-on-Sea
Inspection number	328760
Inspection dates	12–13 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Helen Ranger

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	512
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 Michael Dedman
Headteacher	Mrs Angela Hutchinson
Date of previous school inspection	29 March 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Bournemouth Park Road Southend-on-sea SS2 5JN
Telephone number	01702 468046
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is much larger than most primary schools. It opened in 2003 and serves a part of Southend that has very high mobility in the local population and areas of social and economic deprivation. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is over twice the national average and is rising. Quite a high percentage of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These include moderate learning difficulties, language and communication difficulties and behavioural difficulties. The school's provision includes a learning resource base, induction unit and two nurture units which support pupils as individuals or small groups.

About 20% of pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic groups and English is not the first language for most of these pupils. A large number of pupils, especially in Years 3 to 6, join or leave the school part way through the school year, often staying for only short periods. When children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage, their attainment varies widely but, overall, is considerably below the levels expected nationally for three-year-olds.

The school holds awards in several areas, including a Healthy Schools award and the Basic Skills 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

The staff and governors of Bournemouth Park Primary consider the school's overall effectiveness to be satisfactory and inspection findings agree with this judgement. There are some important strengths in the school's provision, most notably in how well it caters for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in the staff's care and support for pupils of all ages.

Pupils' academic achievements are satisfactory. The school's assessments of pupils in Year 2 show that although standards are below average, they have risen since the last inspection in reading, writing and mathematics. This confirms the effectiveness of the school's provision for its younger children. Improvements in the standards reached by older pupils are less easy to demonstrate because so many of them change schools part way through Key Stage 2. Because of this, the school analyses individual performance carefully. Staff can show that pupils make satisfactory progress between Years 3 and 6. However, standards in the Year 6 tests of recent years have been well below average. Improving the pace of learning in this key stage is rightly identified for further action.

Pupils reach satisfactory standards in their personal development. They say that they enjoy coming to school and most have positive attitudes to learning, although attendance is below average. Behaviour in lessons is usually good but there is a small group of pupils who struggle to conform to the school's expectations of their behaviour. The nurture units help these pupils to develop better attitudes and are especially successful with the younger pupils. However, not all staff are equally well equipped with the skills necessary to manage outbursts of poor behaviour as it arises. Such behaviour has some impact on other pupils' enjoyment and progress when the flow of lessons is broken. Teachers rely too much on senior and specialist staff to withdraw individuals from class instead of finding ways of dealing with any unacceptable conduct themselves.

The school cares well for its pupils. There are good systems to identify pupils who can benefit from additional support for their learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils learn soundly because teaching and the curriculum are satisfactory. Over the past few terms, there has been a considerable amount of change in teachers' methods and the ways they plan and organise activities. Much of this has been the result of a drive to raise standards. Many initiatives are at a relatively early stage and it is too soon to assess their full impact on pupils. However, the school's monitoring of teaching shows that most recent lessons have been good, some outstanding, and that inadequate teaching is now rare. This coincides with inspection observations. A feature of recent practice is that teachers are improving the accuracy and frequency of their assessments of pupils' work. They can now check progress more clearly, identify any pupils at risk of underachieving and provide extra help as needed. This is already ensuring that groups, such as those who find learning difficult and those learning to speak English for the first time, are making at least satisfactory progress. Staff are now rightly focused on using tracking information even more rigorously in lesson planning, so that the pace of learning accelerates.

Leadership and management have a satisfactory impact on pupils' achievement. The headteacher and the Chair of the Governing Body have been consistent influences in how the school has developed since it opened. They show a determination to close the gap between the school's results and national standards. To this end, teachers' leadership roles have been substantially revised. As with the changes to teaching and the curriculum, this has meant a considerable

amount of recent change as staff take on new responsibilities and try new initiatives. There is not always enough consideration given to how much change can realistically take place at any one time or to prioritising actions that can have most impact on pupils' achievement and enjoyment. In spite of this, the school's track record of recent years, especially the improvements that have been secured for younger pupils, indicates a sound capacity for the future.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in Nursery and Reception is good. Children make good progress so that, by the end of Reception, standards are close to nationally expected levels. Staff effectively combine activities led by adults with those the children choose and plan themselves. Extensive use is made of the large outdoor area where children work and play well together. This makes a significant contribution to their good personal development and well-being. However, the lack of a covered area outside sometimes limits opportunities to extend learning.

Teaching is good and all staff make a positive contribution to children's learning and welfare. The good use of questioning, together with an emphasis on discussion, careful observation and the promotion of good listening skills all help children to learn and develop well. Children enjoy the wide range of activities provided. Role play areas such as The Gingerbread House and The Three Bears' Cottage provide stimulating opportunities for imaginative play and creative learning. Behaviour is usually good, although during whole-class activities such as story times, some children can become restless as they find concentrating and taking turns difficult. Leadership and management are good. The well-informed lead teacher provides purposeful direction and support for the current good practice. She has a clear vision for the future which includes further development of the outdoor area.

What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate progress, especially in Years 3 to 6, by ensuring that lesson planning takes full account of information from the assessment and tracking systems.
- Develop the ability of staff to deal effectively with challenging behaviour.
- Ensure leaders and managers manage change effectively and give highest priority to initiatives which promote pupils' achievement and enjoyment.

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

While the school's results in the national assessments at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are often below the national average, they represent satisfactory progress compared with pupils' starting points. The school's records indicate that standards in reading in particular are rising as a result of action to improve pupils' knowledge of the sounds made by letters. There are current initiatives to raise standards in writing, especially for boys, including by ensuring that writing tasks take account equally of boys' and girls' interests. Older pupils' enjoyment and understanding of science has been enhanced because lessons have become more practical with more opportunities to carry out experiments and investigations.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Their social development is the strongest aspect. Older pupils take responsibilities in the running of the school, for instance as prefects and acting as buddies on the playground. However, pupils feel that they have insufficient opportunity to influence decisions, for example through their school council, and would welcome the opportunity for a stronger voice. They make a satisfactory contribution to the wider community. They enthusiastically raise money for charities, as well as supporting the school's international initiatives such as the links with several schools in Europe and Asia.

Pupils are generally settled in lessons, although there are times on the playground where the rough and tumble of a small number of pupils needs the careful handling, it is given by staff. While most pupils attend regularly, the level of persistent absence by a small number of pupils, mainly in the younger age groups, has increased in spite of careful monitoring by staff. Most pupils show a reasonable awareness of the need to keep themselves safe and have confidence in the care they receive from staff. The adults provide the pupils with good role models and relationships across the school are good. Pupils appreciate the need to stay healthy through sensible eating, but do not always see how this applies to their own lives. They do, however, like the good opportunities they have for sport and physical exercise. Pupils understand and appreciate the diverse cultures that form the intake of the school. They are provided with satisfactory opportunities to develop the skills they need for later life, through teamwork and participation in residential trips.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Recent improvements to the ways teachers plan lessons and assess and track pupils' achievements have been effective in matching activities more appropriately to the range of pupils' needs. This is helping to set individual pupil targets that are robust enough to promote better levels of progress. There is good liaison between teachers and teaching assistants, especially in supporting pupils who need extra adult help with learning. Adults promote good relationships in class and provide a pleasant atmosphere for learning. Pupils particularly enjoy the growing number of lessons that include practical and investigative work. Lessons include valuable oral feedback from teachers on pupils' performance, for example, about how well they have met the overall objective of the lessons. The quality of written marking is more variable so that pupils are not always made aware of what they have done well and what to concentrate on next.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school is focused on developing pupils' basic skills in its drive to ensure that they reach high enough standards for their transfer to secondary education. New initiatives in English and mathematics are being implemented across the school and include sound provision for pupils who have extra adult help with learning. A current priority is the improvement of arrangements for pupils with particular gifts or talents. Recent efforts to devise a more 'creative' curriculum, including the use of the music studio, encourage pupils to feel excited about their achievements.

The extensive range of school clubs, including a breakfast club, radio club, modern foreign language clubs, gardening and numerous sports activities, is well attended. The clubs help to make up for the limitations of the outdoor play space. The school is establishing valuable partnerships with other local schools, such as those to promote sport and French.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school rigorously carries out its duties to safeguard pupils and promote their health and safety. Many parents praise the high level of care demonstrated by the staff and pupils' views are also positive. Pupils feel that any incidents of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with swiftly and effectively. They report that initiatives such as the playground buddy system and the clear rules and guidelines set by staff help make playtimes enjoyable social occasions. Links with outside agencies, where available, provide extensive support for vulnerable pupils and their families. Staff make good use of the personal, social and health education curriculum to guide and support pupils' social and emotional development. For a significant number of pupils there is a considerable amount of ground to make up in these areas and staff promote effective progress. The nurture units and the learning resource base provide concentrated help and guidance for pupils who need extra support, enabling these pupils to join their regular class groups whenever possible. Pupils' academic guidance is satisfactory. Older pupils generally have a better understanding than younger ones of their learning targets and what they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leaders and managers provide sound direction for the school based on detailed self-evaluation. While they show the determination to raise standards, the school does not always meet the targets it sets itself. In response to this, a changed pattern of staff roles and responsibilities has resulted in the appointment of several team leaders and a new tier of subject leaders. This has led to a relatively complex staff structure that is still being implemented. As a result, the school is not yet in a position to demonstrate that leaders and managers have had more than a satisfactory impact on pupils' achievements. However, parents' and pupils' views of provision, especially the pastoral care, are positive. They are summarised by the parent who wrote, 'very pleased with all my children's progress and all the support that is given to them'. Governors are active and support and monitor the school's work well. They include members who are very aware of the social and cultural needs of the local area and work well to promote links between home and school. This is assisting the school's continuing efforts to promote more effective community cohesion, an aspect of its work for which it has high aspirations and a clear strategy.

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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	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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
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?	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	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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

16 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bournemouth Park Primary School, Southend-on-Sea, SS2 5JN

Thank you all for your welcome and help when the inspection team visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you and seeing your school. This letter is to tell you about some of the best things we found during our visit and some areas where we feel your school could be improved.

We were glad to hear how much you like your teachers and we consider that your school gives you a satisfactory education. The children in Nursery and Reception settle into school quickly and get a good start to their education. In the rest of the school, the staff are improving the ways they plan lessons and how they check how you are getting on. We have asked them to make sure that you make even faster progress in future. We saw lots of changes to the ways that teachers plan your lessons and put you into groups to help you learn. We have asked the adults to make sure that that these changes are successful and help you to learn more quickly. You can help the teachers by trying your best in lessons and listening carefully when they tell you how to improve.

You and your parents told us that, most of the time, you enjoy school. You told us that you know quite a lot about how to lead safe and healthy lives. We saw this in action with the children in Years 1 and 2 eating so much fruit at playtime and we know that many of the older pupils enjoy sports activities. However, some of you told us that sometimes a few children's behaviour affects your enjoyment of school. We have asked the adults in school to keep looking at this, so that when children have problems with behaviour, the staff can help to resolve them even more quickly.

The staff and governors care for you well and are working hard to make school even better for you all. Mrs Hutchinson and your teachers have lots of ideas for the future, so we hope that you will all carry on enjoying life at Bournemouth Park.

Best wishes to all of you.

Yours sincerely

Helen Ranger

Lead inspector