

Bentley Heath Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104088
Local Authority	Solihull
Inspection number	336231
Inspection dates	1–2 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Selwyn Ward

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	396
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Duncan Hill-Brown
Headteacher	Andrew Williams
Date of previous school inspection	0 June 2007
School address	Widney Close Bentley Heath Solihull
Telephone number	01564 772132
Fax number	01564 775708
Email address	office@bentley-heath.solihull.sch.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	1–2 October 2009
Inspection number	336231

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2009

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 23 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at samples of pupils' work, school policies and procedures, the school improvement plan and the questionnaires received from 112 parents, 97 pupils and 22 staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at:

- more able pupils' writing
- teachers' use of assessment information to plan lessons that meet the learning needs of pupils of all abilities
- how the school manages the impact of shared responsibility for class teaching.

Information about the school

In this large school, the great majority of pupils are White British, with very small numbers of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. None are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The school has a Nursery class which operates in the mornings. There are two classes in each year group from Reception Year to Year 6. The school shares part of its premises with St James Church. It has achieved an Active Mark award and Healthy Schools status. The headteacher was appointed in January 2008.

There is extended provision for pupils on the school site run outside the ordinary school day by Crossover Childcare. This independently managed provision was inspected separately.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

The school lives up to its motto, 'Building Happiness and Success'. As a parent graphically explained, 'Bentley Heath School is not a sausage factory, and it produces well rounded individuals, who look after themselves and others, as well as giving them a rigorous academic education.' Pupils are helped to grow in confidence. They have an impressive appreciation of how to lead safe and healthy lives. Their behaviour is exemplary and they are eager to learn, and this contributes to their increasing academic success. Pupils build on the good start they get off to in the Early Years Foundation Stage to attain consistently high standards throughout the school. Coupled with the good progress made by girls and boys of all abilities and from different backgrounds, this represents outstanding achievement.

Parents describe the many improvements in teaching, their children's rate of progress and in the attractive school environment. These, and the across-the-board rise seen in standards, and especially in more able pupils' writing, show the school's good capacity for continued improvement. The headteacher, governors and leadership team have an accurate view of how well the school is doing and they recognise where there is scope for accelerating progress even further. Although teaching and learning are good, pupils do not all understand the targets they are given and the targets are not sharply enough matched to pupils' individual learning needs. This limits opportunities for teachers to tailor learning opportunities to further stretch every individual. It also limits opportunities for pupils to measure how well they are doing and take increased responsibility for their own learning.

With every child in Year 3 learning a stringed instrument, music plays an important part in the life of the school. It also contributes to pupils' cultural development. However, opportunities are missed to extend pupils' awareness of other cultures beyond their own everyday experience.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Extend the school's promotion of community cohesion by giving pupils more opportunities to learn about and learn from other cultures and beliefs around Britain and the wider world. Governors should expect this to be in place and should be evaluating its impact by the end of the summer term 2010.
- Give pupils more individual, readily understood targets to further extend all pupils' learning and to enable pupils to better assess how well they are doing. This should be developed over the coming term and be in place by the start of the summer term 2010.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in lessons and the standards they attain are high. The already above average standards rose sharply in the Year 6 national tests in 2009 as a result of the school's focus on improving pupils' writing. The improvement in writing was equally dramatic in the Year 2 assessments. Moreover, comparable improvement is evident in pupils' current work in all year groups. Achievement is outstanding because progress for girls and boys of all abilities is good. This includes more able pupils, who, in the past, had not always done as well in writing. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress because they benefit from good support in lessons.

Parents are very aware of the improving picture of pupils' academic success and the reasons for it. As one explained, 'My daughter is progressing really well. She needs lots of encouragement and support with her literacy, and the teachers are more than happy to give it.' Another important factor in pupils' success is their great enjoyment and enthusiasm for school. A parent described how her child 'cannot wait to go to school each morning'. Pupils show a genuine pride in their school. Many told inspectors that they think Bentley Heath is 'the best in the world'. As one explained, 'The school really helps you learn and be a good person.' Pupils enjoy being able to take on responsibilities, to the extent that some bemoan the fact that the school council has not met as regularly as they would like. Together with enterprise activities such as the school bank, run in conjunction with a commercial bank by pupils in Year 5, pupils' good attendance and high standards of literacy and numeracy help to prepare them exceptionally well for the next stage of their education and for their future working lives.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Lessons are well ordered. As a pupil pointed out, 'The teachers are strict, but in a good way.' The pupils make good progress because they are well motivated and teachers generally succeed in engaging their interest and in harnessing their enthusiasm. Just sometimes, however, some pupils' attention begins to wane when they are expected to listen passively for too long. Teachers make increasingly effective use of assessment information to plan lessons that help pupils to build on what they have previously learnt. Marking has contributed to the sharp improvement in pupils' writing. This is because pupils benefit from detailed feedback on written work. Even in subjects such as science, spelling and punctuation errors are routinely corrected and teachers show pupils what they need to do to move their writing on to the next level. Marking in mathematics is much less detailed and so does less to drive improvement. Pupils' targets also make less contribution than they could to further raising standards because they are not specific enough to individual pupils' needs and they are not always written in language that the pupils understand.

Pupils enjoy the interesting and exciting things they get to learn. They are especially enthusiastic about music. The pupils also greatly appreciate the new facilities they have as a result of the building works, including trim trails for both the infant and junior playgrounds. Productive partnerships with outside organisations, including the secondary school to which most pupils transfer, help to enrich the curriculum through extending modern foreign languages and sporting activities. The effective arrangements for care and welfare contribute to the confidence pupils have in their safety. Induction arrangements for pupils new to the school are especially strong. A parent of a child who joined Bentley Heath partway through the year wrote to praise the way 'the headteacher and staff were extremely supportive in helping my son adjust to his new school'.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

How effective are leadership and management?

Through their shared commitment to improving provision and outcomes for Bentley Heath's pupils, the headteacher, senior leadership team, staff and governors have secured what parents describe as 'a massive improvement in every aspect of the school'. All groups, including parents and pupils, were consulted in setting the priorities in the school improvement plan. The plan has become a helpful tool for leaders and governors in driving improvements, although not all its success criteria are as precise and measurable as they could be. Perceptive monitoring of lessons has helped to raise the quality of teaching and ensure that girls and boys of all abilities now make equally good progress. There is shared responsibility for teaching in many of the classes, but this is well managed so that there is no disruption to pupils' learning through the midweek change of teacher. Parents praise the improved home-school communications, and especially the meetings at the start of the year that outline what is due to be taught and helps parents to support their children's learning.

Leaders and governors have identified that, although Bentley Heath promotes equal opportunities well, the contribution that the school makes to community cohesion is not as strong as other aspects of its work. Though the school plays an important role within the local community, and pupils and families take an active part in activities arranged through St James Church, pupils have much less awareness of other beliefs and ways of life in different parts of Britain and around the world. Governors point to budgetary constraints last year which slowed work in developing this area of provision, but they have now set as a priority the further promotion of community cohesion. Arrangements to check on the suitability of all adults currently working with pupils in the school meet government requirements.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate
 Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2
---	----------

Early Years Foundation Stage

'My child has settled in brilliantly and absolutely loves going to school.' This comment from a parent sums up the views of many. Parents describe how their children are thriving in a stimulating environment where they are looked after well and feel happy and secure. Children join school with above average skills and capabilities. In this well-run provision, consistently good teaching and careful tracking of how well they are doing, helps the children to make good progress. Almost all attain the early learning goals expected for children at the end of the Reception Year and a great many exceed them. Girls do better than boys in their early writing skills, but there is scope to further boost early mathematical skills of both girls and boys by giving them more opportunities to practise mark making in number.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents express very positive views about almost all aspects of the school. Many wrote to comment favourably on the many improvements they have seen since the school was last inspected.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bentley Heath Church of England Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 112 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 396 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	84	75	28	25	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	86	77	26	23	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	45	45	49	49	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	53	54	35	35	5	5	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	63	64	29	29	3	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	58	52	46	41	3	3	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	69	62	37	33	4	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	58	52	44	39	3	3	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	65	58	38	34	3	3	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	51	46	44	39	7	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	46	41	53	47	6	5	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	83	74	26	23	1	1	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	82	73	27	24	2	2	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



30 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bentley Heath Church of England Primary School, Solihull B93 9AS

Thank you for making us to welcome when we came to visit your school. Many of you told us how proud you are of your school. You have every right to be. It is a good school where you are achieving exceptionally well and attaining high standards. You are making good progress throughout the school, from the start of the Nursery to the end of Year 6.

We were impressed by your very sensible attitudes and excellent behaviour. You know a great deal about keeping healthy and safe, and the way everyone gets on so very well together helps to make Bentley Heath such a happy, friendly place to be. The school takes good care of you and you benefit from good teaching in your well-run school.

Many of your parents told us how much the school has improved over the past couple of years. We have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to make two further improvements. You all have targets, but not all of you fully understand them and they are not all matched closely enough to your individual needs. We would like you to have more individualised targets, that you each understand. This will help teachers to plan work that challenges you and will also help each of you to assess how well you are doing. We have also asked the school to give you more opportunities to learn about different people's lives and experiences in other parts of Britain and the wider world.

Our very best wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully

Selwyn Ward

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.